

China, India, Pakistan stall talks on textiles review at WTO: Diplomats

AFP, Geneva

Major textile exporters China, Pakistan and India on Thursday stalled talks at the World Trade Organisation on assistance for smaller textile-producing developing countries likely to be affected by the end of import quotas next January, diplomats said.

Several developing countries have asked the WTO to prepare a review of the impact of the end of quotas on smaller economies that have built up their industry around textiles.

India, supported by China and Pakistan, as well as Hong Kong, whose textile exports are expected to benefit from the international agreement to eliminate quotas in January 2005, opposed the proposal during a WTO committee meeting, trade sources said.

The issue is expected to be discussed among WTO member states over the next two months, the

sources added.

"They are dragging their feet," a diplomat said.

"It's clear that the Chinese and Indians would be happier if we end this procedure, while the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the United States would like to continue," he headed.

Several studies have shown that China stands to make huge gains in major export markets like the United States and Europe when the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing draws to an end.

The quotas were designed 40 years ago to cap textiles imports from individual countries and are being phased out under the binding agreement struck nine years ago.

China currently accounts for about 28 percent of the world clothing markets. A WTO study has indicated that Chinese clothing should snatch 50 percent of US imports after quotas are abolished, against 16 percent currently.

About 20 countries, including Bangladesh, Mexico, Mauritius and Tunisia, fear massive job losses amid unbridled competition from China, which was not a member of the WTO when the phase-out was agreed.

They have urged other trading nations to temper the impact of the binding agreement, while the WTO has said it is lining up World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) support for poor countries that suffer.

China and India said in the WTO meeting that the question of "adjustments" to help smaller producers should not just deal with the liberalisation of the textiles markets, but should extend to other areas like agriculture, the trade sources said.

"In fact they don't want the WTO to continue to deal with textile as one sector but rather that it deal with by the Least Developed Countries' sub-committee," the sources said.

Gold at new 16-year high of \$455

AFP, London

The spot price of gold marched above \$455 dollars on Friday, setting fresh 16-year high points as the US currency tumbled to a fresh record low against the euro.

Gold's spot price jumped by 3.61 dollars per ounce to as high as \$455.30 dollars compared to late Thursday and was the highest level since June 1988.

Gold, which is priced in dollars on world markets, made a fresh jump Friday after the euro shot to a new all-time peak of 1.3329 dollars in early European trading on speculation that China would reduce its holdings of US government bonds.

The gold spot price later eased to 451.85 dollars as the euro paused for breath.

"With traders still targeting higher (gold) prices we could see a test of 460 dollars at some point today largely due to the absence of fund profit taking which has been slowing the metal," said James Moore, an analyst at The BullionDesk.com specialist website.

A weaker dollar makes gold, which is priced in the US currency on world markets, more attractive to buyers using other currencies.



PHOTO: LIMO GROUP

Seyed Mansur Elahi, former adviser to the caretaker government, Sotaro Nishikawa, country representative of Japan External Trade Organisation (Jetro), Kiya Masahiko, counselor of Embassy of Japan in Dhaka, and Limbo Group Chairman TP Biswas were present at a function organised to mark the 35th anniversary of Limbo Group on Wednesday in Dhaka.

Dollar falls to record low versus euro

REUTERS, Tokyo

The dollar fell to a record low against the euro on Friday and a four-year low versus the yen as traders seized on a report that China has pared down its US Treasury bond holdings.

The report in Shanghai-based China Business News quoted a member of the Chinese central bank's monetary policy committee as saying the country had trimmed its Treasuries in foreign exchange reserves to \$180 billion, trying to minimize losses from a falling dollar.

While skeptical of the report, market players still jumped on it as more proof of the dollar's sharp slide is a long way from over, with no sign of central banks standing in the way.

"I think the China story's going to have some legs," said Luke Waddington, head of forex trading at Royal Bank of Scotland in Tokyo.

"People don't really need any reasons to sell the dollar. If they are given a reason it's just putting petrol on the fire."

