

Business

Imports fall by 15 p.c

Star Economic Report

Imports of major commercial items and industrial raw materials in four months upto October declined by 15 per cent in Taka terms, according to final figures available from Bangladesh Bank.

In US Dollar terms, the import decline in value terms will be about 25 per cent. Taka was depreciated on five occasions in the seven months period till September '90 and the extent of depreciation was 10 per cent.

The import situation in volume terms is not known for certain. But traders said import prices were up in the international markets after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in early August. This would only suggest that the import volume had a more pronounced decline than what was indicated by the value of imports.

Banking sources, however, noted that the decline in value or volume of imports was partly due to last year's over-imports and adequate stocks in the pipeline in July at the beginning of fiscal 1990-91.

Moderate uptrend at share market

Star Economic Report

The week began on Saturday at the Dhaka bourse with a moderate uptrend in trade volume but there was no change in the mood of the market. Most traded shares declined in prices as sellers were more active than buyers. Institutional investors did not extend any major support to the sellers.

All Share Price Index of Dhaka Stock Exchange lost further ground. It dropped to 340.5426 points from 340.6904 at the close of business last week. The index indicates the market prices of all listed stocks with the exchange. In all, 6785 shares changed hands compared with last Thursday's 2540. Traded shares valued Taka 2,39,490.00 against Taka 1,53,498.00 on the closing day last week.

The traded shares involved 23 listed stocks. Of them, 11 fell in prices and only one rose and eleven shares remained unchanged at their previous quoted prices. On the decliners' side, Pharma aids lost Taka three at its closing at Taka 157.00. Second ICB Mutual Fund and Talu Spinning went down by Taka two each. The other losers included Third ICB Mutual Fund, BGC Insurance, Bangladesh Autocars, Dhaka Vegetable, Rupan Oil, Eagle Box Apex Tannery and Beximco falling within the range of Taka 0.20 to Taka 1.00.

The lone gainer Peoples Insurance advanced Taka one to Taka 109.00.

The unchanged traded stocks were Fifth ICB Mutual Fund, Sixth ICB Mutual Fund, United Insurance, Atlas Bangladesh, Eastern Cables, Quasem Drycells, Chittagong Vegetable, Therapeutics, The Ibsinia, Satham Textile and Beta Shoe.

Quoted Prices of Traded Stocks

January 26

Table with 4 columns: IV/ML, Closing (Taka), Change (Taka), and various stock categories like Investment, Insurance, Engineering, etc.

Dhaka Stock Exchange Market Profile January 26

Summary statistics for 133 listed stocks: 121 Unchanged, 11 Losers, 1 Gains.

\* 121 unchanged stocks include eleven traded on the day at the previous day's quoted prices. DSE All Share Price Index = 340.5426. Issued Capital-Taka 4,602,377.190.00. Market Capitalisation=Taka 9,731,092,490.00. Turnover = Taka 239,490.00 (Value) 6785(Volume).

Bangladesh Bank figures showed total imports of commercial items and industrial raw materials between July and October at Taka 4320.57 crore. This amount was the value of Letters of Credits (LCs) opened under loans, credits, grants, barter, Special Trading Arrangements (STAs), cash, Wage Earners Scheme (WES) and Secondary Exchange Market (SEM) operations under the period.

The total value of outstanding import LCs at the close of October was Taka 5497.93 crore. This included Taka 2686.96 crore LCs funded under cash, WES, SEM, Barter and STA and Taka 2810.97 crore, under external loans and credits.

LCs opened for import of Petroleum, Oil and Lubricants in July-October were valued Taka 637.44 crore compared with Taka 294.56 crore in the same period last year.

Fabrics under back-to-back LCs rose to Taka 742.04 crore from Taka 556.84 crore, salt imports in terms of LC openings increased by Taka 16.09 crore to Taka 19.91 crore, powdered milk food by Taka 49.67 crore to Taka 123.95 crore and spices, by Taka 11.73 crore to Taka 15.61 crores.

Imports of synthetic and mixed yarn were also up in value terms by Taka 5.32 crore to Taka 38.88 crore and pharmaceutical raw materials by Taka 31.6 crores to Taka 80.37 crores. Corrugated tin rose by Taka 21.68 crore to Taka 23.74 crores.

Commercial and industrial imports of other items fell in terms of LC openings. The items were rice and wheat, salt, edible oil, pulses, coconut oil, raw cotton, synthetic fabrics, finished drugs, coal, G.I. sheet and others.

Price Barometer Essentials

January 26

Price Barometer Essentials table listing various goods like Aman (fine), Potatoes, Vegetables, etc. with prices per kg.

