

ECNEC approves Tk 172 cr projects

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) at a meeting in Dhaka Tuesday approved the summary of four projects involving Taka about 172 crore including Taka 18.64 crore in foreign exchange, a Planning Ministry press release said Wednesday night, reports BSS.

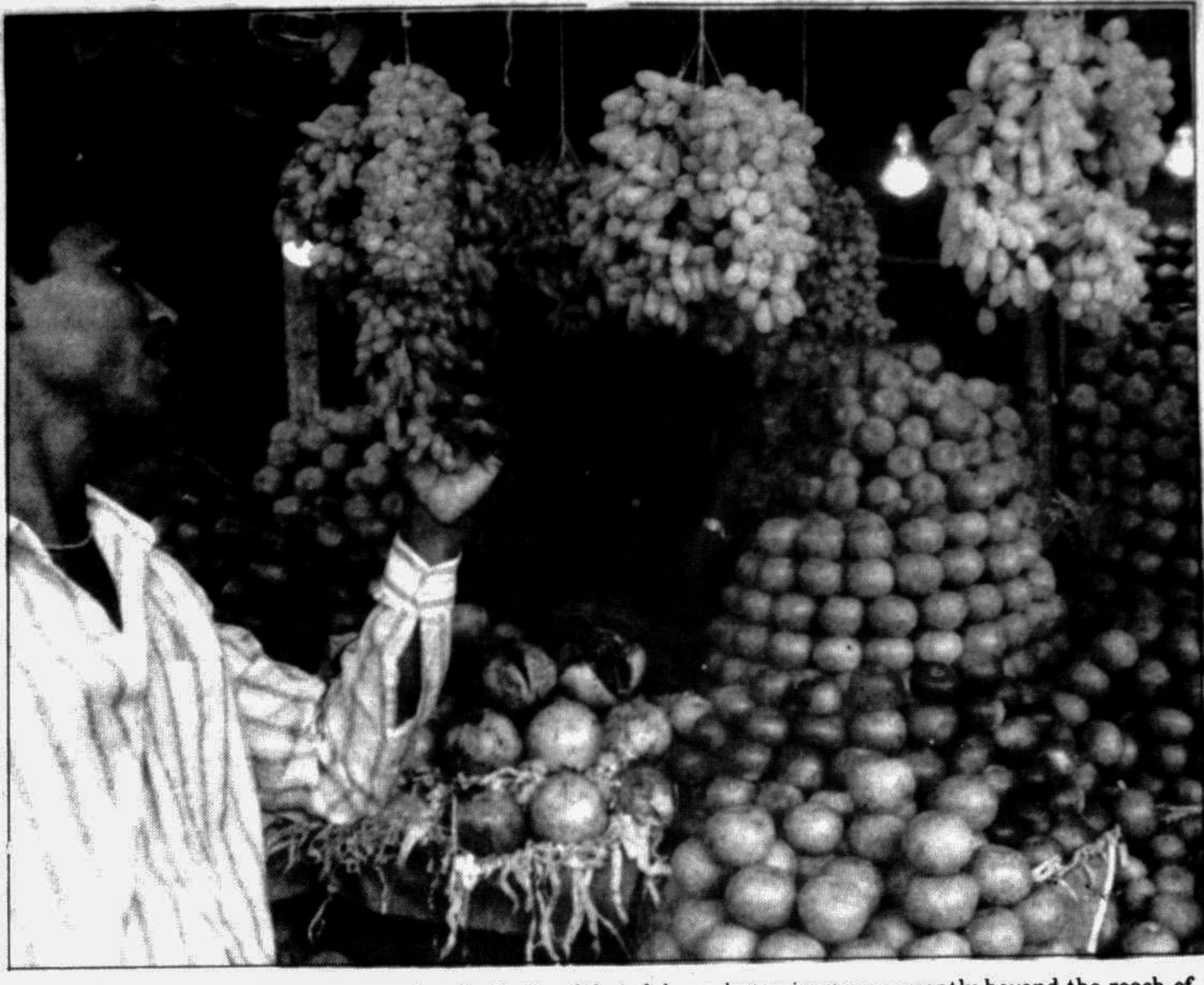
The projects are: An expansion programme for the silk industry and setting up of a silk cocoon multiplication centre 2. Setting up of the 300-bed Shaheed Suhrawardy Hospital at Sher-E-Bangla Nagar first phase 3. Establishment of a National Heart Disease Institute and Hospital at Dhaka and setting up of Coronary Care Unit in each of the country's eight medical college hospitals and Postgraduate Hospital and Research Institute—revised and 4. Distribution of sports accessories to educational institutions and youth and sports clubs.

