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The Daily Star BUSINESS

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DHAKA, SUNDAY, APRIL 25, 1999

DCCI training on business communication concludes

The 5-day training course on "Effective Communication in International Business" organised by the Human Resource Development Programme (HRDP) of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) concluded Friday, says a press release.

The course aimed at familiarising the participants with topics like, communication in business and its types — written and oral communication, how to make communication more effective, banking correspondence in good business, effective telephonic procedure, internal business communication, role of meeting in business, technique of conducting a successful meeting, effectiveness of different media and communication process in trade.

In all, 28 participants from government and private organisations attended the course.

DCCI Director A M Mubashshar distributed certificates among the participants. Earlier DCCI Director Altab ul Islam inaugurated the training course on April 19.

Belgians keen to boost trade ties with Bangladesh

Belgian businessmen and investors have shown keen interest in expanding trade and investment ties with Bangladesh, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday, reports UNB.

Addressing a meeting of Bangladesh Investment Forum in Brussels Friday, Andree Wyckmans, Advisor General of Belgian Foreign Trade Board (BFTB), said there was scope for further development of trade and investment between the two countries.

He hoped that the Business Forum would develop closer relations among business communities of the two countries.

The meeting was jointly organised by BFTB and Bangladesh Embassy in Belgium at the Belgian Foreign Trade Board (BFTB).

Besides the FBCCI Trade and Investment Delegation to Europe, a large number of Belgian businessmen participated in

the Business Forum. Welcoming the participants, Abdul Awal Minto, President of the FBCCI and leader of the FBCCI Delegation to Europe, said the industrial enterprises, which faced exorbitant costs in Belgium and were losing their competitiveness, might find Bangladesh as an ideal destination for relocation.

Focusing on the growing trade relation between Bangladesh and Belgium, Minto said Belgium is an important trading partner of the country. In 1997-98, Bangladesh had favourable trade balance of US \$194 million.

He said Belgium is the nerve centre of the European Union and was the gateway for promoting trade and investment cooperation with EU countries.

Stating Bangladesh government's priority and incentive packages for foreign investors, Minto said the government

has designated the private sector as the engine of growth.

In addition to building and upgrading the physical infrastructure, the government has embarked on an extensive reform programme in key areas such as education, administration, law and finance, said Bangladesh's apex trade body president.

He hoped that privatisation of state-owned enterprises, continued trade liberalisation and opening up the energy and telecommunications sectors to private enterprises would transform the overall investment climate in Bangladesh.

Minto said that foreign direct investment was needed to lift Bangladesh's economy to a growth track of 7 per cent in the short term in order to make a significant breakthrough in poverty alleviation and improvement in the people's standard of living.

To obtain such growth, investment has to go up from the current level of 17 per cent to 25 per cent of GDP, he said welcoming the Belgian investors in Bangladesh.

Ronald Andersson, Honorary Consul of Bangladesh in Antwerp, Belgium, in his speech said that for increasing the volume of trade Bangladesh should undertake more publicity and encourage the participants to do more business with Belgium.

Bangladesh ambassador to Belgium Khairul Anam in his speech emphasised the need for more trade between the two countries and urged the Belgian investors to invest in Bangladesh.

The ambassador listened to the problems relating to customs, banks and ports, which were discussed in the meeting and gave assurance for solving these problems.

The meeting was followed by a question-answer session participated by the both sides.

Kodak Express makes its debut in Bangladesh

Star Business Report

Kodak Express, the largest chain of photofinishing labs, made its debut in Bangladesh yesterday opened two such labs in the city.

Speaking at a press conference on the eve of the launching yesterday, Sanjeev S Mehta, Business Support Manager for South Asia of Kodak, said that with the presence of KEX, Bangladeshi consumers may well be benefited from the world class photo technology and find it a more safer resort for preserving their precious memories on Kodak films and papers.

"We are going to be very strict about maintaining the quality of our products and services," Mehta said.

He said that Kodak Express franchise would be offered to selective labs that meet our required quality standards.

The first two KEX at Dhanmondi and Gulshan-1 will be opened by Kodak's business partners in Bangladesh, Aquamarine Distributions Limited (ADL).

Kodak Express promises its consumers the best of photographs, printed on its own papers and processed by quality Kodak chemicals in fully automatic mini lab machines.

