

Automakers report lower Q2 US sales

AFP, New York

General Motors, Toyota and other automakers suffered a hit to US sales in the latest quarter as supply chain woes continued to crimp inventories, according to results released Friday.

GM sold 582,401 autos in the three months ending June 30, a drop of 15 per cent from the same period a year ago.

The Detroit giant said it is holding 95,000 partially-built vehicles in need of components that it expects to deliver by the end of 2022.

Such maneuvers have become the norm over the last year as manufacturers try to make headway on as many high-margin vehicles as possible amid limited supply of semiconductors and other key items.

On the positive side, GM said it scored strong sales for its pickup trucks, the Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra, despite low inventories. And "pent-up demand" drove sales growth in other vehicles, including the Chevrolet Camaro and Chevrolet Colorado.

GM reaffirmed its full-year profit outlook, but its second-quarter net income range of between \$1.6 billion and \$1.9 billion lagged consensus estimates.

Meanwhile, Toyota reported sales of 531,105 over the same period, a drop of 23 per cent compared with the 2021 quarter, and the Japanese company also cited "ongoing inventory challenges" hindering its dealerships.

A bright spot has been a jump in sales of Toyota's electric vehicles, which have comprised more than 25 per cent of Toyota's sales so far this year.

Cox Automotive has forecast a 19.3 per cent drop in US auto sales for the second quarter.

"Even though economic conditions have worsened in the past months, the lack of supply is still the greatest headwind facing the auto industry today," said Charlie Chesbrough, senior economist at Cox.



Data from the Chattogram Port Authority showed that the country's premier seaport handled 32.55 lakh units of containers, including import, export and empty ones, in 2021-22, posting growth of 5.11 per cent from a year ago.

PHOTO: STAR/FILE

CTG PORT SETS RECORD in container, cargo handling

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chattogram port handled a record volume of containers and cargoes in the just-concluded fiscal year riding on the rebound of Bangladesh's international trade as global economies reopened from the coronavirus pandemic-induced economic slowdown.

Data from the Chattogram Port Authority (CPA) showed the country's premier seaport handled 32.55 lakh twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of containers, including import, export and empty ones, in 2021-22, posting a growth of 5.11 per cent from a year ago when it managed 30.97 lakh TEUs.

The figure included the containers loaded and unloaded at the main jetties of the port and the Pangoon Inland Container Terminal at Keraniganj and the Kamalapur Inland Container Depot in Dhaka.

The port registered 3.1 per cent container handling growth in 2020-21, 2.92 per cent in 2019-20, and 3.28 per cent in 2018-19.

Boxes totalled 30.04 lakh TEUs were handled in 2019-20 and it was 28.08 lakh TEUs in 2018-19, CPA data showed.

Commercial items, commodities,

machinery, chemical products and industrial raw materials, except those for cement and ceramics sectors, are imported using containers, while export-oriented goods are solely carried through containers.

The port registered 3.1 per cent container handling growth in 2020-21, 2.92 per cent in 2019-20, and 3.28 per cent in 2018-19

The port's overall cargo handling, including those containerised and bulk cargoes, grew 3.91 per cent year-on-year in FY22.

More than 11.81 crore tonnes of cargo moved through the port in 2021-22, up from 11.37 crore tonnes a year ago. A total of 10.16 crore tonnes were handled in 2019-20.

Vessel arrivals at the port also rose. A total of 4,231 vessels arrived in 2021-22, while the number was 4,062 a year ago.

CPA Chairman Rear Admiral M Shahjahan attributed the overall rise in cargo and container handling and vessel arrival in the last fiscal year to an increased

foreign trade helped by the improvement in the pandemic situation at home and abroad.

In Bangladesh, imports grew a staggering 41.42 per cent year-on-year to \$68.67 billion in the July-April period of FY22. It was \$48.55 billion in the same period a year ago, central bank data showed.

Merchandise exports stood at \$47.17 billion in the July-May period, up 34.09 per cent, year-on-year. The shipment was said to have crossed \$50 billion in FY22, the first time in the country's history.

"Continuous steps to improve the port's capacity and efficiency helped us handle a record number of cargoes and containers," said the CPA chief, adding that the port's container storage capacity has been beefed up and various new equipment is being added.

According to Shahjahan, the port has not been closed for a single day since the pandemic hit the country more than two years ago.

"We also did not face congestion whereas regional ports witnessed significant snarl-ups during the pandemic. As a result, our overall productivity has increased."

Chinese airlines buy 300 planes from Airbus

AFP, Beijing

Four Chinese airlines said Friday they will buy a total of 292 planes from Airbus in a \$37 billion windfall for the aviation giant, as the industry rebuilds after the coronavirus pandemic.

The orders come after a bumper year for Airbus, which posted record profits in 2021 after a two-year pandemic slump, giving the company a further boost over US rival Boeing.

China Eastern said Friday it had agreed to purchase 100 A320neo jets and China Southern said on the same day that it would buy 96 of the same model.

Air China and its subsidiary Shenzhen Airlines also confirmed the purchase of a combined 96 A320neo planes, according to separate filings.

Airbus said the deals showed "the positive recovery momentum and prosperous outlook for the Chinese aviation market".

Japan manufacturers' confidence drops

AFP, Tokyo

Confidence among Japan's largest manufacturers sagged for a second quarter on rising costs and supply constraints, though the service sector was boosted by economic reopening, a key survey showed Friday.