The meeting held at the NEC Bhavan was presided over by the Adviser on Planning. The advisers in charge of the Ministries of Communications, Health and Family Welfare, Social Welfare, Women Affairs, Youth and Sports, Cultural Affairs, Irrigation, Water

Development and Flood Control, Environment and Forestry, Fisheries and Livestock attended the meeting. Members of the Planning Commission, Secretary Planning, and Secretaries of the concerned Ministries were also present on the occasion.

The press release further said ECNEC in previous three meetings held between December 24 and January 9, had approved six projects involving Taka 866 crore including Taka 436 crore in foreign exchange.

The projects are: 1) Construction of two multipurpose jetties with backyard facilities and procurement of equipment for loading and unloading; 2) Upazila development survey project-revised; 3) Extension of Telecommunication facilities at villages - revised project; 4) Sirajganj integrated rural development project (SIRDIP) Water Development Board's part - revised; 5) Third fisheries project and 6) Rehabilitation and construction of food godowns with Dutch Assistance including maintenance and training (4th phase).



Out of reach: Everyone wants to enjoy the fruits of their labour, but prices are currently beyond the reach of most people. —Star Photo

Thin trading at Stock Exchange

Star Economic Report
Trading was thin at Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) on Wednesday when it resumed business after Tuesday's suspended operations because of the death of one of its senior operators.

Dullist trends persisted and there was little buying support from the institutional investors.

The market was in a bearish mood with most of the traded shares losing further ground.

Trading took place in 20 stocks including one debenture issue. But the volume was low. In all, 2561 shares and debentures changed hands.

Among the traded stocks, 11 fell in prices, three rose and six were unchanged.

The DSE All Share Price Index which measures the ups and downs of all the listed stocks in the market declined to 343.43 points from the preceding trading day's 343.4370.

Among the decliners, Saham Textile lost Taka 2.50 and Islam Jute Taka 2.00.

ICB 3rd Mutual Fund gained most. It advanced Taka seven to Taka 150.00 at its closing rate. But other ICB Mutual Funds in trading lost within the range of Taka 0.36 to Taka 1.73.

Quoted prices of traded stocks

Investment	FV/ML	Closing rate (Taka)	Change
3rd ICB. M. Fund	100/5	150.00	+7.00
4th ICB. M. Fund	100/10	138.27	(-1.73)
5th ICB. M. Fund	100/10	121.00	(-0.50)
6th ICB. M. Fund	100/10	90.50	(-0.36)
Peoples United	100/10	108.00	unchanged
Quasem Drycile 10/50	100/10	106.00	+0.25
Bangladesh Automobiles	100/5	123.00	unchanged
B. Thai	100/10	78.00	(-0.50)
Eastern Cables	100/5	82.00	(-0.50)
Quasem Drycile 10/50	100/10	8.00	(-0.10)
Cit. Vegetable 100/10	100/10	95.00	unchanged
Dhaka Vegetable 100/5	100/10	104.00	+3.00
Tulip Dairy	100/10	104.00	+3.00
Zee Bangla	100/50	8.80	(-0.20)
Oxygen	10/50	52.50	(-0.41)
Islam Jute	100/5	61.00	(-2.00)
Pharma & Chem	100/5	72.00	(-1.00)
Chemical Textile	100/5	61.00	unchanged
Saham Textile	100/10	87.80	(-2.50)
Debiture	2500/1	1650.00	unchanged

Malaysia's palm oil stocks fall

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 16: Malaysia's total palm oil stocks fell 9.07 per cent to 719,193 tonnes at the end of December from 790,958 tonnes in November, the Palm Oil Registration and Licensing Authority (PORLA) said Tuesday, reports AFP.

