



Asanga Marasinghe, country director of IFS Bangladesh, a global enterprise applications company, hands over the signed papers of a deal to Mohammed Nasir Uddin Chowdhury, managing director of LankaBangla Finance, at a programme. LankaBangla will implement IFS Applications 9, which will enable LankaBangla to monitor and map the employees' complete hire-to-retain process.

Indian farmers to raise rubber tapping amid price rally

REUTERS, Mumbai

India's natural rubber output in 2017/18 is likely to jump 15 percent to its highest in four years at 750,000 tonnes as a spike in benchmark prices prompts farmers to start tapping trees they had abandoned earlier, industry officials told Reuters.

Higher domestic production could reduce imports by the world's second-biggest consumer of the commodity and help arrest a rally that has lifted overseas prices JRUc6 to their highest in more than five years. The rubber rally could also trim margins for tyre makers and force them to raise tyre prices.

"The spike in rubber prices has renewed the interest of farmers in tapping," Rajiv Budhraj, director general of Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA), told Reuters. In the last two months, domes-

tic prices have jumped 24 percent to 16,000 rupees (\$235.85) per 100 kg, hitting a three-year peak on Monday, mainly due to supply disruptions in Thailand and led by surging Tokyo rubber futures.

"The current year's production target, which earlier we thought unlikely ... will definitely be achieved," Budhraj said.

The state-run Rubber Board has set an output target of 654,000 tonnes for the current fiscal year ending on March 31, up 16.4 percent from the previous year.

Budhraj expects the output to be another 100,000 tonnes in the following financial year. Many rubber farmers in India had previously suspended tapping operations during a three-year slump that dragged local spot prices to 9,100 rupees per 100 kg in February 2016, the lowest level in nearly seven years.

Asia targets tourism, education boost from Trump travel ban

REUTERS, Kuala Lumpur/Bangkok

Seeking to capitalize on US President Donald Trump's controversial new travel restrictions, companies and officials in Asia said they would target greater tourism and education ties with Muslims worried about the curbs.

Trump's Friday directive put a 120-day hold on allowing refugees into the country, an indefinite ban on refugees from Syria and a 90-day bar on citizens from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

In Muslim-majority Malaysia, the group CEO of Asia's largest budget airline, AirAsia, suggested countries in the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) could cash in.

"With the world now getting more isolationist it's time for ASEAN to start making it easier for tourists to come," Tony Fernandes said in a tweet on Tuesday.

Malaysia is a popular destination for tourists from the Middle East, with nearly 200,000 arriving in 2016 from countries including the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Qatar.

The country is also a key destination for medical tourism and halal tourism, with food and other products largely halal-certified. In neighboring Thailand, tourism officials said the US ban could lift visitor numbers.

"The Middle East is a big market for us, especially in the medical tourism sector. They may choose to visit Thailand more



Hundreds of people rally against a travel ban signed by President Trump in an executive order, during a protest at Detroit Metropolitan airport in Romulus, Michigan.

and this may also boost our sector," Tourism Authority of Thailand Governor Yuthasak Supasorn told Reuters.

Trump has presented his ban as a way to protect the United States from Islamist militants, but it has been condemned by a growing list of foreign leaders and drawn protests by tens of thousands in American cities.

With concerns about safety and security building, some Asians were reconsidering

US travel plans and seeking alternatives, even though their countries were not subject to the restrictions.

"When you want to travel, especially for leisure, then you want peace of mind," said Alicia Seah, director of public relations and communications at Singapore's Dynasty Travel. "Right now people are planning for their March-April onwards travel. They will put their travel plans (to the United States)

on hold at this juncture in time."

Singaporeans may either chose to travel to the United States later in the year or explore alternative locations such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada or within Asia, she said.

Trump has argued tougher vetting of immigrants is needed to protect America from attacks, but critics complain that his order unfairly singles out Muslims and defiles America's historic reputation as a welcoming place for immigrants.

Keasar Trad, president of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils, said Trump's travel restrictions were not only hurting innocent people but were "bringing great damage to his own economy and to the standings of Americans internationally."

"Everyone who has relatives in America, whether they are from the countries listed or not, they are petrified of what this man is going to do to America and to their relatives," Trad told Reuters.

Some education providers had seen early signs of an impact.

Rod Jones, CEO of Australian-listed education firm Navitas Ltd, said the company had seen a downturn in inquiries for their US-based English language courses.

"We have started to see students back off from the US because of their concerns about potential issues they may face," Jones told analysts on an earnings call.

Japan eyes US job, investment initiative ahead of Abe-Trump summit

REUTERS, Tokyo

Japan is hammering out plans to show US President Donald Trump its firms are ready to create US jobs, according to a document whose contents were revealed to Reuters, as Prime Minister Shinzo Abe prepares for a summit where automotive trade will be high on the agenda.