Currently, Kodak Express (KEX) has more than 20,000 shops worldwide.

It has recently trained up ADL's technical staff to ensure Quality Monitoring Service (QMS) for all printings to be handled by KEX labs throughout Bangladesh.

Anis Ahmed, MD of ADL, said that his company was committed to bringing the best of Kodak products to the country at affordable prices.

consumers can buy a wide variety of Kodak films and KB 10 cameras. All prints will be done on Kodak Royal paper available only at KEX labs.

Md Mesbahuddin, ADL Marketing Manager, said that the new service would be monitored from time to time.

"We will print on 4R size papers rather than 3R, because 4R gives a more real impression," he said.

Kodak and ADL also announced that they would initiate an expansion plan for the Kodak Express network in Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet and Cox's Bazar.

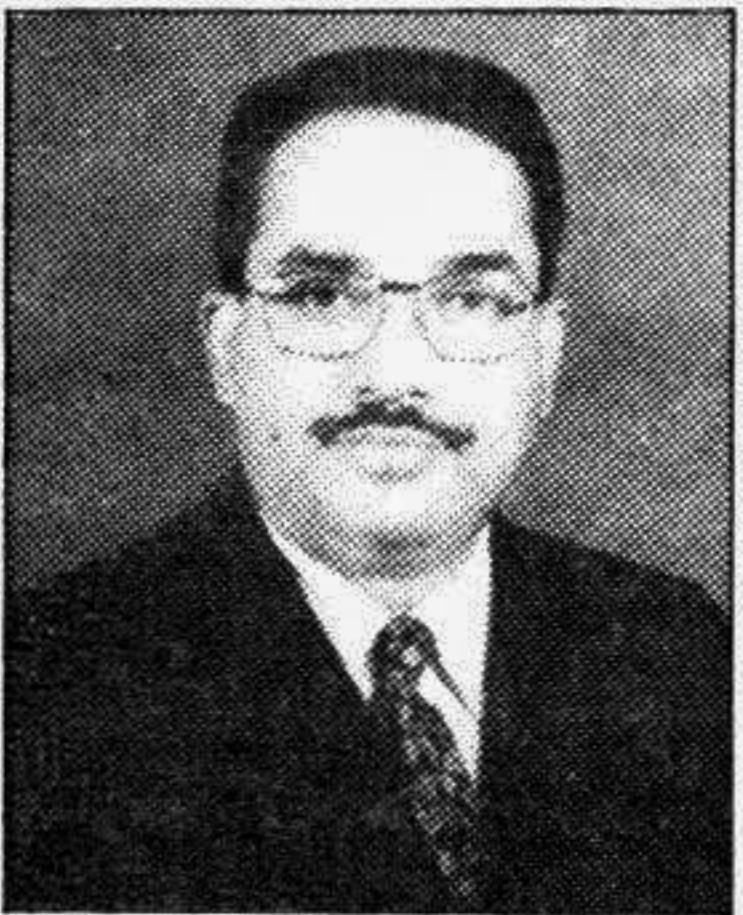
Kodak is growing at a rate of 25 per cent in Bangladesh. "But we are expecting much more in days coming," Mehta said.

"We want to open 25 to 50 more labs in this country by the end of this year," he added.



Sanjeev S. Mehta (C), Business Support Manager of Kodak South Asia, Anis Ahmed (L), Managing Director of Aquamarine Distributors Ltd (ADL), and Md Mesbahuddin, Manager, Marketing of ADL, are seen at a press conference on the eve of launching Kodak Express in the city yesterday. — Star photo

New marketing director of ACI Pharma



Arshad-ul-Alam has joined ACI Limited as Marketing Director, ACI Pharmaceuticals. He started his career in pharmaceutical business management with Organon and later joined BEXIMCO Pharmaceuticals Ltd, says a press release.

He was with Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd before joining ACI.

Meghnaghat plant Agreement on supplying power grid accessories

Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Ltd (PGCB) and Shanghai Cable Works, China, signed an agreement yesterday on supplying conductor, earthwire and fittings under Meghnaghat Power Station Associated Transmission Lines Project, financed by the Asian Development Bank.

