

GCC states reluctant to privatise govt facilities

ABU DHABI, Dec 18: Gulf Arab states are reluctant to privatise public facilities to offset low oil prices for fear it could create unemployment among their nationals, a regional study said Saturday.

The six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states are striving to convince the private sector to employ more nationals and cut reliance on foreigners, who account for more than half the workforce.

But under privatisation many local employees could find themselves jobless as expatriates are preferred as cheaper and more skilled labour, said the study by Henry Azzam, chief economist at the National Commercial Bank, the biggest bank in Saudi Arabia.

Public departments in the GCC countries are characterised by the high number of national employees, some of whom will likely lose their jobs when those departments are privatised, Azzam said in the

study, published in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) newspaper Al-Haleej.

Private management will seek to increase foreign workers at the expense of locals because those workers accept low salaries and the labour laws governing them are more flexible in terms of employment and sacking.

Most GCC citizens prefer the public sector because they get higher wages and more job and retirement benefits.

GCC governments have sought to force the private sector to take more native workers, but mainly in vain.

The six states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and the UAE — have announced plans to privatise some key state institutions in sweeping economic reforms triggered by the decline in oil prices.

Low prices have created persistent deficits in the GCC budgets and balance of pay-

ments and forced member states to withdraw from their overseas reserves and borrow from the local and international markets.

Experts estimated the internal debt of the six members at around 79 billion dollars.

In Kuwait, Qatar and the UAE, foreigners account for more than two-thirds of the total workforce while in Oman and Bahrain, extensive training of locals has enabled them to ease gradually reliance on expatriates.

Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil producer and the biggest GCC nation still has a large foreign labour force despite job nationalisation efforts.

Azzam said privatisations could also lead to an increase in price as the switch to the private sector will remove government subsidies.



A family of holiday-makers pushes its luggage trolleys down the highway during the blockade of Sydney International Airport on Saturday by demonstrators protesting the noise levels over residential areas created by the opening of the new runway. Some 10,000 angry residents effectively closed the airport for three hours causing at least six international airlines to cancel or reschedule their flights. — AFP photo

Malaysia invests \$1.9b in ASEAN states

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 18: Malaysia's investment in other members of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) amounted to some 1.9 billion US dollars for the period 1980 — June 1994, official figures show, reports Xinhua.

International Trade and Industry Minister Rafidah Aziz disclosed this after a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to formalise Sijori (Singapore-Johor-Indonesia growth triangle) was signed in Johor, some 400 kilometres south of here on Saturday.

She said the investment in ASEAN accounted 35 per cent of Malaysia's total investment overseas and Singapore and Indonesia received the lion's share of Malaysian investment in ASEAN.

Meanwhile, Singapore's investment in Malaysia has amounted to 2.46 billion US dollars in a total of 946 pro-

jects and Indonesian investment in Malaysia has reached 61 million US dollars, new reports from Johor quoted her as saying.

Deputy Prime Minister Brig Lee Hsien Loong who signed the MOU on behalf of Singapore, was also optimistic about Sijori's prospects.

Sijori, initiated by Singapore in 1989, covers also Singapore and Indonesia's Riau Islands and is one of the three ASEAN sub-regional groupings.

Under the MOU, the three governments will set up a consultative and coordinating body between the public and private sectors for implementation of the growth triangle concept.

The governments agreed on bilateral and tripartite cooperation in manufacturing, agriculture, tourism, shipping, and many other areas. Malaysia's proposal for the setting up of an ASEAN skills training centre in Johor was well received.

Exchange Rates

Following are the Sonali Bank's dealing rates to public for some selected foreign currencies effective as on December 15 and 16.

