100 US farmers to assist Ukraine

NEW YORK, Apr 24: More than 100 American farmers will depart on Sunday, April 25, for Ukraine to assist Ukrainian farmers with spring planting, it was announced vesterday. The American farmers are participating in operation farm Ukraine '93, a **US-Ukraine Joint Business** Venture derived from a fouryear agro-industrial sales production agreement concluded in March 1993 between US firm ICI seeds and Zemlya and Lyudi, a Ukrainian agricultural firm and designated representative of Ukraine's Ministry of Agriculture, reports Xinhua.

Kuwait to raise oil products next yr

RUWAIT CITY, Apr 24: Kuwait has pledged to increase its exports of oil products next year, a newspaper report said yesterday. Kuwait's refined oil exports are expected to reach 400,000 barrels per day in 1994, compared with the current volume of 300,000 barrels, the local newspaper Assiassa quoted a statement of the Kuwait Oil Organisation as saying. The organisation expects the total production capacity of its refineries to rise to 645,000 barrels per day at the beginning of next year, reports Xinhua.

Argentina neither buy nor sell dollar

BUENOS AIRES, Apr 24: Argentina's central bank (BCRA) said it neither bought nor sold dollar in trading on Friday, the fifth day running it has not intervened in the market. It said its dollar buy rate continued at 0.9980 peso and the sell rate at 1.000 peso. The bank last operated in the market last Friday when it bought 37 million dollar to take net purchases so far in the month to 287 million dollar, reports Reuter.

> Cameroon frees coffee market

YAOUNDE, Apr 24: The Cameronese government has lifted its monopoly on the country's coffee market for businessmen, an official communique said yesterday. Cameroon, one of the largest coffee producers of the world, has an annual coffee production of 110,000 tons, reports Xinhua.

Dollar gains against yen in NY

NEW YORK, Apr 24: The US dellar declined against all major currencies except the Japanese yen in busy trading Friday. Gold prices settled sharply higher on technical factors. On the New York Commodity Exchange, gold bullion for current delivery settled at 346.50 dollar a troy ounce, up 6.50 dollar from Thursday. Republic National Bank said gold jumped 6.90 dollar an ounce to a late bid price of 346.50 dollar. Precious metals prices advanced overseas and continued to climb in US trading, reports AP.

Stocks finish

lower in New York NEW YORK, Apr 24: Stocks finished lower Friday depressed by a surprisingly weak report on durable goods orders and a drop in bond prices. The Commerce Department said new orders to factories for durable goods plunged an unexpectedly steep 3.7 per cent in March, despite a rebound in orders for military equipment. The drop, to a seasonally adjusted 130 billion dollar, was the worst since December 1991 and much larger then the one per cent decline that analysts had expected, reports

Police save chief of Taiwan Hitachi

TAIPEI, Apr 24: Taiwan Hitachi Co Ltd Chairman Hsu Ming-Chuan was, rescued here overnight following the arrest of his two kidnappers who had demanded a 22 million Taiwan dollar (846, 154 US) ransom, police said today. Hsu, head of Taiwan Hitachi, one of the island's largest air conditioner manufacturers, was saved by police three days after he was abducted by three assailants, reports AFP.

### Deliver of US aid to Russia uncertain

WASHINGTON, Apr 24: President Clinton praised Boris Yeltsin as a "genuine democrat," but admitted that he could not be certain of delivering all the aid that he's promised the embattled Russian leader. reports Reuter.

## Yen's surge may wreck Japan's recovery | US new steps to lift

TOKYO, Apr 24: The relentless surge of the yen could wreek plans to put the Japanese economy back on its feet, economists said on Monday, reports Reuter.

The yen, which has been setting one record high after another in the last two weeks, threatens to eripple Japans critical export industries and could slow what is already expected to be sluggish economic growth.

The gains to around 111.00 here come at the worst moment for Japanese policy makers, who only a week ago announced an unprecedented 117 billion dollar economic rescue plan to ensure recovery from an 18-month downturn.