The Tk 22.6 crore contract was initially by Mohammed Salim, Company Secretary of PGCB, and Fang Longkui, Director of Shanghai Cable Works, says a PGCB press release.

Senior officials of both the organisations were present on the occasion.

The project will be able to transmit 450 MW power from the Meghnaghat Power Station to Dhaka and other areas of the country, the release added.

Malloch Brown new UNDP administrator

Mark Malloch Brown, the World Bank Vice-President for External and United Nations Affairs, has been appointed Administrator of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with effect from July 1, reports APB.

Malloch Brown, a Briton, replaces James Gustave Speth who held the position since 1993, says a press release issued Friday.

He joined the World Bank as the Director of External Affairs in 1994 and became Vice-President for External and United Nations Affairs in 1996.

Earlier, Malloch Brown worked for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees from 1979 to 1983.

Brazil, Andean Pact discuss preferential tariffs

BRASILIA, April 23: Trade officials from Brazil and the Andean Pact discussed introducing preferential tariffs on a list of up to 800 products as a step towards reaching a preliminary free trade accord, reports said here Friday, delegates said.

IBM-Advance Education opens in city Tofail calls for exploiting software export potential

Commerce and Industries Minister Tofail Ahmed has called upon the exporters to exploit bright potential of computer software export and government's incentives to diversify and expand the country's export base, reports UNB.

"Computer is one of our thrust sectors. The government has already withdrawn all taxes from the sector to ensure smooth growth of computer industry in the country," he said while inaugurating IBM-Advance Career Education (ACE) at Chandrasaha Tower at Panthapath in the city yesterday.

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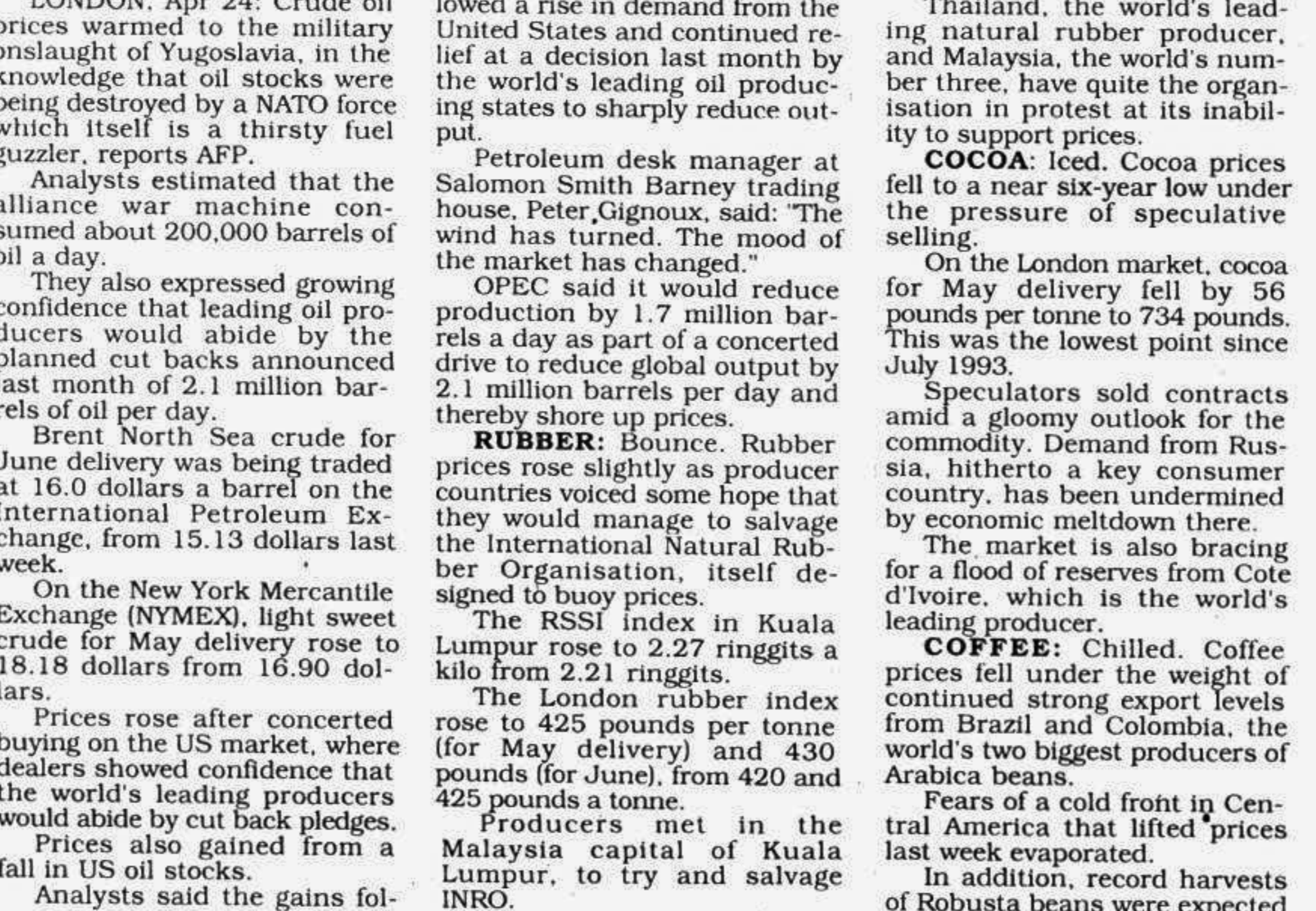
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Plan to modernise Khulna city undertaken

