

1000 tolas gold seized from diplomatic pouch

Airport Customs (Tuesday) seized 1,000 tolas of gold worth Taka 80 lakh from a diplomatic pouch, according to a Customs press release, reports BSS.

One hundred gold bars each weighing 10 tolas were recovered from the pouch sent from Singapore in the name of Asian Development Bank, Dhaka.

The press release said, when a clearing agent employee and an employee of Biman were about to depart the freight building of Zia International Airport with the pouch after clearance, a freight officer and member of surveillance team challenged them.

The clearing agent employee and his associate fled leaving the bag which was opened later before the members of different agencies, the press release added.

Saifur sees a tourist spot at Sonargaon

SONARGAON (Narayanganj), Apr 15: Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman said desired peace and prosperity can be attained only through overall socio-economic and cultural development of the rural people, reports UNB.

He was inaugurating a three-day 'Folk Festival and Baisakhi Mela' at Folk and Craft Foundation premises here Tuesday.

Chaired by Cultural Secretary Islamuddin Malik, it was also addressed by State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahanara Begum, Prof Md Raza Rahman MP and Foundation Director KM Habibullah.

Rahman recalled the world-wide fame of muslin, zamdani and craft arts of Sonargaon and said we should enrich our indigenous culture gradually for developing the country.

He urged to make Sonargaon a centre of national archives and local culture and hoped that the place can be a good tourist spot if infrastructural facilities are provided.

The Finance Minister said the national government is determined to bring success in socio-economic and cultural field by ensuring proper utilisation of limited resources, said an official handout.

Tea exports face bad time

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Apr 15: Export of Bangladesh tea marked a drastic decline over the last nine-month period of the current fiscal year compared to the corresponding period of the previous fiscal year posing a bleak future for the country's second cash crop after jute, marketing officials of Bangladesh Tea Board said.

They said less export enquiry from foreign buyers, shipping problems and stiffer competition in the world market could be attributed to the fall in Bangladesh's tea export.

Official reports said the tea exported in the nine-month period from July to March of 1991-92 fiscal was 21.92 million kgs down from 24.03 million kgs in the corresponding

period of 1990-91 showing a fall by 2.11 million kgs. Similarly, the earnings against the tea exported also came down during the period. According to official reports, the export earnings in the nine-month period of current fiscal was recorded at Taka 115,02,20,569/- as against Taka 141,52,86,742/- in the corresponding period of previous fiscal year.

Bangladesh has targeted to export 30 million kgs of tea in 91-92 fiscal year but Tea Board officials are skeptical about the achievement of the target. In the 1990-91 fiscal, a total of 26.5 million kgs of tea was exported against its target of 28 million kgs.

Bangladesh tea is exported to about 25 countries of the world while Iran has emerged as the largest buyer. It imported eight million kgs of tea over the last nine months period of 1991-92 fiscal 2.4 million kgs more than the previous corresponding period.

Bangladesh tea faces a tough competition from Sri Lankan and Kenyan teas. Pakistan, which earlier used to buy about 50 per cent its tea requirement from Bangladesh, now prefers Sri Lankan and Kenyan teas because of cheaper price and shipping facilities.

The last auction of the season held here March 10, 1992 and it would resume on April 28, 1992, Tea Board sources said.



BTC Chairman M Mujibul Huq addressing the press conference. MD Malcom Fry (second from left) and two other senior officials are seen. — Star photo

AGM declares 11 pc dividend

1991 - a depressing year for BTC

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Tobacco Company (BTC) experienced a depressing year in 1991 as after-tax profit dropped by 77 per cent to Taka 1.16 crore compared to last year.

The company suffered a pre-tax loss of Taka 1.73 crore. But the balance sheet of BTC recorded the profit of Tk 1.16 crore after it obtained exemption of tax on the gratuity it had to pay to 670 surplus workers following the lay-off of its Chittagong operation.

The facts were disclosed at a press conference on the occasion of the 19th Annual

General Meeting of the Bangladesh Tobacco Company (BTC) held at Sonargaon Hotel Wednesday.

During the year, the company paid a total of Taka 573.92 crore as taxes to the government and declared Taka 3.30 crore as dividend, 11 per cent on the paid up share capital of Tk 30 crore.