Crude palm oil stocks fell 15.76 per cent to 423,979 tonnes in December but processed palm oil stocks rose 2.62 per cent to 295,214 tonnes, PORLA said.

Another report from Kuala Lumpur adds, Malaysian Finance Minister Daim Zainuddin Tuesday revised Malaysia's economic growth rate for 1991 to 7.8 per cent from the eight per cent forecast in December to take into account the Gulf crisis.

Seminar on Clearing at Stock Market

Star Economic Report
Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) organised on Wednesday a discussion meeting on "Settlement and Clearing Procedures in Stock Market Trading".

The visiting UNDP Consultant Kishore Tandon was the key-note speaker.

Khawja Abdul Qudus, Chairman, DSE, presided over the meeting. Among others, the officials of the Ministry of Finance, Investment Corporation of Bangladesh, and Bangladesh Bank attended it.

Exchange Rates January 16

RATES, offered by Commercial Banks, for Bills on Collection (BC) selling and Overdrafts (ODs) transfer buying. One Unit of Foreign Currencies (FCs) for Taka.

FCs	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	35.9226	35.4432
UK Pound Sterling	68.3936	67.5938
German Deutsche	23.2720	22.9510
Mark		
French Franc	6.8600	6.7559
Saudi Riyal	9.6060	9.4778
Dutch Guilder	20.6511	20.3579
Pakistan Rupee	1.6234	1.6081
(AMU)		
Singapore Dollar	20.3828	20.1107
UAE Dirham	9.8069	9.6760
Kuwait Dinar	Not available	
Indian Rupee	1.9602	1.9412
(AMU)		

*AMU-Asian Monetary Union
Wage Earners Fund/Export Performance Bonus (XPB) Fund

	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	36.48	36.53
UK Pound	69.49	69.54

* The rates of Pound Sterling are decided every day, based on the cross-rates of New York market

Source: Sonali Bank

Wall Street investors on the sidelines

NEW YORK, Jan 16: Many major Wall Street investors decided Tuesday to sit on the sidelines as the midnight UN Security Council deadline for Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait loomed, reports AFP.

The Dow Jones average of 30 leading industrial stocks spent most of the day fluctuating within a narrow band of about 10 points. At the closing bell, the Dow was up 6.68 points at 2,490.59 points.

With just 110 million shares changing hands on the New York stock exchange, decliners narrowly outnumbered advancers—726 to 685, with 549 stocks unchanged.

RAW JUTE January 16

Kutchi bales FOB Narayanganj/Daulatpur Varieties (Tk. per 100 Kg)

White	Tossa	Mechhia
Medium 1393	1500	1125
Bot. (B) 1340	1447	1098
Bot. (C) 1206	1286	1045
Bot. (X) 1072	1125	857

* FOB = Freight on board
* Bot. = Bottom

White Rejection (WRS) Tossa Rejection (TRS)

White Rejection (WRS)	Tossa Rejection (TRS)
White/Tossa: Cutting	
BWCA ***	1450 235
BWCB ***	1300 220
BWCA ***	1600 250
BWCB ***	1500 235
Mechhia	
Spl.	1950 355
A	1900 345
B	1800 330
C	1600 295
SPL Cuttings	1000 175
Ord. Cuttings	900 170
SMR	1125 200

* FOB ready = Narayanganj
** FOB sight = Chittagong/Mongla Ports. Indicative Price at which sales may be considered for EPC registration.
***The \$ prices are exclusive of any selling commission.
O. D. (Sight non-traditional/applicable to export bills). One \$ = Tk. 35.4956
* MT = Metric Ton
Imports/arrivals of bales at Narayanganj were seven to eight thousand mounds while at Daulatpur at six to seven thousand mounds. (One mound is equal to 37.32417 KGs.)