KHULNA, Apr 24: Khulna Development Authority (KDA) has undertaken a master plan to turn the city into a modern one, reports UNB.

According to official sources, the formulation of the master plan which began two years ago is nearing completion.

KDA first formulated a master plan in 1961 for the development of the city, but most of the projects under the plan could not be implemented during the past 37 years.



Phil Moody, Regional Manager, Business Development UK & Europe Region of Standard Chartered Bank, conducts a workshop on "Trade Gateway, Euro and Sterling Services" for the officers of commercial banks. — Unitrend photo

Iraq accuses US, UK of dumping fuel on farmland

BAGHDAD, April 24: Iraq accused US and British planes on Saturday of dumping fuel on agricultural land in the south of the country, causing the death of several people, reports AFP.

The charges were detailed in messages from Foreign Minister Mohammed Said Al-Sahhaf to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and current Security Council president Alain Juppé, the Iraqi press reported.

Sahhaf said the US and British planes dumped the fuel during patrol flights over the southern "no-fly" zone, "causing the death of a number of innocent citizens."

"This aggression against innocent citizens is the continuation of the military aggression perpetrated by the United States and Britain against Iraq and constitutes a flagrant violation of international law," Sahhaf said.

He vowed that Iraq would continue to oppose the no-fly zones in the south and north of the country. It does not recognise the legitimacy of the zones which were set up after the 1991 Gulf War but which are not covered by a specific UN resolution.

The zones are enforced by US and British aircraft and have been the scene of regular skirmishes between allied aircraft and Iraqi planes and air defences since December.

StanChart workshop on gateway to Europe held

Standard Chartered Bank hosted a workshop on "Trade Gateway, Euro and Sterling Services" for the officers of sixteen commercial banks in the country on Wednesday.

Phil Moody, Regional Manager of Business Development, UK & Europe Region of Standard Chartered Bank, conducted the workshop, says a press release.

Standard Chartered Bank has introduced the "Trade Gateway to Europe" service for its customers to direct their trade business for the United Kingdom and Europe through its office in London.

The service guarantees turn around to exporters within 24 hours of receipt and at present covers 24 countries.

It also includes free courier direct to beneficiary with prepaid courier return, flat advising fee, state-of-the-art technology and dedicated account management.

Commodity: Weekly Roundup

Oil up on alliance war machine consumption in Balkans

LONDON, Apr 24: Crude oil prices warmed to the military onslaught of Yugoslavia, in the knowledge that oil stocks were being destroyed by a NATO force which itself is a thirsty fuel guzzler, reports APB.

Analysts estimated that the alliance war machine consumed about 200,000 barrels of oil a day.

They also expressed growing confidence that leading oil producers would abide by the planned cut backs announced last month of 2.1 million barrels of oil per day.

Brent North Sea crude for June delivery was being traded at 16.0 dollars a barrel on the International Petroleum Exchange, from 15.13 dollars last week.