Gold & Silver

January 26

Gold & Silver prices table showing Gold (Taka for 11.66 grams), Tejabhi, Guinea, and Silver prices.

Source: Department of Agricultural Marketing



It's not, of course, surfeit or oversupply. But fish supply increasing in the market. The price is too exorbitant for the wallet of the buyers. -Star Photo

Adulterated dalda causes heart diseases

Our DU Correspondent

Frequent marketing of sub-standard and adulterated 'dalda' throughout the country is affecting public health, an investigation on the products of five 'dalda' factories showed. The report says, the dalda factories are not maintaining the ratio of ingredients of its products under the standards set by the Government authorities. This causes high cholesterol in blood, leading to blood pressure and various types of heart diseases.

More \$ 1b Kuwaiti loan to USSR

CAIRO, Jan 26: The Kuwaiti Government in exile extended a one billion dollar loan to the Soviet to help it overcome its economic difficulties, reports MENA.

LONDON, Jan 26: After exceptional losses which followed the initial success of the allied forces in the Gulf the previous week, crude oil and gold firmed slightly at the beginning of this week before optimism about the course of allied operations trimmed gains, reports AFP.

Gold: Easier after a recovery. After a recovery due to a feeling that the Gulf war would not be as short as the early allied successes against Iraq had led some to believe, gold prices resumed a downward trend.

Silver and Platinum: Easier. Silver fell to 15-year lows, and platinum slide to a three-month low. The economic slowdown in the industrialised countries depressed the two metals, which are used primarily for industrial purposes, platinum in autocatalysts and silver in photography, electrical and soldering industries.

Copper: Weak. Prices continued to slide on concern about the impact of the Gulf war on industrial demand for metals. Cash prices fell to their lowest level since April 1988, and three-months prices to their lowest since June 1988.

HIDES & SKIN

(Wet/Salted) January 26

HIDES & SKIN prices table listing various animal products like Cow, Lamb, Goat, etc. with prices per 100 pieces.

Source: Department of Agricultural Marketing

World Bank suspends talks to aid USSR

WASHINGTON, Jan 26: The World Bank has said all discussions with Soviet Union on technical assistance have been suspended following the Moscow's use of force to crush independence movements in the Baltic states, reports PTI.

The World Bank's action was in the form of Conable's decision made last week but revealed only on Wednesday to cancel to discuss details of the bank's council meeting that was scheduled to discuss details of the bank's plans to offer technical aid to the Soviet economy.

The announcement by World Bank President Barber Conable is the latest in a series of steps by western governments and multinational institutions to drive home displeasure with the Soviet Union's use of troops in the Baltics with withholding food shipments and suspending plans to prop up the economy, the Washington Post said.

The western nation's decision was announced by Treasury Secretary Nicholas F. Brady, who said that the G-7 had put the whole question of aid to the Soviet Union 'on hold'.

Though the World Bank is an independent organisation immune to political pressures, the western powers enjoy enormous influence by virtue of the weighted voting system in the Bank which gives them a dominant voice.

Reuter adds from Moscow: People in Moscow and the

giant Russian Republic on Friday were given another week to change money being withdrawn from circulation at the order of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. The Russian Federation

Japan-Siberia air route opens soon

TOKYO, Jan 26: Tokyo and Moscow have agreed to open a new Japan-Siberia air route between the northern Japanese city of Nigata and Irkutsk in Soviet-Siberia, a Transport Ministry official said Saturday, reports Reuter.

Japanese and Soviet officials, winding up five days of talks in Tokyo on Friday, agreed to allow two flights a week on the new route starting in April, the official said.

"Moscow sees the route as an important link to help promote development of Siberia," the official said.

The Soviet Union plans to begin the new service in April but Japanese carriers have yet to announce their plans.

Soviet officials said they will allow Japanese carriers using Trans-Siberian air routes to fly on to eight new points in Europe and the Middle East. At present carriers are restricted to 11 such routes to London and other European points.

HK airline to resume flights to Dubai

HONG KONG, Jan 26: Hong Kong's flagship Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd. will resume flights to and from Dubai beginning next against 58.4 per cent the previous month.

Many big companies, such as US computer firm IBM, have advised their staff to cut down on business travel in view of the terrorist threat.

EC proposed to impose tax on ME oil

LONDON, Jan 26: A group of ruling Conservative Party legislators in Britain wants the European Community (EC) to slap a tax of a Dollar per barrel on imports of Middle East oil to help pay for the Gulf war, reports Reuter.

A motion tabled in Parliament asks the government to propose to EC Finance Ministers that they should impose a charge like value added tax on all EC imports of Middle East oil since Iraq's August 2 invasion of Kuwait.

