Asia urged to deepen economic integration

Kuala Lumpur: Export-orientated Asia should hasten regional economic integration, to bolster trade and keep a crucial engine of growth running as it braves for fallout from the global financial crisis, officials and experts at an international trade forum in Kuala Lumpur said in November. Many of the region’s nations have pursued export-led industrialisation and growth to raise living standards rapidly but are now facing a prolonged slowdown as demand from Europe and the US wanes, while the credit crunch morphs into an economic meltdown.

“In the current economic situation, the threat of much slower global trade appears to be real,” said Malaysia’s Trade Minister Muhyiddin Yassin. “It is important to convince the world that expanding trade through economic integration is one of the ways to restore global economic growth.”

More than 70 free-trade agreements have been concluded by the ten-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations along with China, South Korea, and Japan, with another 70 or more still being negotiated. But regional or multilateral parts are preferred for maximising trade, minimising distortions, and relieving the administrative burden on smaller developing countries with limited resources.

Nagesh Kumar, director-general of the Research and Information System for Developing Countries think-tank in India, added that Asia must seek to boost trade within the region, to reduce reliance on Western countries as demand slows and exports dwindle amid the global economic melt-down. “To make up for the losses, Asia needs to find new sources of demand. Regional economic integration is the real option to pursue now with more vigour to enable it to overcome this crisis,” he told The Associated Press on the sidelines of the forum.

Nobel Biocare acquires BioCad and signs exclusive partnership with Optimet

GOTHENBURG, Sweden: Nobel Biocare has signed an agreement to buy 100 per cent of BioCad Medical Inc., a leading developer of computer-aided software for prosthetics, for a total amount of EUR 26 million (US$32.5 million). With the agreement, Nobel will obtain all rights to BioCad’s trademark, brand names, innovation pipeline, R&D network, and a facility in Quebec City, Canada. Nobel will also retain the 40 employees from BioCad, a company press release stated.

Recently, the company announced the signing of an exclusive partnership with Optimet, Optical Metrology Ltd, Israel, to offer a new generation of optical scanners with impression capturing capabilities.

According to the press release, Nobel Biocare and BioCad have developed a solution to combine the leading BioCad CAD interface with Nobel Biocare’s CAM manufacturing. The new BioCad software essentially will take the restoration process from a computer-assisted design process to a more computer-automated design process, reducing and automating much of the design work done by a lab to create the digital model for a restoration.

Additional features are an intuitive user interface, new design solutions for overdentures, new design possibilities for implant-supported prosthetic materials, crowns, bridges, wax ups and cut backs. It also comes with a comprehensive tooth library and a laser sintering production technology. The software, tagged for a pre optical scanner, will be launched in early 2009.

According to company officials, additional products and products will also be presented at all major industry events in early 2009 and launched thereafter.

Melville, NY, USA: Henry Schein Inc. has announced that, as of October 2008, it has exited the wholesale ultrasound business, and will dispose of such operations during the fourth quarter of 2008. This business represented sales for the Company’s Medical Group of approximately US$15 million in 2008, and Henry Schein will record a loss from discontinued operations of approximately US$1.6 million (or US$0.07 per diluted share), primarily related to the write-down of intangible assets during the fourth quarter of 2008. The operating results of the discontinued operation will be reported separately for all prior periods.

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Dental Tribune to hold Berlin Masters

Robin Goodman
Dental Tribune

NEW YORK CITY, NY, USA: Dental Tribune recently announced that Berlin Masters—featuring the annual Roots Summit and Implants Summit—will be held in Berlin on June 26 and 27, 2009. As the cultural hub of modern medicine, new ranks with London, New York and Paris as one of the great cities of the world, Berlin is one of the most important cities in Europe and can cater to the most diverse tastes during the day and certainly provide enough highbrow entertainment to fully justify indulging in the city’s nightlife later. Also ranking among the worldwide top international conference locations, Berlin will be the perfect destination for dentists to enjoy the tradition of the Summit.

Located in the centre of the city, the event will take place in the Hotel Palace Berlin, one of the most renowned hotels in the German capital. Both the Hotel Palace Berlin and the conference centre is to cater for GSK’s global oral health-care product development projects.

Mumbai, India: Colgate-Palmolive India has sold its Nepal subsidiary to Everest Hygiene Products for an undisclosed sum. Concurrent with the sale, the companies have signed a contract manufacturing agreement, to continue to source toothpaste from the factory in Hetauda in Nepal, thus providing for continuity of operation at the plant and exports from Nepal. All employees of Colgate-Palmolive (Nepal) Pvt. Ltd will continue their employment on existing terms and conditions under the new ownership.

LONDON, UK: The Asian export market is to cater for GSK’s global oral health-care product development projects.

Manila, Philippines: A survey of Nielsen Company Inc. (the Philippines) showed that the Lamonoy Corporation, makers of Hapee Toothpaste, made a steady climb to become the Philippines’ second leading toothpaste brand.