Currency	Selling		Buying		(Figures in Taka)
	TT & OD	EC	TT Clean	OD Sight	
US Dollar	795	40.4085	40.1000	40.0250	39.9745
GBP	63.176	68.3931	61.9304	61.8146	61.5822
DM	25.9353	25.9539	25.2376	25.1906	25.0958
F Franc	7.5218	7.5272	7.3178	7.3041	7.2766
C Dollar	29.3131	29.3341	28.5235	28.4701	28.3631
S Franc	30.6043	30.6263	29.7795	29.7238	29.6120
Jap Yen	0.4090	0.4093	0.3940	0.3933	0.3918
IRS	1.2939	1.3036	1.2722	1.2531	—
Pak Rupee	1.3164	1.3263	1.2941	1.2747	—
Iranian Rial	0.0232	0.0234	0.0228	0.0225	—

At T.T.(DOC) US Dollar Spot Buying Tk 40.0625

BI Usance Rate:

30 Days 60 Days 90 Days 120 Days 180 Days

39.7497 39.4656 39.1816 38.8976 38.3295

C) US Dollar sight bill 3 months forward purchase: Tk. 40.0250

D) US Dollar sight bill 3 months forward sale: Tk. 40.6085

Indicative Rates

Currency	Selling		Buying		(Figures in Taka)
	T.T. & O.D.	O.D. Transfer	T.T. & O.D.	O.D. Transfer	
S Rial	10.7856	10.6301	10.6301	10.6301	—
UAE Dirham	10.9939	10.8552	10.8552	10.8552	—
Kuwaiti Dinar	134.6432	132.9150	132.9150	132.9150	—
D Guilders	22.9703	22.6766	22.6766	22.6766	—
S Krona	5.3778	5.3070	5.3070	5.3070	—
Malaysian Ringgit	15.7640	15.5638	15.5638	15.5638	—
Singapore Dollar	27.5948	27.2311	27.2311	27.2311	—

Dhaka Stock Prices

At the close of trading on December 18, 1994

Trading improves

Star Report

The trading on the floor of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) improved on Sunday.

The turnover in volume showed a rise of 38,700 per cent and the turnover in value increased by 3,220 per cent.

A total of 42445 issues worth Taka 9039970.00 changed hands as against Saturday's 30602 shares valued at Tk 8757997.50.

The number of shares traded rose to 63 from 54. Of them, 16 gained, 36 incurred losses and the share prices of 11 other issues remained unchanged.

Shine Pukur Jute experienced a massive gain of Tk 212.18 per share, leading the gainers in terms of value.

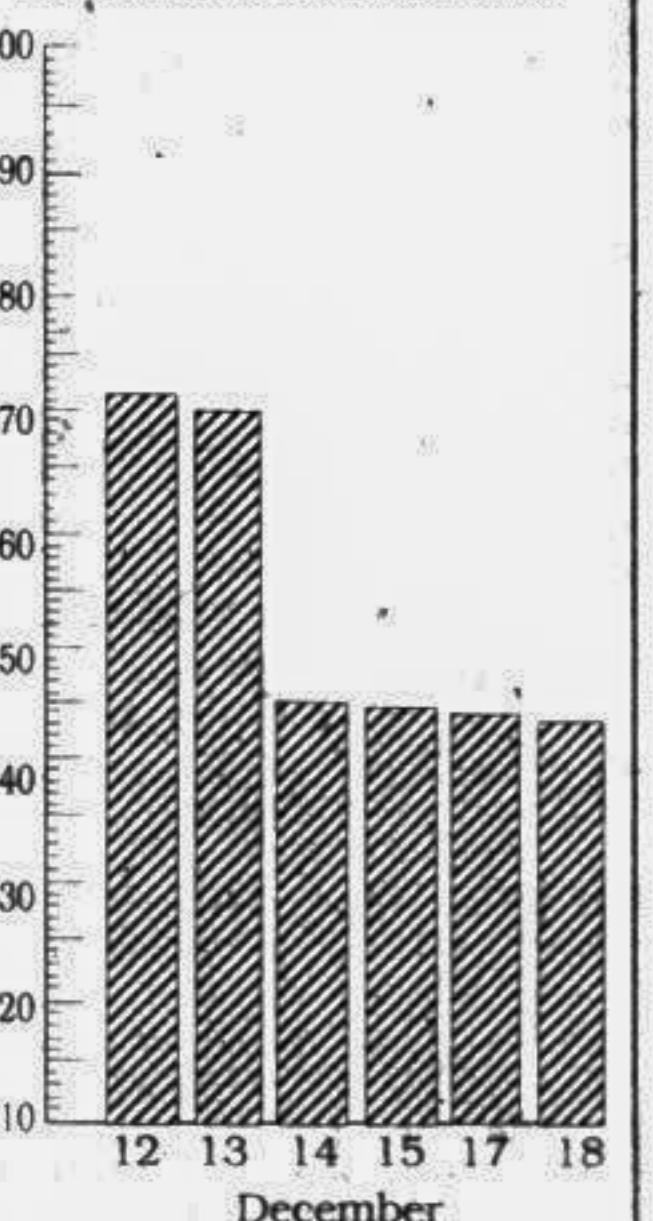
Aftab Automobiles led the losers with a fall of Tk 45.00 per share.