Flexible economic plan suggested

Star Economic Report

Speakers at a discussion meeting called for making economic plans flexible to overcome crisis that might be caused by the Gulf war. They also urged the people of all walks of life to observe austerity to overcome the economic hurdles.

The discussion meeting on the effects of the Gulf war on the politics and economy of Bangladesh was organised on Friday by the Political Research Centre at the Dhaka University Teachers-Students Centre.

Dr Emajuddin Ahmed, former pro-Vice Chancellor of the university, Dr Attur Rahman, researcher of BIDS, Dr Selim Jahan of the Department of Economics of DU, Dr Syed Anwar Hossain of the Department of History, Dr Wahiduddin Mahmud, Mafidul Huq, and Harunar Rasheed spoke. The meeting was presided over by Mr Ferdous Hossain.

Dr Attur Rahman stressed the need for chalking out economic plans, keeping in mind

calamities both natural and man-made, that affect us. Dr Selim Jahan said the Gulf war has created an uncertainty in national life by affecting all the sectors of the economy.

He stressed the need for having flexibility in plans to overcome crises. Dr Wahiduddin Mahmud said if the war continued the country might have to face severe economic crises.

EC approves \$ 15.5m for river survey

The Commission of the European Communities (EC) approved a river survey project for a total of 12.6 million ECU (about US 15.5 million Dollars) said a EC press release issued in Dhaka Saturday. This is one of the major projects in the Bangladesh Government's Flood Action Plan.

Its main objectives are to collect reliable all seasonal data on the hydrology and morphology of the country's main river system as an input to studies being undertaken under the Flood Action Plan.

The project will undertake special studies regarding the behaviour of the river system based on the new data, existing data and supplementary surveys. It will also provide specialised on the job training to Bangladeshi professionals in the fields of river surveys and studies.

The project will be funded by a grant from the European community's budget, under its programme of financial and technical assistance to the developing countries of Asia and Latin America.

Exchange Rates

January 26

Exchange Rates table listing various currencies and their rates, including US Dollar, UK Pound, German Deutsche, etc.

Snippets

India may buy BP oil

NEW DELHI, Jan 26: India's bid to buy one million tonnes of oil on credit from British Petroleum (BP) as a cushion against Gulf war shortages has won a boost with a syndicate of international banks announcing it would finance the deal, reports AFP.

New Delhi has been negotiating with BP in an effort to build an oil buffer and reduce the effect of any price rise shock as a result of the Gulf war.

ANZ Grindlays Bank, a subsidiary of the Australia and New Zealand banking group, said in Bombay it was syndicating a 125-million-dollar oil import facility to finance the deal, press reports said.

War hits HK tourist industry

HONG KONG, Jan 26: Hong Kong's tourist industry, only just recovered from the Trauma of Tiananmen Square, is headed for a new slump with the number of visitors from the United States and Europe expected to shrink drastically because of the Gulf war, reports Reuter.

Hotels have been hit by cancellations and many visitors are cutting their stays short for fear of the international terrorism threat posed by the war.

Jill Stevens, Public Relations Manager at the Hilton Hotel, expects both tourist and business arrivals to be slashed by the war, with room occupancy for January expected to fall below 45 per cent.

Vehicle production in Japan up

TOKYO, Jan 26: Japan's production of cars, trucks and buses rose 3.5 per cent from a year earlier to a record 13.49 million vehicles last year. The Japan Automobile Manufacturers Association said Friday, reports AFP.

Car production jumped 9.9 per cent to 9.95 million units, including 0.84 million minicars whose output soared 88 per cent, the association said. But output of trucks and buses fell with truck production declining 11 per cent to 3.5 million units and bus output retreating 7.5 per cent to 40,185.

Raw Jute

January 26

Raw Jute prices table listing various jute varieties like Kutchha bales, FOB Narayanganj, etc. with prices per 100 kg.

\* FOB = Freight on board

• Bot. = Bottom

Table listing various jute varieties like Pucca bales, FOB Narayanganj, etc. with prices per 100 kg.

Table listing various jute varieties like White Rejection (WRS), Tossa Rejection (TRS), etc. with prices per 100 kg.

Table listing various jute varieties like Habibaji, Cut Ropes, etc. with prices per 100 kg.

Table listing various jute varieties like BWR, BWH, BTR, BTH, BCR, etc. with prices per 100 kg.

Table listing various jute varieties like White/Tossa, Cutting, etc. with prices per 100 kg.

\* 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 Kutchha 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.)



Mr. Mohammad Maniruzzaman Chowdhury, Chairman, Bangladesh Small & Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) and Brig. Masud Ali Khan, Managing Director of Sena Kalyan Sangstha signed the MOU with a view to linking of small industrial units with the large industries on the basis of sub-contracting system. -Star Photo