

Eradication of 'mad cows'

UK refuses to endorse EU conclusions

LUXEMBOURG, Apr 4: Britain accepted a massive EU ball-out for its 'mad cow' hit beef industry in marathon farm ministers' talks Wednesday, but refused to endorse its partners' conclusions while an EU ban on its beef exports remained, reports AFP.

"Very much regret that it has not been possible at this council, for the UK to endorse the council conclusions," British agriculture minister Douglas Hogg told reporters after the tense all night talks.

Other ministers hailed the four million dollar package as an agreement anyway and EU

official said Hogg's stance had more to do with pleasing a strong Euro sceptic lobby in London than to adopt the measures.

The British minister insisted the ban is not justified. It is not based on sound scientific analysis, it is disproportionate. It should be removed.

Hogg made it clear, however, that Britain would undertake measures agreed by his 14 EU partners to eradicate 'mad cow' disease, including the slaughter of over three million cattle in the next four years.

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cent of the cost, Britain 30 per cent the slaughter demand, along with several other requirements formed part of a broad package of measures to help Britain eradicate the disease, compensate producers and restore consumer confidence Europe wide.

The measures were contained in a four page document minister discussed in feverish bilateral and round table talks until after dawn.

"Many of the proposals which are found in the document are proposals that the United Kingdom identified, worked up, presented the

council and therefore, are pleased to see in the document," Hogg said.

"We do intend to carry out the action which is contained in the document," he told reporters.

London has agreed to cull cows aged over 30 months well inside the three to four years incubation period as a first step towards eradication.

The commission estimates the cost of supporting the measure at 320 million ECU's (1 ECU=1.3 dollars) annually. The cull is expected to take four years at a rate of 15,000 a

Indian minority may get HK passport after colony's transfer

HONG KONG, Apr 4: A senior Chinese official has signaled that the Indian minority might get Hong Kong passports after the colony reverts to China in mid-1997, easing fears they could become stateless, a leading Indian businessman said yesterday, reports Reuters.

Raj Sital, Chairman of the Indian Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong, said on Wednesday a chamber group was in Beijing to outline their community's concerns ahead of the British colony's conversion into a Chinese Special Administrative Region (SAR).

Their main worry was the post 1997 right of abode. Sital said Lu Ping, China's top policy maker in Hong Kong, had been very positive in his response when he met the group in Beijing.

He said it will be discussed further to see what solutions can be come up with to solve the problem of allowing people of Indian origin in Hong Kong to apply for SAR passport. Sital said.

Sital said Lu quoted a clause of China's nationality law on provisions for non-ethnic Chinese to apply for Chinese nationality and he said more detailed provision would be spelled out before the sovereignty transfer on July 1, 1997.

Oil prices weaken

LONDON, Apr 4: Oil prices weakened yesterday as a bout of profit-taking ahead of the long Easter weekend pushed them back down from three-and-a-half year highs, analysts said, reports Reuters.

Benchmark North Sea Brent crude may futures closed 21 cents at 19.98 dollar a barrel on the London futures market.

The May contract matched the three-and-a-half year high of 20.30 dollars hit last Tuesday shortly after opening, but sellers later dominated, particularly after the start of futures trading in New York.

Brokers said many traders were taking profits ahead of the four-day weekend and the resumption of the UN-Iraq oil-for-food talks, scheduled to begin on Monday.

Europe looks like it doesn't want to partake in the US euphoria, said Charles Gray of brokerage Prudential Bache Futures.

"Europe's looking further into the future and things don't look that rosy. We have a long-four day break and our Iraqi friends are coming back for more talks," he added.

The third round of talks between Iraq and the United Nations about limited oil sales are due to start in New York on Monday, but the key stumbling block of aid distribution to Iraq's rebel Kurds is unresolved.

They bought more than 13 million barrels of crude in the first two days after holding back recently in hope of seeing lower prices.

A month-long foundation course for the second batch of probationary officers of Eastern Bank Ltd. concluded yesterday, says a BIBM press release.

At the request of the Eastern Bank Ltd. the Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management conducted this specially designed course. The course emphasized stress on various operational areas of banking and rules, regulations, procedures and techniques of handling foreign exchange business, industrial project financing, human resource management etc.

A H M Nurul Islam Choudhury, Director General, BIBM, presided over the concluding session of the course, while A I M Iftekhar Rahman, Managing Director, Eastern Bank Ltd. graced the occasion as the chief guest.

Choudhury in his speech underscored the importance of training for developing knowledge and professional skills. Participants are now well-equipped with requisite professional efficiency to face different problems and to serve the bank with dynamic spirit, Choudhury added.

European refiners returned to the physical market in strength this week as they rushed buy barrels ahead of the Easter holiday, lending further support to prices.

A T M Abdus Shafiq and A K M Khabiruddin Chowdhury, BIBM faculty members and coordinators of the course, also spoke on the occasion.

Birth position and performance of vessels as on 1-4-1996

Birth No. Name of vessels Cargo L port call Local agent Date of arrival

J/1 Golden Venus Rice (G) Kali RSA 10/3 7/4

J/2 Yue Ya Quan Fert Chin PSAL 13/3 6/4

J/3 Bangla Kiron Gi BSC R/A 6/4

J/4 BUT-1 Rice(G) Bomb Cross 6/3 5/4

J/5 Bangla Gourab Gi Kara BSC 16/3 9/4

J/6 Jiang Cheng 924 Gi Yang Bdsip 31/3 4/4

J/7 Zulco Sharif Rice(G) Hald Seacom 28/2 4/4

J/8 Da Ye Gi Xing Prog 27/2 12/4

J/9 Alexey Tolstoy M. Seeds Suda 9/3 6/4

J/10 Seik Beach Ci B. Abb SES 16/2 7/4

J/11 Ascanteprise C. Clink Lans RML 19/2 10/4

J/12 Bangla Robi Cont Sing BSC 20/3 4/4

C/CT/1 Alexandrov Cont Sing Bdship 11/3 7/4

C/CT/2 Feng Shin Cont Sing Bdship 10/3 7/4

C/CT/3 Meng Yang Cont Sing AML 22/4 7/4

CGJ C. Clink Yang RML 15/3 10/4

GSJ Bangla Sampad Wheat (G) BSC R/A 6/4

RM/6 Pacific Hunter Had Sing MSPL 31/3 6/4

DQJ/1 Zhen Jiang Cement Long PSAL 29/3 6/4

DDJ/1 Tanary Star Idle Para PSAL 7/6 10/4

DDJ/2 Banglar Shourabh Repair BSC R/A 6/4

RM/8 Al Swamruz Repair P. Kela ASLL 23/2 5/4

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