

Oil prices up ahead of northern winter

Oil prices rose on Friday as tight supplies of distillate fuel, including heating oil, ahead of the northern hemisphere winter spurred buying.

Gas oil has gained well over six percent so far this week, dragging up refining profits and spurring physical oil buying to staunch a three and a half week slide on crude futures.

India, Russia to ink banking, energy pacts

AFP, New Delhi

India and Russia are put final touches to new visa, energy, banking and space research pacts to be signed during Russian President Vladimir Putin's December visit to New Delhi, officials said Friday.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Zhukov whose visit is aimed at laying the groundwork for Putin's visit to the Indian capital next month said he was "extremely happy" with his meetings in India.

"The presidential visit is likely to materialize in memorandum of understanding (MOUs) being signed in the banking, joint space research, information technology and communication fields," said Zhukov.

Frozen food slow from Nov 28 as exporters eye Tk10,000cr a year by '08

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

As exporters eye Tk 10,000 crore earnings annually from frozen food exports by 2008, an international exposition of aquaculture production begins in Dhaka on November 28.

Bangladesh Frozen Food Exporters Association (BFEEA) and InfoFish, a Kuala Lumpur-based intergovernmental organisation, will jointly organise the two-day event -- the first of its kind in the country -- in collaboration with the commerce and fisheries ministries and Swiss Import Promotion Programme (SIPPO).

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is expected to inaugurate the conference styled "Bangladesh Seafood Exposition 2004" at Sonargaon Hotel.

"The international conference on aquaculture production and marketing of shrimps and fin fish will help us

achieve our goal 'Vision 2008', a target to export frozen foods worth Tk 10,000 crore annually by 2008," Mahmudul Hassan, secretary general of BFEEA, told The Daily Star.

Frozen foods worth \$390 million were exported in 2003-2004 financial year, which was \$10 million higher than the target. Export target has been set at \$410 million (Tk 2,500 crore) for the current financial year, Hassan said, adding, "This exposition will attract more foreign buyers."

There will be 56 stalls in the fair of which 45 have already been booked. Buyers from Thailand, Singapore, India and some other countries will visit Dhaka during the exhibition.

Besides, experts from home and abroad will present 30 keynote papers relating to production, marketing and technological aspects.

The conference will hold three technical sessions--markets and

marketing of aquaculture products, aquaculture production technology, and quality and safety of aquaculture production.

According to BFEEA, two delegations -- one from Vietnam Association of Seafood Exporters and Processors and another from Europe-- will also visit Bangladesh during the fair.

Vision 2008 puts emphasis on improvement of existing lab facilities, training of technicians, introduction of an internationally accepted certification and establishment of a reference laboratory to test and certify the product quality.

The country's 500 hatcheries produce about 500 crore shrimp larvae, which are enough to meet the target of production by 2008.

"We are taking steps to increase shrimp production through optimum utilisation of the processing capacity. We are also exploring new markets," said an exporter.

US mulls import curbs on China cotton yarn

REUTERS, Washington

The Bush administration has launched its seventh investigation in the past three weeks that could lead to curbs on imports of clothing and textiles from China, US officials said Thursday.

The latest probe focuses on imports of combed-cotton yarn, which is used to make higher-quality clothing. It follows six other investigations looking at imports of cotton pants, underwear, knit shirts and other clothing items.

US textile groups fear massive job losses caused by a flood of cheap clothing and textiles from China when a decades-old import-quota system is eliminated at the end of this year. The change is the result of a 1994 world-trade agreement.

They have filed petitions asking the Bush administration to impose new "safeguard" quotas on billions of dollars of China clothing when the current quotas expire.

Nike co-founder Knight steps down as CEO

REUTERS, San Francisco

Nike Inc co-founder Philip Knight, who helped transform a small start-up into the world's biggest athletic shoe company, will step down as chief executive officer, the company said on Thursday.

William Perez, 57, who ran privately-held consumer products company SC Johnson & Son Inc., replaces Knight as CEO and president effective Dec. 28 after more than a year-long search. Knight, 66, who also will give up his title of president, plans to remain chairman of the board.

