



Mizanur Rahman Sinha (2-R), managing director of The Acme Laboratories Limited, attends the company's marketing and sales conference 2009 at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Dhaka yesterday. The company's performance in 2009 and strategy for 2010 were announced on the occasion.

## Commodities win boost from US jobs data

APP, London

**Oil prices soared above 82 dollars this week as traders took their cue from better-than-expected US jobs data, firmer stock markets and the latest newsflow on the Greek debt crisis.**

On Friday, data showed that the US economy, a major consumer of raw materials, lost 36,000 jobs in February and the unemployment rate held at 9.7 percent.

The report was better than expected by most economists, who had forecast 67,000 nonfarm job losses and a 9.8 percent unemployment rate. Prices rose following last Saturday's powerful 8.8 magnitude quake in Chile, the world's largest copper producing country, which left about 800 people dead.

Three-month aluminium jumped to 2,258 dollars a tonne from 2,095 dollars. Lead increased to 2,260 dollars a tonne from 2,160 dollars. Tin advanced to 17,524 dollars a tonne from 16,740 dollars. Zinc climbed to 2,356 dollars a tonne from 2,162 dollars. Nickel soared to 22,750 dollars a tonne from 20,687 dollars.

By Friday on the London Bullion Market, gold rose to 1,135 dollars an ounce from 1,108.25 dollars the previous week. Silver climbed to 17.25 dollars an ounce from 16.12 dollars.

On the London Platinum and Palladium Market, platinum advanced to 1,578 dollars an ounce from 1,533 dollars. Palladium rose to 466 dollars an ounce from 430 dollars.

By Friday on the New York Board of

Trade (NYBOT), the price of unrefined sugar for delivery in May slid to 21.79 US cents a pound compared with 23.46 cents the previous week. On London's futures exchange, the price of a tonne of white sugar for May sank to 600 pounds from 662.60 pounds.

By Friday on the Chicago Board of Trade, maize for delivery in May edged down to 3.83 dollars a bushel from 3.89 dollars the previous week.

May-dated soybean meal -- used in animal feed -- fell to 9.44 dollars from 9.61 dollars.

Wheat for May was down to 5.01 dollars a bushel from 5.19 dollars.

On Friday, the Malaysian Rubber Board's benchmark SMR20 rose to 313.25 US cents a kilo from 309.70 cents on February 25.

## Oil lifts

AFP, New York

**Oil prices rallied Friday as traders applauded a better-than-expected US jobs report suggesting recovery in the world's biggest energy-consuming economy is gaining traction.**

New York's main contract, light sweet crude for delivery in April, advanced 1.29 dollars to close at 81.50 dollars a barrel.

In London, Brent North Sea crude for April settled at 1.35 dollars a barrel, up 1.29 dollars from Thursday's close.

The Labor Department reported the US economy shed fewer jobs than expected in February and the unemployment rate held at 9.7 percent despite severe winter storms.

Nonfarm payrolls fell by 36,000, surprising most analysts who projected 67,000 job losses early Friday because of massive snow storms that crippled the country's northeastern region.

Most economists had expected the unemployment rate to rise to 9.8 percent from 9.7 percent in January.

Oil also benefited from positive news from China, the second-biggest energy consumer.

## Weekly Currency Roundup

March 1-4, 2010

### International Markets

The euro eased against the dollar on Thursday ahead of a European Central Bank meeting but retained some support as investors encouraged by Greece's latest austerity measures cut some of their record short positions in the single currency. The euro was dragged down by its fall against the yen as short-term players sold higher-yielding currencies after Asian stocks faltered and prompted investors to trim riskier positions, traders said. That move also pushed the dollar to a three-month low against the yen. The ECB is expected to hold interest rates at a record low of 1.0 percent and outline the next steps in its gradual withdrawal from emergency lending measures. The market focus will be on whether it announces any change to the extra liquidity it has provided for the banking system, and traders will also be listening to ECB President Jean-Claude Trichet's remarks on Greece. Greece announced plans for a further \$6.5 billion in pay cuts and tax hikes on Wednesday to reduce its deficit easing

worries about its debt crisis and helping the year-one Greece-Germany debt spread narrow to its lowest since mid-February. But sentiment remains fragile as investors are unsure if the package will be enough to generate additional support from bigger European Union members such as Germany and France. The BoE is expected to keep rates unchanged, but there have been indications it is leaving the door open to more quantitative easing. Any move to expand its asset purchases could lead to the pound tumbling again, traders said. The dollar has come under pressure versus the yen on the back of comments from Federal Reserve officials that interest rates in the US will stay low for a long time.