The Bank of Japan's closely watched Tankan survey showed confidence among large manufacturers at plus nine, below expectations of 12 and sharply lower than the 14 in the March survey. A positive figure means more manufacturers see business conditions as favourable than those that consider them unfavourable.

The survey reaches about 10,000 firms and is considered to be the broadest indicator of how Japan Inc. is faring.

Corporate Japan has faced several problems as the Ukraine war pushes up oil prices amid general inflation that has boosted raw material prices.

US manufacturing growth slows

AFP, Washington

American manufacturing growth slowed in June as new orders contracted, even though price increases showed signs of slowing, according to an industry survey released Friday.

The Institute for Supply Management said its manufacturing index fell to 53 per cent from 56.1 per cent in May, showing growth slowed significantly even though it stayed above the 50-per cent threshold indicating expansion for the 25th consecutive month.

That was the lowest level for the index since June 2020 during the pandemic downturn.

Prices showed signs of easing, but the drop in the overall index reflected new orders entering contraction territory, falling a whopping 5.9 points to 49.2 per cent, the report said.

Another Eid-Ul-Azha comes

FROM PAGE B1

to the CETP through the chromium drainage system and other effluents via the general drainage system.

But some tanneries transfer chromium effluents through the general drainage system, thereby obstructing the internal biological system of the CETP.

Besides, the CCRU also can't maintain the retention time because of the presence of excess effluents, prompting some chromium effluent to enter into the CETP, according to the DTIEWTPCL paper.

Satyendra Nath Paul, chief engineer of the plant management company, said large tanneries have been asked to set up their own CCRU so that the pressure on the CETP's chromium recovery system lessens. But they are yet to establish the system.

Small tanneries have been asked to discharge effluents properly.

A partial laboratory has been set up to monitor the function of the CETP and the CCRU and the lab is supposed to carry out at least 14 chemical tests. But it can perform five tests now.

Work orders to put in place the facilities to conduct the rest were placed three months ago. The supplier will deliver the machinery by August, said Paul.

In a letter to the DoE in June, the DTIEWTPCL detailed its plan to reduce the use of restricted chemicals and build a chemical warehouse, but the plans are yet to see the

light of the day.

At present, there is no provision for the salt treatment unit since the CETP has no reverse osmosis. It will take Tk 300-400 crore to set up the unit.

The company does not have the money to set up the unit, Paul says.

A dumping yard for



the solid waste will be constructed next to the CETP. Since there will be a huge rush of solid waste during Eid, a pond has been dug next to the proposed yard so that the extra waste can be thrown there, Ahmed said.

Some local and foreign companies have shown interest in solid waste management, but the estate authorities were not satisfied with their plans.

There are nine de-watering units to separate water from waste. Of them, six are functional. An official of the estate says work is on to make the rest ready before Eid.

CONTAMINATED CHEMICALS

STILL POLLUTING DHALESHWARI

In the first week of June, the Department of Environment (DoE) sent a letter to the DTIEWTPCL, saying the CETP is not fully effective.

It came to the conclusion following an analysis of the liquid waste released between January 2021 and

completed by July 5, said Ahmed.

MAKING MOST OF RAWHIDES STILL A FAR CRY

In Bangladesh, Eid-ul-Azha accounts for half of the leather that tanners collect throughout the year.

A lack of compliance is preventing the leather

crore this year, 2 lakhs more than the preceding year, according to the fisheries and livestock ministry.

RECENT SPOT VISIT

During a visit to Kalu Leather Corporation, located on the estate, on Thursday, it was found that it had stored 30 tonnes of salt to preserve the hides. Nine drums are being prepared to remove leather fur.

The company has set a target of procuring 1 lakh rawhides this season, said Abu Sayed, supervisor of the company.

Some other tanneries are also taking preparations to collect and process rawhides.

Some fishermen in Hemayetpur of Savar alleged that due to the pollution caused by the estate, they don't get enough catch in the Dhaleshwari compared to the past.

The Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation under the industries ministry began implementing the estate in 2003 and completed it in June 2021.

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, chief executive of the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association, said that the authorities took no effective initiative in the last five years to run the CETP efficiently.

"As many parties are involved, they only blame each other. So, the problem is not solved," she said, urging the authorities to sort out the problems quickly to stop environmental pollution.



Nawaz Ahmad, chairman of Paramount Insurance Company, virtually presides over the insurer's 23th annual general meeting recently. The meeting approved 10 per cent cash dividend for 2021.

PHOTO: PARAMOUNT INSURANCE



Sheikh Mohammad Salim Ullah, secretary to Financial Institutions Division, and Md Murshedul Kabir, managing director (additional charge) of Sonali Bank, signed an annual performance agreement in the division recently for the attainment of a list of targets set by the ministry in fiscal year 2022-23.

PHOTO: SONALI BANK

Relaxed loan rescheduling

FROM PAGE B1

Rawhide traders will be able to get new loans from banks on regularising their non-performing loans. Banks, however, can consider offering new loans based on their

relationship with the customers concerned.

Md Shakawat Ullah, general secretary of the Bangladesh Tanners Association, said associations of rawhide traders had set a target

to collect around one crore animal skins this Eid.

According to the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, 1.21 crore animals could be sacrificed in the country this year.