For the first time, BTC had to transfer Taka 1.98 crore from its reserve to pay the dividend. This step was taken to avoid any adverse impact on the capital market and to maintain the goodwill of the

company, officials said. In 1990, BTC paid Taka 522 crore as taxes and its dividend was Taka three crore.

Addressing the press, the Chairman of BTC M Mujibul Huq said the pressure on expenses due to inflation has led to considerable increase in the production cost. The total value of the materials consumed by BTC increased by 22 per cent and production costs also rose accordingly.

The biggest tobacco factory of the country also witnessed a dismal growth performance during the year. The overall growth declined by six per cent although the Players Gold Leaf brand experienced a 33 per cent growth. The sale of Gold Leaf brand shot up from 1280 million sticks in 1990 to 1695 million sticks in 1991.

The company witnessed a positive improvement in leaf exports. The export of leaf increased by 30 per cent and the income earned stood at 1.5 million US dollar.

The Managing Director of BTC Malcolm Fry, also addressing the press, said the company needs to increase productivity and improve quality. He, however, said BTC does not have the necessary fund at the moment to purchase the equipment needed for these purposes.

The annual report of BTC showed the fixed asset of the company at Taka 82.14 crore as against Taka 76.21 crore last year.

Current assets stood at Taka 110.34 crore as against Taka 109.18 crore last year. Current liabilities were valued at Taka 85.68 crore as against Taka 79.60 crore in 1990.

The company's working capital stood at Taka 12.15 crore as against Taka 5.92 crore last year.

Malaysia quadruples duties on import of fish

KUALA LUMPUR, Apr 15: Malaysia will raise duties on imported fish by 400 per cent to five Malaysian cent (1.92 US cent) per kilo, a Malaysian Fisheries development authority official said Tuesday, reports AFP.

The move, to take effect Thursday, was necessary to keep importers from bringing in low-quality fish, public relations officer Nik Yahya Abdul Rahman said.

Thailand, which sold 166,000 tonnes of fish to Malaysia, meeting more than 60 per cent of local demand, would be hit hardest.

Malaysia also buys fish from Indonesia and Singapore to supplement the local catch.

Ibrahim Jendol, chairman of the Malaysian Fisheries Development Authority, reportedly said Monday that the cabinet approved the hike in duties last month.

Shipping Intelligence

Chittagong Port

Berth No	Name of Vessels	Local Agent	Date of Arrival	Leaving	Cargo
J/1	Q of Heart/Diamond a/c	L Beele	12/4	17/4	E/L
J/2	Dimitry Poluan	CT	30/3	15/4	C R C
J/3	Adkris	BSL	2/4	17/4	GI/GL
J/4	Safina-e-Haider	ASLL	31/3	20/4	Coke/Pease
J/5	ARJ Anand	NISHAT	4/4	20/4	Salt
J/6	Pionar	MSA	13/4	20/4	GI
J/7	Cattleya	PROG	13/4	20/4	Wheat
J/8	Banglar Sampad	KSL	14/4	15/4	Cont
J/9	Ahlers Breeze	RSL	14/4	17/4	Cont
J/10	Andrian Goncharov	CT	14/4	17/4	Cont
J/11	Golden Fish	BSL	27/3	18/4	MOP
J/12	Lash Barge	BDSHIP	13/4	15/4	Cont
J/13	Ever Cheer	PSAL	7/4	13/4	Cement
MPB/1	Ronjak Victory	BRIGHT	1/4	15/4	Cement
MPB/2	Hang Fook	SSL	18/3	16/4	Repair
CCJ	Samudra Raj	HSC	R/A	15/4	Wheat
GSJ	Banglar Asha	SSST	10/4	18/4	R Phos
TSP	Platon	H&H	9/4	17/4	Cement
RM/4	Hang Wan	BSC	R/A	15/4	C Oil
RM/5	Coaster: a/c Meghna	CLA	10/4	17/4	Repair
RM/6	Banglar Jyoti	EOSL	25/1	20/4	Repair
DD	Continent-1	BSC	26/2	15/4	Repair
DDJ/1	Enduren Sea	BML	14/2	18/4	Repair
DDJ/2	Banglar Mamata	BSC	R/A	20/4	Repair
RM/8	Laurel Star	BSC	R/A	20/4	Repair
RM/9	Banglar Swarna	BSC	R/A	20/4	Repair