"A steep rise in the value of the yen will undermine Japan's domestic demand," Finance Minister Yoshiro Hayashi told a television interviewer on

Sunday. "I will have a negative effect on the economy and that's why I'm not in favour of

Although many see a strong yen as one way to equalise trade flows, economists say this could ironically widen Tokyo's trade surplus by hurting the economy and Japan's ability to import.

Economists said a persistently stronger currency might force policy makers to rethink their plans for the economy. perhaps leading them to consider further fiscal or monetary stimuli While much depends on

how fast the yen actually moves, economists said that it now stood at a level that coulddampen the pace of recovery and that further gains in the currency could put an end to any improvement.

"Yen gains toward 100.00

lagging oil production

for example, could mean the cconomy would sink into a second dip before recovery takes hold," said James Vestal. economist at Barclays de Zostc

The rise of the yen by nearly five per cent since the end of last month has been fuelled in part by speculation that the United States might want the Japanese currency to be stronger against the dollar to help US imports here.

Much to the irritation of Japanese officials, President Bill Clinton last Friday said a higher yen would help cut the trade surplus. His comment was the main reason why the yen set new records on

A strong yen hurts Japan's economy largely through the export sector. Not only will Japanese goods become more

expensive and harder to sell overseas but dollar profits will net fewer yen for the bottom

That could mean more job loses at major Japanese companies and deterioration of consumer sentiment, the weakness of which lies at the heart of the nations slump.

Then yen is a serious concern. Many Japanese companies are going to have a hard time coping if it continues. said Mincko Sasaki-Smith. economist at Credit Suisse.

Analysts said firms like auto and electronic manufacturers will be hardest hit. By some estimates, electronic companies market about 40 per cent of their parts and devices abroad A drop on even one yen in the value of the yen could mean tens of millions of dollar in lost revenue to that industry alone.

That is bad news for Japan's

stock market, which has been trading at its highest levels in more than a year on the back of hopes for recovery.

But after the yen's gains over the weekend, the Nikkei average fell nearly 200 points to 20,112.34 on Monday.

Japan has tried to slow the yen's rise by intervening in foreign exchange markets. Most economists figure that Japanese companies, given time, could cope with a stronger currency by shifting production abroad or hedging against currency exposure.

But conomists said that if the ven continued to climb at its recent pace, Japanese authorities might be forced to prime the economy with ye more public works spending to insure the prolonged downturn did not drag out even fur-

World's only

legal money

launderer

retires

SAN FRANCISCO, Apr 24: A

man dubbed the world's only

legal money launderer is retir

ing after 31 years on the job,

his job today as official coin

washer at the St Francis hotel

in San Francisco, one of the

started in 1938 because silver

dollar were dirtying the white

gloves of ladies using the hotel,

says hotel spokeswoman

Batliner, born in Feldkirch,

The St Francis custom was

city's most prominent hotels.

Arnold Batliner, 88, leaves

reports Reuter.

Michelle Sacvke.

# trade bar on Russia

WASHINGTON, Apr 24 President Bill Clinton Friday reaffirmed his willingness to cooperate with Russian President Boris Yeltsin and announced new measures aimed at lifting trade restrictions on Russia, reports AFP.

The announcement of the proposed measures made two days before the Russian referendum that will shape Yeltsin's political future appeared to be aimed at underscoring US support for the beleaguered Russian leader.

"If he (Yeltsin) wins the election, if he is ratified by the Russian people to continue as their president, then I think we should do our best to work with him toward reform. Clinton said at a White House news conference. Asked about the possible

consequences of Sunday's referendum, in which one of its four questions asks whether to continue pursuit of economic reform, Clinton said if the Russian voters "have confidence in the leadership, I

think that's all we can ask." Yeltsin is "a genuine democrat - small 'D'- and genuinely committed to reform,"

In response to a question about US aid to Russia, Clinton acknowledged that additional aid, announced at the recent Tokyo summit of the Group of Seven, the seven richest in-dustrialised countries, has not yet been obtained.