The dollar fell to a record low against the euro of around \$1.3330. Against the yen, the dollar fell to its lowest level since March 2000 at 102.15 yen, though a prominent electronic platform had quoted it at 102.01 yen.

Pound sterling hit a nine-month high above \$1.90 and is approaching a 12-year peak beyond \$1.9142.

The dollar has lost nearly 9 percent against the euro and yen since early October as traders have specu-

lated that the US prefers a weaker currency to deal with its record-breaking current account deficit.

China closely guards the make-up of its foreign exchange reserves, which hit nearly \$515 billion at the end of September and are the world's second-largest.

But the bulk of that is presumed to be in US Treasuries, and U.S. Federal Reserve data has showed ongoing purchases of US government bonds by foreign central banks over the past six months.

Speculation that China could soon revalue its pegged yuan currency and let it strengthen against the dollar has also captivated market attention, especially ahead of an annual meeting of China's top economic officials in Beijing over the weekend.

But while the yuan was expected to be discussed at the meeting, many in the market believed long-term issues would be the focus of the meeting and few thought a near-term revaluation was a possibility.

China has come under intense pressure to revalue the yuan, which is pegged near 8.28 to the dollar. Countries like the United States have complained that the rate is too low, making Chinese exports unfairly cheap.

While the investors and traders have been on alert for potential central bank intervention to support the dollar, so far verbal warnings from European and Japanese officials have been shrugged off.



PHOTO: CSE

Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman Mirza Azizul Islam speaks at a function held to mark the inauguration of a branch office of Meehan Securities Ltd, a member of Chittagong Stock exchange (CSE), at Cox's Bazar on Wednesday to facilitate share business among the Cox's Bazar investors. CSE President Habibullah Khan is also seen in the picture.

Weekly Currency Roundup

November 20 -- November 25, 2004

Local FX Market

US dollar remained stable in the beginning of the week. Increased demand for import made the US dollar stronger against Bangladeshi Taka by the end of the week.

Money Market

Bangladesh Bank borrowed BDT 8,122.00 million through the Treasury bill auction held on Sunday, compared with BDT 3,954.00 million in the previous week's bid. Weighted average yields of all bills of different tenors were slightly lower from the previous bid.

Call money rate eased this week. Call money rate ranged between 4.25 and 5.00 percent in the beginning of the week. It continued to ease and fell to around 2.50 and 2.75 percent by the end of the week.

International FX Market

● Euro hit an all-time high against US dollar, yen at 4-1/2 year high, Swiss franc at 9-year high and sterling at 9-month high against dollar.

In the beginning of the week, the dollar held just above a recent record low against the euro and a 4-1/2-year low versus the yen on Monday after the Group of 20 rich and developing nations made no effort at the week-end to stop its decline. G20 central bankers and finance ministers made no mention of currency swings in their post-meeting communiqué. However, the dollar faced renewed pressure from Friday's comments from Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, who appeared to suggest that a weaker dollar may be needed to help cut the US current account deficit.

The dollar plumed a record low against the euro in the middle of the week, as news that Russia may consider boosting the share of euro in its vast foreign exchange currency reserves gave traders another reason to dump the dollar. Higher oil prices also hurt the greenback and a warning issued last week by US Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan about further dollar weakness continued to resonate throughout the market. Greenspan warned that the US deficits were unsustainable and that investor appetite for dollars was bound to dwindle. Dollar also slumped to a nine-year low against the Swiss franc.

Dollar hit an all-time low versus the euro and a 4-1/2 year low on the yen near the end of the week fueled by concerns about the US trade deficit and the view that US administration is supportive of the dollar weakness. US Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan commented last week that US deficits were unsustainable and investor appetite for US assets was bound to shrink. Market has taken this comment as an indication that weaker dollar is a policy tool to be used by USA to curb the increasing trade deficit. Dollar also came under pressure against Asian currencies amid on-going talk of China revaluing its yuan currency against dollar in the next couple of days. Judging by interest rate futures, another rate rise is seen by the market as almost certain at the Fed's final policy meeting of the year in December.