Tanker Due

Name of Vessels	Local Agent	Date of Arrival	Last Port	Cargo
Stolt Sydness	SEACOM	18/4	-	CDSO
Matterhorn	BSLL	8/4	-	C Oil
Banglar Jyoti	BSC	R/A	-	C Oil

Vessels at Outer Anchorage

Name of Vessels	Local Agent	Date of Arrival	Last Port	Cargo
Prima Maersk	MSPL	14/4	Sing	HSD
Phorann	Alamin	14/4	Ind	Urea
Fong Yun	BDSHIP	14/4	Sing	Cont

Vessels not Ready

Name of Vessels	Local Agent	Date of Arrival	Last Port	Cargo
Shezan	Aqua	13/4	Cott	Sulp/R
Al-Tabith	KSL	R/A(11/4)	-	Wheat

Vessels Awaiting Instruction

Name of Vessels	Local Agent	Date of Arrival	Last Port	Cargo
Banglar Kiron	BSC	R/A(6/4)	-	-
Coplapo	MSPL	12/4	Sing	-
Lee	-	14/4	-	Cotton
Eastern Breeze	RRSA	14/4	-	Repair
Kota Jade	-	13/4	Sing	Cont

Vessels not Entering

Name of Vessels	Local Agent	Date of Arrival	Last Port	Cargo
Alyan	ALAMIN	R/A(18/9)	Sing	Cement
Red Deer	OTL	R/A(26/11)	Sing	-
Hang Tone	H&H	31/3	Mong	Scrapping
Amrite	SSL	R/A(12/4)	Aroon	Wheat
Theomana	Unimarine	9/4	Rio	Scrapping
Sea Progress	AML	8/4	Padra	Cement
Olympic Phoenix	BSL	R/A	Sing	-

Vessels due at Outer Anchorage

Name of Vessels	Date of Arrival	Last Port	Cargo	Local Agent	Leading Ports
Robert-e-Lee	15/4	H D	Lush	KARNA	USA Ports
Mandir	16/4	Col	Cont	RSL	Col
Sung Hwa	16/4	-	Cement	H&H	-
Infinity	16/4	Sing	Cont	RSL	Sing
NGS Ranger	17/4	Mong	Cont	BDSHIP	Sing
Silver Sea	17/4	Hong	GI	PROG	-
Mar Bonita	17/4	St Law	Wheat	LAMS	-
Sidi Bishr	17/4	Mong	-	MMI	Suez
Orient Venture	18/4	Sing	GI	HFA	-
Vishva Parjat	18/4	Mong	E/L	SSL	UK C Ports
Sea King	18/4	St John	MOP	LAMS	-
I Yamuranko	19/4	-	Cont	CT	Sing
Arkis River	19/4	-	-	RSL	-
CGM Bretagne	20/4	Cal	Cont	BDSHIP	France
New Genlord	20/4	Sing	Cont	BDSHIP	Sing
Perla	21/4	Vanc	Wheat	LAMS	-
Qing He Cheng	21/4	Sang	GI	BDSHIP	-
Arunachal Pradesh	21/4	-	GI	SSL	Far East, Japa
Fong Shin	22/4	Sing	Cont	BDSHIP	Sing
Zang San	23/4	Col	R Phos	TSLL	-
Petr Starostin	24/4	Sing	Cont	CT	Sing
Al-Salma	25/4	-	GI/GL	ASLL	Sing
Elbellis-IV	25/4	D Mark	Wheat	JF	Sing
Safar	25/4	-	-	ASLL	-
Hua Yin	26/4	Kandl	Salt	ALAMIN	-
Kota Buana	26/4	Sing	Cont	CTS	Sing
Zeno	29/4	Vanc	Wheat	LAMS	-
Optima	3/5	Sing	Cont	RSL	Sing

The above were the Wednesday (15/4/92) Shipping position and performance at Chittagong Port as per berthing sheet of CPA supplied by HRC GROUP, Dhaka.