The question is can we get any more aid for Russia that requires a new appropriation by the United States Congress," he said.

## UK resists EC accord on energy tax

LUXEMBOURG, Apr 24: A meeting of European Community energy and environment ministers aimed at reviving their fight against global warming ended without agreement Friday, after Britain blocked an accord on controversial EC-wide energy tax, reports AP.

"When the British had the opportunity to be flexible, they were inflexible," said Dutch Environment Minister Hans Alders.

"When 11 member states said we would go for a European tax in some form, they asked that we agree to disagree," he told reporters after the 10-hour meeting.

Britain and the poorer nations of Spain, Ireland, Greece and Portugal have resisted the measure because they fear it could hurt their economies al-

WASHINGTON, Apr 24: The

World Bank announced on

Friday that it has completed a

deal for 1 billion dollar worth

of loans to boost Russia's lag-

USE SHARESTA

ging oil production, reports

from the bank itself, the

world's biggest source of aid

loans. Some would be lent by

the European Bank for Reco-

nstruction and Development

(EBRD), an intergovernmental

body set up to help Russia and

eastern Europe. The rest

would be obtained through

national agencies like the US

government's Export-import

its peak, it would increase

Russian production by 33,000

tons a day, the bank said. At

The Uganda shilling used to

be a big joke. When Kenyans

visited, they returned home

with stories that a bottle of

beer and an overnight stay in a

Uganda hotel could cost a

Ugandan shilling has bounced

back. A year ago the Kenyan

shilling equalled 37 Ugandan

Ugandans want to invest in the

the Bank of Uganda. A year ago

the bills were offered at 40 per

cent interest and in a month

the bank sold bills for 10 mil-

lion shilling. The bank then

cut the interest rate to 17 per

cent and offered only five bil-

Uganda's central bank said:

real value in the Ugandan

shilling. People, especially the

longer necessary to keep your

money in Paris or New York.

· The upsurge in foreign ex-

change sales is a reflection of

greater capital inflow into the

opened in 1989 they amou-

The real value could be here."

An expatriate economist at

lion. There was still a flood.

An increasing number of

shillings. Today it fetches 17.

All this has changed. The

sackload of cash.

When the project reaches

Half the money will come

ready suffering from Western Europe's deepest slump in 50

At Friday's meeting the socalled "poor four" accepted the principle of some sort of fiscal measures. But Spanish and Portuguese officials said they wanted exemptions allowing their industries to develop unhindered by the tax.

After the meeting, Danish Environment Minister Sven Auken said it was "naive" to believe the EC could meet targets to have an energy tax approved during the first half of this year. He still hoped the measure

could be approved by the end of 1993. "Today 11 countries, work-

ing on a very difficult dossier have shown themselves willing to make progress," Auken told

today's prices that much oil

could be sold for 1.5 billion

dollar a year in the hard cur-

rency Russia needs to buy

goods in other countries and

United States, Japan and other

countries with a welcome

source of supplies other than

biggest oil producer, but pro-

duction has dropped sharply in

recent years and Saudi Arabia

struck with the Russian gov-

ernment and three govern-

ment-owned enterprises in

western Siberia that have be-

gun the long road to privatiza-

tion. They are called Koga-

lymnestagas, Purnestagas and

The World Bank deal was

Russia was long the world's

It would also provide the

to keep up with its debts.

the Middle East.

has now overtaken it.

a news conference.

 The EC's Executive Commi ssion first proposed taxes on coal and oil a year ago ahead of the world environment conference in Rio de Janeiro.

It hoped the plan would inspire a worldwide effort to cut emissions of carbon dioxide given off by carbon fuels.

But as the EC nations wrangled over details, the United States snatched the lead in the fight against global warming when President Clinton proposed a tax on fuels that, if approved by Congress, would take effect July 1994.