Role of accountants in development stressed

Kazi Fazlur Rahman, Presidential Adviser in charge of the Ministries of Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control, Forest and Environment and Fisheries and Livestock, Wednesday stressed the need for a greater role of professional accountants of the South Asian countries to contribute towards economic development of the region, reports BSS.

The environment for economic development has never been more challenging than it is today and as such the importance of the role of accountants cannot be over emphasized, the Adviser said.

He was inaugurating the two-day international seminar of South Asian Federation of Accountants at Hotel Sonargaon in the city. The seminar was jointly sponsored by the Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Bangladesh and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Bangladesh.

The inaugural ceremony was also addressed, among others, by Commerce Secretary, Mr. Nasimuddin Ahmed, SAFA President, Mia Momtaz Abdullah, SAFA Vice-President and President of ICMA, Mr. Habibur Rahman, and ICA President, Mr. M A Qadri Mollah.

Kazi Fazlur Rahman said the increasingly complex business environment coupled with ever changing hopes and aspirations of the societies of the region demanded higher skill and wider knowledge of sophisticated technique in effectively maintaining the records and accounts with which the professional accountants were deeply connected.

So they have greater responsibility to the society's uplift in the 90s, the Adviser said exhorting the accountants of the region to pay more attention towards economic emancipation of the nations in South Asian countries.

Lauding the initiative of ICMA and ICA in holding the seminar, the Presidential Adviser said it would help the accountants of the region to exchange their experience and ideas with one another for professional integrity among the South Asian nations.

He called upon the accountants of Bangladesh to face the challenges in both private and public sector in the country to meet the demands of the nation.

"It is largely true that accountability in Bangladesh should be broadened," Mr. Fazlur Rahman said adding, "You will play the best role in meeting the demands of our people."

SAFA President, Mia Momtaz Abdullah said the organisation had taken schemes to teach accountancy in the Maldives and Bhutan.

He also said that only stable governments in the region could solve the problems now facing the accountants and management officials. SAFA has been formed with the professional accounting bodies of the SAARC countries to promote and develop accountancy profession in the South Asian.

'Changes won't affect Japan's investment'

Japan External Trade Development (JETRO) representative in Bangladesh Mr. M. Sasaki said, the recent political changes here would not affect the enthusiasm and commitment of Japanese entrepreneurs for industrial investment in Bangladesh including the Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ), reports BSS.

He told newsmen accompanying him during a visit to the CEPZ on Monday that the Japanese investors, who had already set up industries here, were receiving queries from their fellow entrepreneurs in Japan on the prospect of investment after the change-over in Bangladesh. "We are giving them a green signal" he added.

Mr. Sasaki said the Japanese investors had already got sanction for 13 industrial units in the CEPZ with a total investment of over 40 million US dollars. Three units were in full operation while five others were in trial production.

Mr. Sasaki said, the main object of the Japanese companies working in Bangladesh was to make "transfer of technology" from Japan to Bangladesh. All industrial managements here were taking a number of people from here to Japan to impart necessary training before going into production in their respective units, he added.

Besides, Mr. Sasaki said, JATRO would make all out efforts to export Bangladesh goods like garments to Japan to reduce the huge trade imbalance existing at present, between the two countries.

Talking to newsmen, Mr. Masanori Taniuchi, Managing Director, Fuji-Bangla International, Mr. Masakatsu Fukumoto, Managing Director Fuji Galves, Mr. Toshio Oka, Managing Director, Miniplo Electric, Mr. Tomioki Baba, President, Yume Kikaku and Mr. Koichi Hasegawa, Director Olympia-Mi, all said they found the working conditions quite encouraging and workers and industrial workers here were quick in picking up.