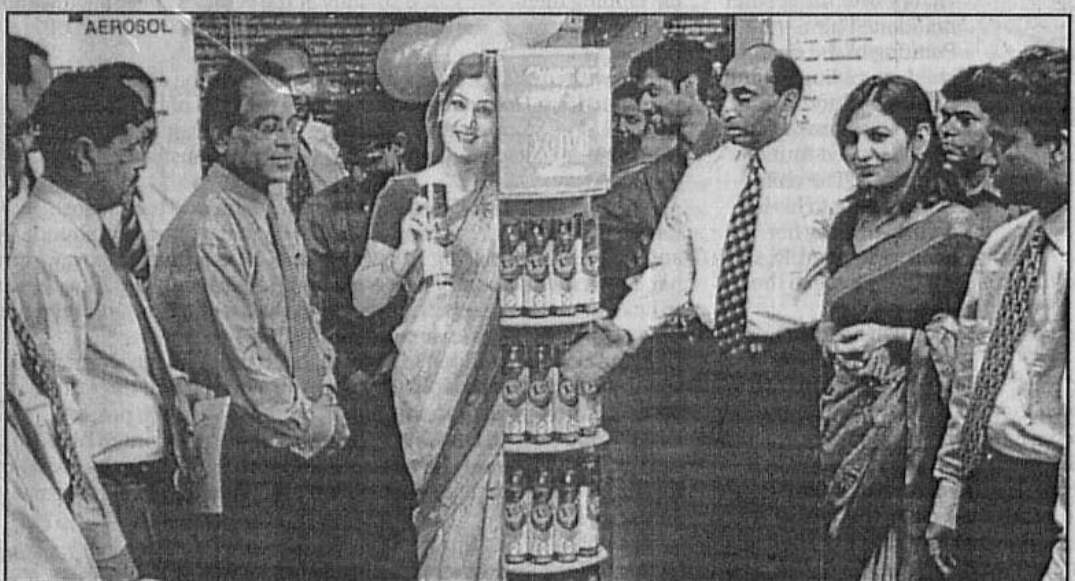


PHOTO: STAR

Square Toiletries Limited launched its new mosquito repellent 'Xpel Aerosol Spray' on Thursday at a function at superstore Agora's Dhamondoutlet in Dhaka. Square Toiletries Ltd Managing Director Anjan Chowdhury and Rahimafroz Superstores Ltd Managing Director Niaz Rahim are seen with other officials in the photograph at the product launching ceremony.

Square Toiletries launches new mosquito repellent spray

Square Toiletries Limited, a leading manufacturer of consumer products, has launched its new mosquito repellent 'Xpel Aerosol Spray' on Thursday in Dhaka.

Square Toiletries Ltd Managing Director Anjan Chowdhury and Rahimafroz Superstores Ltd Managing Director Niaz Rahim uncovered the new product at a ceremony at superstore Agora's Dhamondoutlet.

General Manager of Square Toiletries Ltd Mahmudul Haq, Director (Sale) of Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd KM Saiful Islam, Director of Square Consumer Products Ltd SK Das and other senior officials were also present at the function.