British Energy Minister

Timothy Eggar said after Friday's talks differences between other EC states mean full agreement between all 12 would not have been achieved even without Britain's opposi-

Varyegannestagas. Approval is

still needed from the 176

governments-including the

United States and Russia-that

own the bank, but they rarely

object when a project has

mitted 760 million dollar for

loans to Russia, some of it to

will be spent on developing

new Russian oilfields and re-

habilitating old ones. There

will also be a program of "well-

workovers"-revivals of wells

which have had to halt pro-

Bank expects to sign an

agreement soon to provide 2

billion dollar worth of loans for

The US Export-Import

The bank has already com-

Money from the new loans

reached this stage.

promote oil production.

There are a number of delegations who may be trying to point the finger at the UK. but they will be doing so without justification," he said.

The British delegation had tried to postpone any decision on tax until a June 7 meeting of finance ministers.

But main supporters of the tax - Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands - had hoped an agreement in principle or Friday would send a signal to the finance ministers whose approval is needed for its adoption.

The failure to do so is a blow for Denmark, the EC's current president. Denmark called the ex-

traordinary "jumbo" ministeria

producers of oil, coal and natu-

ral gas in the former Soviet

republics so they can buy

equipment in this country. One

of the republics, Kazakhstan,

made a deal earlier this month

with Chevron Corp which

could eventually bring 20 bil-

lion dollar of investment

money into the republic's oil

enov, Kazakhstan's energy

minister, told reporters in

Washington that Chevron's

Tengiz field has 900 million

tons of reserves but his coun-

try has a total of 2.2 billion

tons. He said he was putting

together a consortium of about

10 major companies to explore

under the Caspian Sea, where

he said there may be more oil

nted to seven million dollar.

Now they are running at 35

said foreign exchange sales last

year totalled 300 million dollar

- triple the amount Uganda

gets from coffee, its largest

shilling indicates the in-

creased tempo of economic ac-

tivity. Expatriates coming back

into the country are impressed

by the growth. Julia Crombie,

an Australian consultant with

African Pearl Safaris, says: "I

see new buildings coming up,

modern cars that are not gen-

erally seen on many streets in

The country's overall finan-

cial situation is improving, but

Ugandans are not convinced by

government statements.

Professor Elisa Ochieng, of the

Department of Economic at

Makerere University, says

"Any policy to be relevant must

put into consideration the pol-

"Nobody gave permission to

the government to sell our

property to outsiders. We

should have been consulted.

- Gemini News

ities of the stomach."

other African cities.'

The revival of the Ugandan

President Yoweri Museveni

than in the Tengiz field.

million dollar a year.

export earner.

On Thursday Kadyr Baik-

and gas production.

Austria in 1904, in estimated council partly to impress its to have washed 17 million dolenvironmentally conscious cit lar in change in his three-plus izens of the EC's commitment decades as coin washer. to green policies. llis job involved cleaning the money with soap and pol-WB will lend Russia \$1b to boost ish, drying it with heat lamps, sorting and then packaging it

> and bars. Sacvke said Batliner is the only known coin washer anywhere but the hotel is search ing for a replacement.

for use in the hotel restaurants

### G-7 meet in Tokyo 15 states yet to

send ministers TOKYO, Apr 24: The second cast west aid conference opened here Saturday, but a number of the 15 participating nations did not send ministers and questions about the usefulness of the meeting persisted, says AFP.

One western European diplomat said there was widespread concern that the conference would only dupli cate other bilateral and multilateral initiatives already underway.

Yet Japanese minister of International Trade and Industry Yoshiro Mori, whose ministry is sponsoring the conference, said much important work remained to be done. "I'm convinced that it is

necessary to promote not only stabilization in those countries via macro-economic measures. but also with micro economic (measures), especially to promote industrial reforms, trade and investment," he told the opening session.

However, the Group of Seven (G-7) industrialised countries committed to helping the eight former east bloc countries transform their economies, indicated by their low-level participation that they are not convinced the forum is best suited to do the

A number of the richest western countries, notably France and Italy, sent bureaucrats rather than ministers, and British board of trade President Michael Heseltine failed to arrive, although he had been expected to earlier.