Price Index

Essentials		Fruits		Vegetables		Spices		Milk		Pulses	
Item	(Taka per kg)	Item	(Taka per kg)	Item	(Taka per kg)	Item	(Taka per kg)	Item	(Taka per kg)	Item	(Taka per kg)
RICE	15.50-17.00	Mashur	28.00-30.00	Green Chilies	6.00-8.00	Mustard	20.00-24.00	Green Chilies	8.00-10.00	Green Gram	38.1326
Amorfin	14.50-15.50	Chholha	24.00-25.00	Watermelon (Large)	30.00-45.00	Mustard	20.00-24.00	Green Chilies	8.00-10.00	Black Gram	68.9668
Pajam	14.50-15.50	Kharai	14.00-15.00	Coconut (Large)	8.00-10.00	Mustard	20.00-24.00	Green Chilies	8.00-10.00	Red Gram	23.6565
VEGETABLES	(Taka per kg)										
Potato (local)	8.00-9.00										
Brinjal	3.00-5.00										
Karela	8.00-10.00										
Lalchak	4.00-5.00										
Pepys	5.00-6.00										
Green Banana (Four Pieces)	4.00-5.00										
OTHER FOODGRAIN	(Taka per kg)										
Flour	14.50-15.00										
Atta	11.00-11.50										
FISH	(Taka per kg)										
Rubi(big)	140.00-150.00										
Katla(big)	100.00-110.00										
Hilsa	90.00-100.00										
Pungas	115.00-120.00										
Shrimp(big)	90.00-110.00										
Singi	95.00-110.00										
Koi	100.00-120.00										
MEAT	(Taka per kg)										
Beef	50.00-55.00										
Mutton	80.00-85.00										
CHICKEN	(Taka per kg)										
Large	70.00-72.00										
Moderate	74.00-76.00										
Small	78.00-80.00										
TEA	(Taka per kg)										
Dust (Plain)	70.00-80.00										
EDG	(4 pes)										
Hen	10.00										
Duck	10.00										
Firm	10.50-11.00										
PULSES	(Taka per kg)										

Source: Department of Agriculture Marketing

Exchange Rates

The following are the Commercial Bank's BC selling and TT (C) OD transfer buying rates for some selected foreign currencies effective on April 16.

Currency	SELLING	TT(C)	BUYING
US dollar	39.1326	38.9087	38.6339
Dollar Sterling	68.9668	68.6275	68.1744
DM	23.6565	23.5069	23.3409
FF	6.9902	6.9467	6.8977
S Riyal	21.0221	20.8906	20.7430
D Oulders	6.5527	6.5097	6.4638
S Kroner	23.6909	23.5553	23.3890
Singapore Dollar	10.6911	10.6299	10.5548
UA£ Dirham	133.6965	132.9315	131.9927
Kuwaiti Dirham	1.5116	1.5048	1.4972
Indian Rupee (AMU)	1.5585	1.5513	1.5436
Pak. Rupee (AMU)			

Authorised dealers will apply T T clean buying rate for purchase of remittances of Bangladesh's working abroad.

Note: AMU=Asian Monetary Union.

Dhaka Stock Prices

At the close of trading on April 15, 1992
Star Economic Report

Floor witnesses a busy day

A busy day was observed at Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) on Wednesday. A total of 41 shares were traded on the floor, with gainers outnumbering the losers by 21 to 10. Ten shares were sold at their previously quoted prices.

Transactions, in terms of both value and volume, substantially increased marking almost a boom-in business. Volume and value increased more than twice from Monday's figures.

A total of 49129 papers traded valuing Tk 3208383.00. The DSE Composite Price Index gained 0.472 point and closed at 290.3727.

THE DAY'S TRADING AT A GLANCE

DSE ALL Share Price Index	290.3727				
Market Capitalisation (Tk)	8,304,783,289				
Turnover (in value Tk)	3208383,00				
(in volume)	48129				
Company	FV/ML	Previous	Closing	Change	Change
		Day's Price	Price	(Absolute)	(% over
		Tk	Tk	Tk	Previous