STOCK

TRADED ISSUES IN THE WEEK																																													
DSE					CSE					Financial Performance				DSE					CSE					Financial Performance																					
Company	FV/M/L (Tk.No)	Closing	Price Chg (%)	Turnover Share	Company	FV/M/L (Tk.No)	Closing	Price Chg (%)	Turnover Share	Company	FV/M/L (Tk.No)	AGM	EPS (Tk.)	DPS (%)	Company	FV/M/L (Tk.No)	Closing	Price Chg (%)	Turnover Share	Company	FV/M/L (Tk.No)	AGM	EPS (Tk.)	DPS (%)																					
BANK																																													
AB Bank Ltd.	100/5	401.75	29.81	309.50	75421	403.25	30.08	310.00	8274	37/09/03	4.79	---	---	---	Altaf Textiles Ltd.	100/20	41.00	-5.04	40.00	4330	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																				
City Bank Ltd.	100/5	323.00	-1.87	341.75	2470	316.00	-10.00	330.00	21600	28/04/03	5.56	---	---	---	Dyna Textiles Ltd.	100/20	41.00	-5.04	40.00	4330	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																				
ICB Bank Ltd.	100/5	435.50	4.26	417.75	11710	445.50	10.48	403.25	99	07/12/04	15.8	---	---	---	Dela Spinnery Ltd.	100/20	98.25	-1.50	99.75	23567	10/12/03	7.28	10.0	---	---																				
Prime Bank Ltd.	100/5	500.25	9.92	451.75	14325	500.00	10.22	432.00	1501	17/09/04	162	---	---	---	Apex Weaving & Finis.	100/50	50.25	5.55	49.00	10359	47/25/07	46.75	100.0	---	---																				
National Bank Ltd.	100/20	464.50	19.49	388.75	84003	493.00	25.83	391.75	16840	19/09/01	170	---	---	---	Chany Textiles Ltd.	100/50	51.00	0.00	51.00	1170	11/07/00	50.7	100.0	---	---																				
Southbank Bank Ltd.	100/5	1137.00	-4.13	1188.75	14780	1200.00	4.15	1150.00	10755	18/09/04	199	---	---	---	Sonargang Textiles Ltd.	100/50	90.00	-9.55	99.50	440	91/01/00	Not Traded	---	---																					
Rural Bank Ltd.	100/10	432.75	-5.97	481.50	42000	461.75	-4.40	483.00	30410	---	28.6	---	---	---	Beymco Textiles Ltd.	100/50	58.00	0.41	57.75	18330	54/01/00	50.00	100.0	---	---																				
UBI Ltd.	100/5	1136.25	-1.26	1150.75	11275	1170.00	-1.44	1188.25	1208	14/09/99	152	50.0	---	---	BD Zipped Ltd.	100/50	80.00	-9.55	99.50	440	91/01/00	Not Traded	---	---																					
Eastern Bank Ltd.	100/5	2018.75	2.22	2064.75	3975	2010.00	-2.31	2078.75	330	14/09/04	192	---	---	---	Beymco Denims Ltd.	100/50	83.00	0.91	82.75	6880	80/01/00	49.5	100.0	---	---																				
The Oriental Bank Ltd.	100/5	1753.25	10.10	1593.00	1140	---	---	---	---	08/11/03	-9.21	---	---	---	Prime Textile Ltd.	100/50	68.50	-2.14	70.00	4450	67/50/04	68.00	450	---	---																				
ILDC Ltd.	100/20	1385.00	23.94	1125.50	13540	1300.00	23.81	1050.00	20	26/05/04	77.5	30.0	---	---	M. Hassan Textiles Ltd.	100/50	70.00	0.00	70.00	4450	80/01/00	49.5	100.0	---	---																				
United Lending Co. Ltd.	100/20	303.50	5.93	299.75	3780	---	---	---	---	26/04/04	41.2	20.0	---	---	Sajid Knitwear Ltd.	100/50	23.50	0.00	23.50	1850	23/04/02	40.00	500	---	---																				
Uttara Finance and Invs.	100/5	485.75	7.17	428.50	26650	487.25	3.03	450.00	350	05/05/04	83.5	25.0	---	---	Chs Text Ltd.	100/50	60.00	0.00	60.00	10950	26/01/00	37.00	3200.0	---	---																				
Altaf Islamic Bank.	100/5	353.25	17.72	300.25	6474	351.50	17.76	299.50	1910	19/09/04	11.2	---	---	---	Greenland Textiles Ltd.	100/50	194.75	5.93	192.00	1270	10/01/00	10.00	---	---	---																				
Prime Bank Ltd.	100/5	241.50	8.78	203.00	140122	241.75	8.77	209.00	3526	16/05/04	36.1	20.0	---	---	Memo Fabrics Ltd.	100/50	76.75	-0.97	77.50	26100	75/75/03	71.75	800	---	---																				