The European Commission and the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) declined to send their top people, while the body created to aid eastern Europe, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development sent no one.

### Central bank staff have no confidence in Yeltsin presidential and parliamentary ST PETERSBURG, Russia.

Apr 24: Russian central bank officials said on Friday they had



survival

no confidence in President Boris Yeltsin and favoured carly parliamentary and presidential elections, reports Reuter.

"I will vote against Yeltsin and the government's cconomic policies but for early polls," Deputy Bank Chairman Alexander Chandruyev told reporters during an international banking meeting in St Petersburg Yeltsin is seeking popular

support for his rule and his policies in a referendum on Sunday which will also ask people if they favour early elec-Vyacheslav Slovyog, another

Deputy Central Bank Chairman,

said business would continued as usual to Russia whatever the outcome of the referendum, he, too, said he would vote against Yeltsin and his policies but for early elections. "We do not see any big change happening after the

"If the present reform government leaves, a new reform government will take office." Yeltsin, fighting for political

referendum," Solovyov said.

survival against a conservative parliament which accuses him of leading the country to dictatorship, has said he will resign if he loses the ballot.

### WB, UN to press ahead with int'l donors' meet for Vietnam Bank (ADB).

HANOI, Apr 24: The World Bank and United Nations pressed ahead with plans Friday to hold a conference of international aid donors for Victnam in anticipation that the US embargo will be lifted before the end of the year, reports AFP.

Vo Hong Phue, Vice Chairman of Vietnam's State Planning Committee, said the conference scheduled for October or November would help mobilise the 20 to 25 billion dollar in external investment Vietnam's economy needs by the year 2000.

Vietnam, the World Bank and UN Development Programme (UNDP), are to cosponsor the donors' conference with support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Asian Development

"If there is no participation by these institution it is rather uscless," UNDP resident rep-

resentative Roy Merey said after briefing diplomats and journalists on preparations for the conference. Morey's comment was an

acknowledgement that the conference depended on the United States unblocking multilateral loans to Hanoi, a move Washington has conditioned on progress in accounting for US servicemen missing from the Victnam war. France and other countries

have pledged to lobby the United States to make the move when the IMF and World Bank meet next month in Washington, and US President Bill Clinton is reportedly reviewing the issue.

## NZ's economy booming?

WELLINGTON, Apr 24: The New Zealand government is using a flood of bright figures to show an economic boom is dawning but sceptics question whether it is just a coincidence that it happens to be an election year, reports AFP. In the past weeks, eco-

nomic figures have shown unemployment has fallen, Gross Domestic Product has swelled, already insignificant inflation has tumbled further, and a record export surplus. Companies are reporting

new confidence and higher returns. Even the soaring yen is seen as increased earnings for the booming forestry industry. The latest figure out Friday

showed New Zealand posted a record monthly trade surplus in March of 521.1 million NZ dollar (284 million US).

The figures, 9.2 per cent higher than a surplus in the

Moody's said the downgrad-

ing of Fuji, affecting 4.7 billion

dollar, followed the bank's as-

sistance to several troubled

borrowers, especially affiliated

non-bank financial institutions.

problems is likely to take an

extended period of time, in

will be pressured," it said.

the interim, Fuji's profitability

Despite the problem loans

The work out of these

ued an improving trend since last September in the trade balance. For a country which has

same month last year, contin-

been in virtually permanent recession since 1986 when then Finance Minister Roger Douglas launched a monetarist, free-market revolution it seems the worst is over. But this is an election year,

and traditionally things look good here ahead of a poll. With the government at record lows in public opinion polls, its critics accuse it of priming the so-called "good news ma-

Under Douglas the labour government mounted a vigorous assault on inflation, running nearly to 20 per cent.

This was continued under current Finance Minister Ruth Richardson.

### Steep losses and credit down grades deepen Japanese banks' woes itability over the next several tail networks. ings of their Netherlands sub-

TOKYO, Apr 24: Japanese banks announced Friday 370 billion yen (3.4 billion dollar) in capital losses for the year to March to reflect write-downs on equity portfolios arising from Japan's stockmarket slump, reports AFP.