"In the near term, I will focus my efforts on ensuring an effective transition and on evolving into my role as an active chairman," Knight said in a statement.

Current account balance records surplus

BSS, Dhaka

The country's current account balance recorded a surplus of Tk 1,007.4 crore in July 2004, the first month of the current fiscal, against Tk 998.3 crore in the corresponding month of the last fiscal showing a rise by Tk 9.1 crore.

The rise in the current account balance in July this year was mainly due to increase in current transfers and narrower trade deficit compared to the same month of the last fiscal.

The Bangladesh Bank data showed that the country experienced a trade balance of Tk 137.7 crore in its disfavor against Tk 394.2 crore during the same month in 2003.

The export earnings during July 2004 increased to Tk 5,143.7 crore from Tk 3,930 crore in July last year, indicating a rise by Tk 1,213.7 crore

or 30.88 percent. Import payments made by the country amounted to Tk 5,281.4 crore in July this year against previous year's Tk 4,324.2 crore rising by Tk 957.2 crore or 22.14 percent.

The current transfer, the capital inflows including remittances through official and private channels, jumped to Tk 1,923.1 crore in July this year, from Tk 1,669.1 crore of the same month last year, signaling a rise by Tk 254 crore or 15.22 percent.

The remittance sent by the Non-Resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) rose to Tk 1,713.96 crore in July 2004, against Tk 1,546.75 crore in July 2003, by Tk 167.21 crore or 10.81 percent.

But the proceeds obtained by the country through services provided abroad were much lower than the payments made showing a wider gap of Tk 535.4 crore or 188 percent

in July this year, against Tk 185.5 crore deficit in the same month of the previous fiscal.

The country earned Tk 456.8 crore by giving services abroad in the month under review against Tk 999.2 crore payments it made for taking services. On the other hand, it received Tk 594.9 crore for its services provided abroad against Tk 780.4 crore outflows as payment for servicetaken.

The country's net income including interests for its assets and liabilities at home and abroad showed a wider deficit in July this year compared to that of in the same month of last year.

The payments made by the country in the month rose to Tk 281.6 crore from Tk 117.9 crore in the same month of the last fiscal. The country received Tk 39 crore as its income in the month against Tk 26.8 crore in July 2003.

Dollar wobbles ahead of G20 meeting

REUTERS, London

The dollar was within a cent of record lows to the euro Friday, raising concerns about European growth, but shares clung to 28-month peaks despite big falls in drug stocks as oil steadied around \$46 a barrel.

The dollar fell to an all-time low versus the euro and a 7-1/2 month low against the yen Thursday on

expectations that the Group of 20 -- which includes most major developed and developing countries -- will not move to slow the greenback's slide.

The G20 finance ministers are due to start their meeting in Berlin later in the day.

Meanwhile US Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan and European Central Bank President Jean Claude Trichet take part in a

panel discussion on "Euro in Wider Circles" at 1330 GMT at a European Banking Congress in Frankfurt.

"If they say anything about currencies causing global imbalances, about Asian currency pegs and how the euro is bearing the brunt of dollar depreciation, this could have an impact on the bond market," said Menno Middelburg, economist at Rabobank in Utrecht.



Pran Group Deputy Managing Director Ahsan Khan Chowdhury (R) shakes hands with a buyer after signing an export order at SIAL International Food Fair '04 held in Paris recently. Food processing company Pran got handsome spot export orders for fruit juices, drinks, tea and confectionery.