Forward contracts for Lankan tea

Sri Lanka introduced its forward tea sales recently. An auction was held for the sale of tea to be harvested in the future months.

Tea India in its last issue reported that a separate catalogue for the "forward contracts" was introduced for the sale of tea to be harvested and manufactured by selected estates.

Nearly 75 per cent of the teas on offer in this special catalogue was snapped up by the buyers.

The objective of the Forward sales Auctions is to secure an assured price for the tea producer for his future crop without his income being subject to volatile price changes.

China to enforce ceilings on bank lending

BEIJING, Jan 16: China will rein in its money supply in 1991 to ease inflationary pressure from a monetary surge last year, official reports said Tuesday, reports AFP.

The People's Bank of China will enforce strict ceilings on lending, the central bank's Governor, Li Guixian, told a national banking conference. He disclosed exact loan quotas for the country's banks.

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In 1990 leading rose 47.5 per cent to 273.1 billion Yuan (52.5 billion Dollars) and bank note issuance 42.9 per cent to 30 billion Yuan (5.8 billion Dollars).

The Central bank chief said exceptions in the tight lending policy would be made for agriculture and major state construction projects, which would enjoy increased credit.

Gold & Silver

Gold (Taka per 11.66 gram.)
Tejahi 6,800.00
Guinea 6,500.00
Silver 200.00

Source: Directorate of Agricultural Marketing

HIDES & SKIN (Wet/Salted)

January 16 (Taka per 100 pieces)

Cow	15,000.00	20,000.00
Light	30,000.00	35,000.00
Medium	40,000.00	45,000.00
Heavy	55,000.00	60,000.00
Very heavy	75,000.00	80,000.00
Rejected	27,000.00	32,000.00
Goat Big & heavy	13,000.00	13,500.00
Light & Medium	7,500.00	8,000.00
Rejected	3,500.00	4,000.00
Sheep	9,000.00	10,000.00
BUFFALO	62,000.00	68,000.00

Source: Agricultural Marketing Directorate

Tk 4,000cr agri loans outstanding

Star Economic Report
Poor agricultural credit recoveries have slowed down new lending in the sector.

The banks disbursed Taka 175 crore in the first half of fiscal 1990-91 against the annual target of Taka 1,250 crore.

Outstanding agricultural credits in December, 1990 stood at over Taka 4,000 crores.

Most to it classified as overdue.

Banking sources said that agricultural credit recoveries did not improve in 1990. The banks are not extending fresh loans to the defaulters. The financial sector reforms that Bangladesh Bank introduced last year called for a more cautious approach to fresh credit disbursements.

Most agricultural creditors are not eligible to obtain fresh funds because they have not cleared off their outstanding loans, the sources said.

Quick Gulf war may pull US economy out

NEW YORK, Jan 16: A quick Gulf war could help pull the US economy out of its recession, experts say, but a long conflict could do economic damage by furthering the uncertainty in the financial and oil markets and bloating the Federal deficit, reports AP.

War historically has boosted the economy by pumping extra Dollars into industry for production of military goods. Vietnam-related spending, for example, was credited for the economic boom of the 1960s.

But this time around, the impact of additional military spending will be minimal unless the war is protracted. That's because the military already had most of the equipment it needed and the scale of the war would be smaller, said David Wyss, an economist at the economic forecasting firm DRI-McGraw-Hill Inc.

While the start of war might send financial and oil markets reeling, a quick victory over Iraq by the US-led forces would drive oil prices lower and ease the lack of confidence in the financial markets, Wyss said.

"If you really can go in there and wipe them out in four weeks, oil prices would plunge," Wyss said. "It ends the uncertainty, and I think you'll get a nice little rally in the stock and bond markets."

Taiwani Dollar lowers

TAIPEI, Jan 16: Threats of possible war in the Gulf drove down the Taiwan Dollar by 12.6 Cents Tuesday, the worst fall in fight months, to close at 27.381 to the US Dollar, reports AFP.