Moody's Investors Services Inc and Standard and Poor's Asia Ltd meanwhile cut the ratings of seven banks to reflect their deteriorating asset quality, notable their exposures to the real-estate, construction and non-bank

sectors. The banks downgraded by Moody's were Sumitomo Bank Ltd and Fuji Bank Ltd, affecting some 8.5 billion dollar in outstanding securities.

Standard and Poor's announced similar action against four trust banks -Milsui Trust and Banking Co Ltd, Mitsubishi Trust and Banking Corp. Sumitomo Trust and Banking Co Ltd. and Yasuda Trust and

Banking Co Ltd. Among the major losses, Sanwa Bank Ltd, suffered the biggest loss of 45.7 billion yen (415 million dollar), Mitsubishi Bank Ltd incurred a 39.7 billion yen loss while Longterm Credit Bank Ltd announced a loss of 39.5 billion

Other losses announced include 36.6 billion yen at Bank of Tokyo Ltd, 36.3 billion yen at Industrial Bank of Japan Ltd, 35.3 billion yen at Sakura Bank

Ltd and 22.9 billion yen at Dai-Ichi Kangyo Bank Ltd. Smaller losses were 21.4

billion yen at Asahi Bank Ltd. 21.2 billion yen at Tokai Bank Ltd. 20.8 billion yen at Nippon Credit Bank Ltd, 15.6 billion yen at Daiwa Bank Ltd, and 7.6 billion yen at Ilokkaido Takushoku Bank Ltd.

Among the trust banks, Sumitomo Trust suffered a loss of 19.7 billion yen while Mitsubishi Trust said its loss came to 10.5 billion yen.

Mitsubishi Bank said in a statement the write-downs applied only to its reporting in Japan where marketable securities are carried issue by issue at cost or market price

whichever is lower. Mitsubushi, the only

Japanese bank listed in the United States, said the writedown "will not affect" its financial reporting under US generally accepted accounting principles.

Earlier Friday, Moody's cut its ratings for the senior debt. long-term deposits and longterm letters of credit of Sumitomo and Fuji from "Double-A-3" to "Single-A". The same downgrades were applied to their guaranteed subsidiaries in Hong Kong and Australia as well as a Sumttomo unit in the United States and a

Fuji subsidiary in Luxembourg. This situation is expected The subordinated debt ratto dampen the bank's prof

"Single-A-1" to, "Single-A-2" while the additional rating on perpetual subordinated debt at the Fuji unit was cut from "Single-A-2" to "Single-A-3". the "Prime-I" short-term ratings for both banks weren't affeeted by the move. Moody's said the Sumitomo

sidiaries were lowered from

downgrade, affecting 3.8 billion dollar, partly reflected the bank's exposure to troubled trading company Itoman Corp. "The potential unrealised

losses associated with Sumitomo's large real estate-related exposures, both domestic and overseas, may be substantial.

at the two banks, among Japan's five biggest in terms of assets. Moody's noted that both had strong domestic re-

Sumitomo is thus expected years, even as the bank's marto remain "one of the most gin is benefitting from a cyclical downturn in interest rates," the US rating agency

formidable banks in Japan and the world" while Fuji is expected to be an "ultimate benefictary" of Japanese financial reforms, emerging as a "strong survivor . Standard and Poor's said

the downgradings of the four biggest trust banks reflected their "high level of problem loans" and deteriorating asset quality The long-term outlook for

all four banks is "negative", the agency said, reflecting "general concern about the credit quality of all Japanese banks due to their ongoing asset quality difficulties".

 Kitgum Moroto. Zaire sale of treasury bills offered by Victoria Mbarara "They have realised there is Tanzania Rwanda elite, have realised that it is no Going up Going down **Gross National Product** Population (GNP) per capita 1990 1992 1987 1980 country. When annual sales 13 million 18.8 million 🥍 \$250 \$280

Privatisation hits most Ugandans