Southbank Bank Ltd.	100/5	996.00	9.41	544.75	34540	1000.00	9.75	540.75	44413	29/09/04	37.8	20.0	---	---	Allex Industries Ltd.	100/50	78.25	1.95	76.75	23000	17/50/02	78.50	300	---	---																				
Dhaka Bank Ltd.	100/5	772.75	15.72	667.75	65508	780.00	20.00	650.00	404	27/05/04	40.5	15.0	---	---	Antico Bangladesh Ltd.	100/50	70.50	8.77	69.00	4526	10/01/00	70.00	---	---	---																				
N C C Bank Ltd.	100/5	460.50	17.47	392.00	307103	459.00	15.98	395.75	29213	26/04/04	12.1	10.0	---	---	H.R. Textile Ltd.	100/50	64.00	-12.93	75.50	1576	60/04/02	70.00	100	---	---																				
AMEF First Mutual Fund	100/5	125.25	2.24	125.00	207560	126.75	2.34	125.00	27955	01/11/01	0.11	---	---	---	CNC Kamal Textile	100/50	90.00	-2.56	95.00	200	94/01/00	Not Traded	---	---																					
Dutch Bangla Bank Ltd.	100/5	680.00	0.45	1521.00	21150	1749.75	3.95	1683.25	30	21/03/04	0.1	20.0	---	---	Sajid Knitwear Ltd.	100/50	23.50	0.00	23.50	1850	23/04/02	40.00	500	---	---																				
Middle Finance Ltd.	100/5	471.25	4.46	414.50	60684	465.00	14.48	409.75	60	16/10/03	6.71	---	---	---	Square Textile	100/50	124.20	21.85	120.00/109474	174	24/01/28	100	23457	---	---																				
National Trust Bank Ltd.	100/5	560.25	1.54	540.00	207560	561.75	1.54	538.00	27955	27/05/04	71.7	25.0	---	---	Metro Spinning Ltd.	100/50	139.75	3.90	134.50	4269	13/04/28	15.60	6000	---	---																				
Standard Bank Ltd.	100/5	495.00	15.59	428.25	118355	495.00	15.46	427.50	55300	10/05/04	19.5	---	---	---	Pharmaceuticals Ltd.	100/50	134.50	4.96	131.00	12780	13/04/28	15.60	6000	---	---																				
First Lease Intl. Ltd.	100/5	458.75	14.83	399.50	208811	456.00	13.64	401.25	21766	06/04/04	20.0	---	---	---	PHARMA & CHEM.				---	---	---	---																							
Amor Bangladesh Ltd.	100/5	440.00	19.91	390.75	446994	445.25	14.24	398.75	37130	24/06/04	13.1	20.0	---	---	Amor Bangladesh Ltd.	100/50	66.50	5.91	62.60	4000	58/01/00	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
Bank Asia Ltd.	100/5	738.00	4.71	726.25	150518	738.00	4.76	727.25	11930	24/06/04	29.0	---	---	---	Beymco Pharma	100/50	83.80	10.76	76.00/203580	83.80	91/19	76.20	76078	---	---																				
Nearshore Bank Ltd.	100/5	1376.75	11.85	479.00	114783	515.00	9.61	486.25	53224	19/06/04	27.0	---	---	---	Gloxy (BD) Ltd.	100/50	182.70	1.50	180.00	1500	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
Central Bank Ltd.	100/5	473.50	4.58	644.00	406100	670.25	4.48	641.50	90280	16/05/04	17.4	---	---	---	ACT Limited	100/50	92.10	0.00	84.80	24500	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
INVESTMENT																								---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
ICB	100/5	189.25	-2.85	195.00	11100	130.00	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	Pharmacia	100/50	103.50	0.00	103.50	1700	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
2nd ICB Mutual Fund	100/5	2700.00	4.25	2590.00	10	2600.00	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	Reckitt Benckiser (BD) Ltd.	100/50	136.20	9.84	132.00	2330	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
3rd ICB Mutual Fund	100/5	685.00	4.72	690.00	20	685.00	14.48	620.00	150	12/08/03	32.6	41.0	---	---	Therapeutics	100/50	146.75	8.70	135.00	720	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
4th ICB Mutual Fund	100/5	577.00	---	---	---	510.00	---	---	40	12/08/03	30.9	40.0	---	---	Kolmar Chemical	100/50	44.55	0.79	44.00	540	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