### Local Money Market

The call money rate traded in the range of 2.5-3.0 this week.

### Local Market FX

The USD was on an uptrend against the BDT this week. The market was active and there was ample liquidity.

-- Standard Chartered Bank



Rashed Ahmed Chowdhury, director of Mutual Trust Bank (MTB), inaugurates the Banani branch of MTB Securities, the stock brokerage arm of the bank, in Dhaka on Wednesday. Anis A Khan, managing director and chief executive officer, is also seen.

MTB SECURITIES REGISTRATION OF VALUE AND MARKET LIST OF COMPANIES: Securities and Exchange Commission vide its Notification No. SEC/MC/CMRC/2010-2013 dated March 01, 2010 has informed the following: To make the capital markets more transparent, efficient, and dynamic, the following decisions have been taken regarding the proposed change of the face value and market lot shares of listed companies in a meeting of the Ministry of Finance held 5th November, 2009 headed by the Honorable Finance Minister. "In future, the minimum face value of all the listed companies should be standardized. Since the face value of most of the listed companies is Tk. 100.00, fixing a standard face value of Tk. 100.00 would be easier. The face value of the shares of existing companies shall remain unchanged. "In future, the market lot of all the listed companies should be uniform to implement the above mentioned decision, all the listed companies are advised to refrain from taking any initiative to change the existing face value of shares of their companies.

EHLAs per audited quarterly accounts for the 2nd quarter (half-yearly) ended on 31.01.2010 (from August 2009 to January 2010), NPAT= Tk. 16.38 million, EPS= Tk. 2.64 as against Tk. 16.55 m. and 10.74 respectively for the same period of the previous year. Whereas net loss of the company was Tk. 14.79 m. and EPS of Tk. 16.00 m. for the same period of the previous year.

MEGCOMILK & EASTRNLIVE: Trading of the shares of the company will be allowed only in the spot market from March 25, 2010 and trading of the share will remain suspended during the month of March. The notice of termination of the suspension of trading of the shares of the company will be given on March 25, 2010.

PRIMEINSUR Stock dividend @ 20% for the year 2009 AGM: 03/05/10, Record date: 15/03/10, EPS= Tk. 28.68, NAV= Tk. 143.80 for the year ended on December 31, 2009. PEOPLESINS Stock dividend @ 20% for the year 2009 AGM: 27/04/10, Record date: 16/03/10, EPS= Tk. 33.17, NAV= Tk. 242.78 for the year ended on December 31, 2009.

AHMSITMF As per audited accounts on 30/06/09, NPAT= Tk. 55.32 m. with Realized Earnings Per Unit of Tk. 0.33 as against Tk. 84.20 m. and net loss of Tk. 2.83 million with EPS of Tk. (1.42). Accumulated loss of the company was Tk. (33.11) million as on 31.12.09. As per profit and loss account of the company, there was no turnover/sales for the period ended on 31.12.09.

QSMILSK: As per audited quarterly accounts for the 1st quarter ended on 31 December 2009 (October to December), the Company has reported net loss of Tk. (2.83) million with EPS of Tk. (1.42). Accumulated loss of the company was Tk. (33.11) million as on 31.12.09. As per profit and loss account of the company, there was no turnover/sales for the period ended on 31.01.2010 (from August 2009 to January 2010), NPAT= Tk. 16.38 million, EPS= Tk. 2.64 as against Tk. 16.55 m. and 10.74 respectively for the same period of the previous year. Whereas net loss of the company was Tk. 14.79 m. and EPS of Tk. 16.00 m. for the same period of the previous year.

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