The local currency plunged 8.5 Cents against the Greenback to finish at 27.255 Monday, about a week after the Central Bank of China had eased intervention to stabilize the Taiwan dollar around the 27-1 level.

Market dealers also attributed the Dollar's advance to strong seasonal demand by local importers, adding that Tuesday's finish of the Taiwan unit was the lowest level since it registered 27.40 against the Greenback on June 22, 1990.

Gold prices rise in London

LONDON, Jan 16 Gold prices rose by five Dollars here Monday amid fears of war in the Gulf and political uncertainty after the Soviet crackdown in Lithuania, reports AFP.

Gold was trading at 395.75 Dollars an ounce in the morning against Friday's close of 390.75 Dollars but slipped to 395.35 Dollars at the fixing.

Shippets

Brunei produces extra oil

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN, Jan 16: Brunei produced an extra 7,00,000 barrels of oil last year as a result to higher production to meet market demand after Iraq invaded Kuwait in August, a Brunei Shell Petroleum company official said, reports AFP.

George Innes, the Managing Director, told Brunei Shell employee Friday that about 2,000 barrels were produced daily in addition to the average daily production of 1,50,000 Barrels Per Day (BPD) forecast for the year.

Brunei Shell is the sole oil producer in the oil-rich Sultanate.

Hotel in Manila to be privatized

MANILA, Jan 16: The government-owned Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel is to be privatized through a negotiated sale after two efforts to auction it off failed, its owners said Tuesday, reports AFP.

Feliciano Belmonte, President of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), a state pension fund which owns the luxury hotel along Manila bay, said unnamed Hong Kong and Japanese groups were among the interested buyers.

The GSIS is asking 1.5 billion Pesos (53.6 million Dollars) for the 670-room hotel, currently managed by the Seattle-based Westin group.

Nepal rises sugar price

KATHMANDU, Jan 16: The interim government has increased the price of sugar by 15 per cent in a bid to control its flow into the Indian market where it fetches a better price, an official source said Tuesday, reports AFP.

The price of sugar has been fixed at 15.5 Rupees (51 cents) per kilogram, up from 13.50 Rupees (45 Cents), the official source said the interim government had cut the sugar price by 12 per cent after its formation in April last year, but the resulting shortage of the product caused a popular outcry.

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Price Barometer: Essentials

January 16 Retail prices

Rice	(Taka per Kg)	Meat	(Taka per Kg)
Aman (Very fine)	17.00-17.50	Beef	50.00-55.00
Aman(fine)	14.00-15.00	Mutton	75.00-80.00
Pajam	13.00-14.00	Oil	(Taka per Litre)
Ufshi	11.50-12.00	Mustard	52.00-56.00
Vegetables	(Taka per kg)	Soybean	31.00-32.00
Potato(White)	5.50-6.50	Cocunut	(Colombo)
Brijal	5.00-8.00	Vegetable Ghose	44.00-52.00
Lady's finger	15.00-16.00		
Cauli flower	5.00-8.00	Spices	(Taka per kg)
(Per piece)		Onion(New)	12.00-14.00
Karolla	18.00-20.00	Garlic	60.00-68.00
Lalshak	4.00-6.00	Chilies (Local)	60.00-65.00
Green Banana (Four Pieces)	5.00-8.00	Turmeric(Round)	44.00-48.00
Other Foodgrain	(Taka per Kg)	" (Long)	50.00-52.00
Flour	12.00-14.00	Green chillies	22.00-24.00
Anta	11.50-12.00	Ginger	15.00-20.00
Wheat	9.50-10.00	Cinnamon*	
Fish	(Taka per kg)		3.00-3.50
Rubi(big)	100.00-130.00	Cardamom*	
Katla(big)	70.00-90.00		8.00-10.00
Shilsha	50.00-55.00	Jhira (50 grams)	6.00-7.00
Hirama	80.00-90.00	Dhosa	28.00-30.00
Singi	60.00-70.00		