5th ICB Mutual Fund	100/10	370.00	8.69	340.50	580	378.25	10.36	360.00	160	12/08/03	3.1	24.0	---	---	The Ins Bna	100/10	827.50	7.73	821.50	5330	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
6th ICB Mutual Fund	100/10	219.00	4.29	210.00	2940	210.00	-2.33	215.00	910	12/08/03	14.8	17.5	---	---	Reckitt Chemicals	100/10	439.00	2.15	439.00	2015	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
7th ICB Mutual Fund	100/5	132.50	-1.06	215.00	1480	128.00	---	---	10	12/08/03	13.4	12.5	---	---	BCIL	100/10	22.75	-2.31	23.75	6330	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
8th ICB Mutual Fund	100/5	200.75	3.48	194.00	3050	165.00	---	---	4	12/08/03	10.8	13.5	---	---	Wata Chemicals Ltd.	100/10	195.75	3.03	190.00	740	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
TRISRS Mutual Fund	100/10	101.00	-0.49	101.00	1200	111.00	---	---	---	---	5.84	5.00	---	---	BD BBSB Mutual Fund	100/10	439.00	2.15	439.00	2015	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
AMEF First Mutual Fund	100/5	125.25	2.24	125.00	207560	126.75	2.34	125.00	27955	01/11/01	0.11	---	---	---	National Polymer Ltd.	100/10	231.20	-8.86	240.00	1640	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
ICB ANCE First Mutual Fund	100/5	5025.25	25.16	238.50	30900	235.00	2.17	235.00	300	17/08/04	14.9	12.0	---	---	Libra Infusions Ltd.	100/10	164.75	3.78	160.00	800	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
ENGINEERING																								---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---		
Auto Automotives Ltd.	100/5	618.00	3.00	600.00	14131	615.50	5.08	585.75	710	13/12/03	17.7	18.0	---	---	Quora Pharma	100/10	400.25	6.89	374.75	51905	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
Auto Pipes Ltd.	100/5	66.00	4.76	63.00	4880	---	---	---	---	29/06/04	-1.81	---	---	---	Quora Pharma	100/10	400.25	6.89	374.75	51905	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
Dynapine Industries Ltd.	100/5	72.00	3.33	210.00	37172	260.00	2.31	203.00	125	24/12/03	6.71	10.0	---	---	Quora Pharma	100/10	400.25	6.89	374.75	51905	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
Bangladesh Lamp Ltd.	100/5	729.25	6.97	681.25	2545	700.00	12.22	659.00	35	24/06/04	2.77	20.0	---	---	Quora Pharma	100/10	400.25	6.89	374.75	51905	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
Eastern Cable Ltd.	100/5	201.25	2.15	255.25	52035	201.25	2.03	258.00	600	26/06/04	1.1	10.0	---	---	Quora Pharma	100/10	400.25	6.89	374.75	51905	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
Samrat Bangladesh Ltd.	100/5	90.00	10.00	118.75	130	---	---	---	---	18/12/03	32.6	41.0	---	---	Quora Pharma	100/10	400.25	6.89	374.75	51905	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
Atlas Bangladesh Ltd.	100/5	785.50	5.99	118.75	1455	730.00	---	---	---	22/12/03	28.4	10.0	---	---	Quora Pharma	100/10	400.25	6.89	374.75	51905	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
Quamam Drycells Ltd.	100/5	19.00	85.27	17.50	13500	18.00	---	---	---	17/12/03	1.01	10.0	---	---	Quora Pharma	100/10	400.25	6.89	374.75	51905	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
Quamam Drycells Ltd.	100/5	19.00	85.27	17.50	13500	18.00	---	---	---	17/12/03	1.01	10.0	---	---	Quora Pharma	100/10	400.25	6.89	374.75	51905	---	Not Traded	---	---	---	---																			
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Quamam Drycells Ltd.	100/5	19.00	85.27	17.50	13500	18.00	---	---	---	17/12/03	1.01	10.0	---	---	Quora Pharma	100/10	400.25																												