STOCK

TRADED ISSUES IN THE WEEK

DSE										CSE										Financial Performance									
Company	EV/ML (Tk.No)	Price Closing	Price (Tk) % Pre Day	Turnover Share	Company	EV/ML (Tk.No)	Price Closing	Price (Tk) % Pre Day	Turnover Share	Last AGM	EPS	DPS	(Tk) (%)	Company	EV/ML (Tk.No)	Price Closing	Price (Tk) % Pre Day	Turnover Share	Company	EV/ML (Tk.No)	Price Closing	Price (Tk) % Pre Day	Turnover Share	Last AGM	EPS	DPS	(Tk) (%)		
BANK																													
AB Bank Ltd.	100/5	309.50	3.95	297.75	7935	110.00	3.42	299.75	440	27/09/03	4.79	---	---	Apex Weaving & Fintex	100/50	49.00	3.16	47.75	1200	46.75-34.84	71.75	---	400	18/03/04	5.07	5.00	---		
Citibank Ltd.	100/5	843.75	4.90	887.25	705	880.00	Not Traded	---	---	27/09/03	4.79	---	---	Dandy Dyeing Ltd.	100/50	51.00	0.00	---	---	51.00	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	
IFIC Bank Ltd.	100/5	417.75	2.77	406.50	742	403.25	Not Traded	---	---	07/12/04	15.21	---	---	Devy Dyeing Ltd.	100/50	22.50	5.56	55.00	3900	50.00	Not Traded	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	
National Bank Ltd.	100/5	151.75	0.21	453.50	2645	145.00	0.20	458.50	152	17/09/04	1.62	---	---	BD Zipper Ltd.	100/50	11.75	-12.96	13.50	200	15.00	Not Traded	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	
Pubali Bank Ltd.	100/5	1188.75	10.29	1060.50	9710	1150.00	10.16	1042.00	7050	14/09/04	1.62	---	---	Beximco Denims Ltd.	100/50	82.75	0.61	82.25	1805	80.00	Not Traded	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	
Rajshahi Bank Ltd.	100/10	481.50	11.20	367.00	21450	215.00	20.20	373.00	21450	15/04/09	15.6	---	---	Pharmex Textile Ltd.	100/50	9.50	2.68	9.25	1750	9.50	Not Traded	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	
UCBL	100/5	1150.75	21.33	1178.25	3147	1188.25	24.79	1179.50	185	15/04/09	15.6	---	---	M. Homefurnaments	100/50	9.75	5.41	9.25	500	10.00	Not Traded	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	
United Bank Ltd.	100/5	1026.00	-0.90	2082.75	1641	2078.75	Not Traded	---	---	14/06/04	192	50.0	---	Sajikh Knitwear Ltd.	100/50	23.50	-0.88	24.50	450	40.00	Not Traded	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	
United Bank Ltd.	100/5	1026.00	-0.90	2082.75	1641	2078.75	Not Traded	---	---	14/06/04	192	50.0	---	Che Xie Ltd.	100/50	2.60	0.00	-2.60	33600	2.70	Not Traded	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	
United Bank Ltd.	100/5	1026.00	-0.90	2082.75	1641	2078.75	Not Traded	---	---	14/06/04	192	50.0	---	Monon Textile Ltd.	100/50	76.75	-9.71	85.00	9950	86.50	Not Traded	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	
United Bank Ltd.	100/5	1026.00	-0.90	2082.75	1641	2078.75	Not Traded	---	---	14/06/04	192	50.0	---	Animay Yam & Dyeing	100/50	75.00	1.35	74.00	300	88.00	Not Traded	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	
United Bank Ltd.	100/5	1026.00	-0.90	2082.75	1641	2078.75	Not Traded	---	---	14/06/04	192	50.0	---	CNC Kamal Textile	100/50	71.00	0.00	71.00	450	68.00	Not Traded	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	
United Bank Ltd.	100/5	1026.00	-0.90	2082.75	1641	2078.75	Not Traded	---	---	14/06/04	192	50.0	---	Square Textile	100/50	21.00	2.56	97.70	341490	100.10	2.88	97.70	31711	20.00	0.04	6.06	30.00		
United Bank Ltd.	100/5	1026.00	-0.90	2082.75	1641	2078.75	Not Traded	---	---	14/06/04	192	50.0	---	Metro Spinning Ltd.	100/50	15.00	0.10	15.00	13000	15.60	Not Traded	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	
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