Beximco Ltd became the volume leader of the day. Its 7500 shares were traded.

Other volume leaders were: Meghna Shrimp Culture (2360), Quasem Silk (2700), Mithun Corporation (2260), Mala Chemical (3680) and Eastern Housing (5360).

The DSE All Share Price Index continued to fall. It decreased by 0.0372 per cent.

DSE All Share Price Index



DSE Shares and Debentures

Company	FV/ML (Taka)	Closing Rate (Taka)
Rahim Textile	100/5	89.33
Salman Textile	100/10	96.00
S.T.M (ORD)	100/5	18.00
Stcraft	100/5	360.00
Swaf Textile	100/5	35.00
Taluk Spinning	100/10	205.00
Tamujudd	100/20	264.14
Beximco Knitting	100/20	125.00
Dynamic Textile	100/20	127.00
Mithun Corporation	07	226.00
Mita Textiles	300	135.00
B Dyeing	6.95	132.00
Ambe Pharma	1.06	130.00
Beximco Pharma	9.64	123.00
ACI Limited	5.00	150.00
Pharmex International	0.00	128.00
Rahim & Colman	5.00	126.00
Therapeutics	4.61	138.00
Kohinoor Chemical	1.06	132.00
BCL	21.05	70.00
Beximco Infusions	9.4	130.00
Beximco Synthetic	8.50	118.00
Lbra Pharma	7.00	160.00
Mala Chemical	26.60	368.00
Paper Processing	5.00	160.00
Apex Tannery	13.04	115.00
Bata Shoe	9.00	144.00
GQ Ball Pen	0.03	160.00
Monno Ceramic	1.00	135.00
Umanir	0.50	95.00
Sunair Refractories	5.30	145.00
Beximco Ltd	8.30	175.00
Chittagong Cement	2.25	141.00
Apex Footwear	1.50	300.00
Eastern Housing	3.31	595.00
BGIC	0.00	50.00
Eastern Insurance	3.00	130.00
Phoenix Insurance	1.53	152.00
B Knitting	12.66	122.00
BCL (Deb)	10.00	10.00
B Synthetic (Deb)	18.68	10.00

PHARMACEUTICALS & CHEMICALS (22)	
Ambe Pharma	10/50
Bangla Process	100/5
Bangla Infusion	100/00
Beximco Pharma	100/5
B. Synthetics	100/20
Libra Pharma	100/20
A.C.I	10/50
Kohinoor Chemical	100/5
N Polymer	100/10
Petro Synthetic	100/50
Pharma Aids	100/5
Progressive Plastic	100/5
Rashid & Colman	10/50
Therapeutics	10/50
Rahman Chemicals	100/10
Green Delta	100/10
Peoples Insurance	100/10
United Insurance	100/10
Janata Insurance	—
Phanafe Insurance	