Abe will visit Washington on Feb. 10 for the talks at which Trump is expected to seek quick progress toward a two-way trade deal.

An early draft of the document, called "US-Japan Growth and Employment Initiative", listed five areas including infrastructure. The document, which was read to Reuters, did not mention automotive trade, which Trump has targeted as "unfair" in an echo of complaints by Washington decades ago.

The document left blanks for the numbers of jobs to be created and the scope of investment but a government source said several hundred thousand jobs could result.

It also referred to the idea of buying dollar-denominated "infrastructure bonds", a proposal that has been floated as a way Japan could take part in Trump's promised upgrade of US infrastructure.

Japanese officials said they were still

trying to assess just what Trump wants from Japan. In addition to singling out cars, he has also lumped Japan with China and Mexico as big contributors to America's trade deficit.

However, Japan's share of the US global trade gap has shrunk to 9 percent from more than half in the early 1990s. Automobiles and car parts account for about three-fourths of the overall US-Japan trade gap, making it an easy target.

In a phone call with Abe on Saturday, Trump reiterated his pledge to create jobs in the United States and asked that the Japanese auto industry contribute, the Nikkei business daily reported, quoting unidentified Japanese government officials.

Abe is expected to meet Toyota Motor Corp CEO Akio Toyoda this week, possibly on Friday.

"Mr. Trump has made a promise to 'Buy American, Hire American'," said one former Japanese diplomat. "Symbolically, autos are a very big player."

The renewed focus on the automotive trade has some Japanese officials and media reminiscing - and not happily - about heated US-Japan auto talks more than 20 years ago.

A last-minute deal in June 1995 averted US tariffs on Japanese luxury cars when Japan's automakers crafted "voluntary plans" to boost purchases

of American auto parts and expand US production. That allowed the Japanese government to maintain its opposition to setting official numerical trade targets while letting US negotiators also claim a win.

Yoshihiro Sakamoto, the top Japanese trade bureaucrat in those talks two decades ago, said such plans - drafted behind the scenes by the auto industry and trade ministry - could be a model for addressing the situation now. Some experts pointed out, however, the ministry's clout had waned since those days.

"What America wants is investment," Sakamoto told Reuters.

Toyota has come under fire from Trump for plans, announced in 2015, to shift production of its Corolla sedan from Canada to Mexico. Earlier this month, Japan's top automaker said it would invest \$10 billion in the United States over the next five years, the same as the previous five years.

On Monday, Honda Motor Co Ltd and General Motors Co said they would jointly produce pollution-free hydrogen fuel cell power systems in the United States from around 2020. The companies said they would invest \$85 million to add a production line at a GM battery plant in Brownstown, Michigan, and create 100 jobs.



Robin Kumar Das, country head for Bangladesh at Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd, and Dileep Banerjee, CEO of Rangs Motors Ltd, pose at the launch of Mahindra Powertrain Division's Mahindra Powerol DG, a generator, at a Mahindra showroom of Rangs Motors in Tejgaon, Dhaka on January 26. Sanjay Jadhav, vice president of Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd, also attended the event.



Kanutosh Majumder, chairman of the executive committee of Jamuna Bank; Shafiqul Alam, managing director, and Nur Mohammed, chairman of Jamuna Bank Foundation, attend the annual business conference for 2017 of the bank in Dhaka.

EDCL ESSENTIAL DRUGS COMPANY LIMITED
395-397, Tejgaon Industrial Area
Dhaka-1208, Bangladesh

Ref No: EDCL/PD-Gopalganj/ICT/PME/2016/042 Date: 30 January, 2017

Amendment of Tender Notice
(Amendment No -2)

Project Title : Establishment of Essential Drugs Company Limited (3rd Plant), Gopalganj

Tender Name : Supply, Erection, Testing, Commissioning, Qualification and Validation of Packaging Machinery & Equipment.

Ref. No : EDCL/PD-Gopalganj/ICT/PME/2016/24 Dated : 05 December, 2016

Notice Si. No	Subject to be Amended	Existing as	Shall be Amended as
14	Tender Last Selling Date and Time	29 January, 2017 at 05:00 PM (Local Time)	12 February, 2017 at 05:00 PM (Local Time)
15	Tender Closing Date and Time	02 February, 2017 at 03:00 PM (Local Time)	13 February, 2017 at 03:00 PM (Local Time)
16	Tender Opening Date and Time	02 February, 2017 at 03:30 PM (Local Time)	13 February, 2017 at 03:30 PM (Local Time)

All other terms & conditions shall remain unchanged.

(Prof. (Dr) Ehsanul Kabir)
Project Director
Establishment of Essential Drugs Company
Limited (3rd Plant), Gopalganj