

CHATTO CREEK

TRADE REPORT

A COMPLIMENTARY NEWSLETTER ON TRADE ISSUES IN ASIA PACIFIC

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AUSTRALIA JOINS NEW GROUP TO TARGET TRADE COLLUSION: Competition authorities from Australia, NZ, Canada, US and UK have formed a new working group to focus on illegal conduct including collusion in global supply chains. Freight rates on global routes are reportedly seven times higher than two years ago.

UK FTA FACES TIMING HURDLE: Trade Minister Tehan may seek to accelerate ratification of the Australia-UK FTA. Trade officials have told a Senate Committee they were aware a 20 sitting day rule cannot be met during the current Parliament. The Minister was reflecting on how he wished to advance the issue.

AUSTRALIAN COAL EXPORTERS LOSE BID: The Australian Competition Tribunal has denied 10 mining companies an earlier green light to collectively negotiate terms including pricing with the Port of Newcastle. This followed an earlier authorisation by the ACCC. Newcastle is Australia's largest coal port.

CHINA FACES WTO HIGH-TECH CHALLENGE: The EU is challenging China at the WTO claiming it is breaching global intellectual property rules by restricting EU companies from going to a foreign court to protect their patents. It claims EU patent holders that do so often face significant fines in China.

UK GETS CLOSER TO JOINING PACIFIC GROUP: The UK's bid to join the CPTPP moved forward during the week when a CPTPP Working Group asked the UK to submit its market access offers by March 20. UK Trade Secretary Trevelyan is visiting Indonesia, Singapore and Japan this week to boost its Indo-Pacific trade ties.

CHINA'S WE CHAT NAMED AS PIRACY FACILITATOR: The USTR has for the first time named China's WeChat and AliExpress as online markets that facilitate substantial trademark counterfeiting. In its latest review of markets facilitating counterfeiting and piracy, the USTR listed 42 online and 35 physical markets.

INDIA & UAE SIGN FTA: India and the United Arab Emirates signed a bilateral trade agreement during the week. Indian Commerce Minister Goyal said the closer economic partnership agreement would create one million new jobs for Indian citizens and see bilateral trade soar by 40 per cent to \$US100b within five years.

CHINA'S DISPUTE BID ON WTO AGENDA: The WTO Dispute Body's draft meeting agenda for February 28 has listed China's second bid to have a WTO Dispute Panel appointed to review Australia's dumping duties on stainless steel sinks, wind towers and railway wheels. Australia vetoed China's first bid in January.

TAIWAN MOVES TO PROTECT CORE TECHNOLOGIES: Taiwan is to toughen its security laws to safeguard high-tech industries and prevent leaks of core technologies. Premier Su said high-tech industries - a vital lifeline for Taiwan - had been increasingly infiltrated by China's "red supply chain" in recent years.

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT PURSUES PHILIPPINES: The European Parliament has passed its 5th such motion threatening to temporarily suspend the Philippines from accessing its preferential tariff program for developing economies. It relates to EU concerns over alleged human rights violations.

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