On the New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX), light sweet crude for May delivery rose to 18.18 dollars from 16.90 dollars.

Prices rose after concerted buying on the US market, where dealers showed confidence that the world's leading producers would abide by cut back pledges.

lowed a rise in demand from the United States and continued relief at a decision last month by the world's leading oil producing states to sharply reduce output.

Petroleum desk manager at Salomon Smith Barney trading house, Peter Gignoux, said: "The wind has turned. The mood of the market has changed."

OPEC said it would reduce production by 1.7 million barrels a day as part of a concerted drive to reduce global output by 2.1 million barrels per day and thereby shore up prices.

RUBBER: Bounce. Rubber prices rose slightly as producer countries voiced some hope that they would manage to salvage the International Natural Rubber Organisation, itself designed to buoy prices.

The RSSI index in Kuala Lumpur rose to 2.27 ringgits a kilo from 2.21 ringgits.

The London rubber index rose to 425 pounds per tonne (for May delivery) and 430 pounds (for June), from 420 and 425 pounds a tonne.

Thailand, the world's leading natural rubber producer, and Malaysia, the world's number three, have quite the organisation in protest at its inability to support prices.

COCOA: Iced. Cocoa prices fell to a near six-year low under the pressure of speculative selling.

On the London market, cocoa for May delivery fell by 56 pounds per tonne to 734 pounds. This was the lowest point since July 1993.

Speculators sold contracts amid a gloomy outlook for the commodity. Demand from Russia, hitherto a key consumer country, has been undermined by economic meltdown there.

The market is also bracing for a flood of reserves from Cote d'Ivoire, which is the world's leading producer.

COFFEE: Chilled. Coffee prices fell under the weight of continued strong export levels from Brazil and Colombia, the world's two biggest producers of Arabica beans.

reduction in output" the GNI trading house said.

US soybean prices fell as China, which has been swamped by huge volumes of overseas oil, said that it plants to impose a 13-per cent increase on import duties to protect local growers.

In contrast, most European oil prices rose modestly this week.

US agriculture secretary, Dan Glickman, said that the United States had not yet negotiated a second slice of food aid to Russia after a first wave of 3.1 million tonnes of grains and vegetable oils early this year.

On the Chicago Board of Trade soy prices fell by six cents to 4.83 dollars a bushel.

On the Rotterdam market, palm oil prices rose to 540 dollars a tonne from 480 dollars.

wheat prices fell by five cents to 2.57 dollars a bushel (of 27.2 kg for May delivery).

Maize was unchanged at 2.19 dollars a bushel (of 25.4 kg, for May).

European prices, meanwhile, rose sharply after a surge in demand.

On the London market, wheat prices rose by 1.65 pounds to 77.15 pounds per tonne (for May delivery).

COTTON: Thin. US cotton prices fell on technical trades amid extremely low trading volumes.

May contracts fell to 56.70 cents a pound from 59.53 cents.

Wool: Warm. Wool prices rose slightly amid stronger demand from industry and higher oil prices which made synthetic fibres slightly more expensive to produce.

The Woottops index here rose by three pence to 305 pence per kg and in Australia, the Eastern index rose by four cents to 5.52 Australian dollars a kilo.

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New office-bearers of BAI 45th Batch Assoc

Mominul Azam Sabuj and Sheikh Kamrul Hasan have been elected unopposed as president and general secretary of Bangladesh Agricultural Institute (BAI) 45th Batch Association.

The election was held at a special meeting of the association held at Krishibid Institution conference room in the city on Friday, says a press release.

Shikher Raji-US-Shams Suman and Muhammad Afzal Hossain were elected vice-presidents.

Other newly-elected office-bearers are Sheikh Ahaduzzaman Shameen — joint secretary, A N M Manzoor Marshed Mithu — treasurer, Abdul Awal Bulbul — organising secretary, Abdullah Yusuf Akand — research and international affairs secretary, Nasreen Akter Litu — social welfare secretary, Sirajul Islam Tapon — cultural and sports secretary, Monowarul Islam Monir — public relations and publications secretary and A K M Fazlul Mannin Tuhin — office secretary.

Noor Mohammed Raza, Iqbal Hossain and Mahmuda Anwar Rumun were elected executive members of the association.