



COPAL COCOA *Info*

A Weekly Newsletter of Cocoa Producers' Alliance

Issue No. 199

2nd – 6th October 2006

ICCO Daily Cocoa Prices

	ICCO daily price (SDRs/tonne)	ICCO daily price (US\$/tonne)	London futures (£/tonne)	New York futures (US\$/tonne)
2 nd October	1046.02	1545.29	845.00	1495.00
3 rd October	1035.48	1533.97	839.67	1480.67
4 th October	1035.99	1530.35	840.00	1477.00
5 th October	1054.96	1561.21	857.33	1510.33
6 th October	1037.90	1533.07	845.67	1482.67
Average	1,042.07	1,540.78	845.53	1,489.13

Up-coming Events

- 15th International Cocoa Research Conference, 9th – 14th October 2006, San José, Costa Rica

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Have you had your cocoa today?

**International Financial Futures and Options Exchange (LIFFE)
London Futures Market – Summary of Trading Activities
(£ per tonne)**

Monday 2nd October 2006

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	Daily High	Daily Low	Volume
Dec 2006	849	830	-19	849	830	2,781
Mar 2007	863	846	-17	863	846	1,067
May 2007	873	859	-17	873	859S	270
Jul 2007	872	871	-17	872	872	78
Sep 2007	898	885	-17	898S	885S	259
Dec. 2007	903	898	-17	903	898	13
Mar-08	915	910	-17	915	915	1
May-08		920	-17			0
Jul-08		930	-18			0
Sep-08		938	-18			0
Totals		889				4,469

Tuesday 3rd October 2006

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	831	824	-6	837	822	2,972
Mar 2007	849	841	-5	850	840	757
May 2007	861	854	-5	863S	854	282
Jul 2007	871	867	-4	877	869S	171
Sep 2007	885	880	-5	889	880	90
Dec. 2007	899	894	-4	899	897	48
Mar-08	911	906	-4	911	911	4
May-08		917	-3			0
Jul-08		927	-3			0
Sep-08		935	-3			0
Totals		885				4,324

Wednesday 4th October 2006

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	824	825	1	845	821	4,675
Mar 2007	840	841	0	861	838	1,906
May 2007	854	854	0	871S	851	1,988
Jul 2007	867	867	0	882S	865	32
Sep 2007	895	881	1	895S	879	136
Dec. 2007	908	894	0	908S	908S	2
Mar-08		907	1			0
May-08	931	916	-1	931	915S	12
Jul-08		927	0			0
Sep-08		935	0			0
Totals		885				8,751

Thursday 5th October 2006

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	826	843	18	851	825	4,169
Mar 2007	846	858	17	865	841	1,196

May 2007	859	871	17	870	859S	88
Jul 2007	877	885	18	889	877	113
Sep 2007	887	899	18	898S	887S	2
Dec. 2007	904	911	17	910S	904S	20
Mar-08	915	924	17	915	915	5
May-08	923	933	17	932S	923	6
Jul-08	935	944	17	943	935	35
Sep-08		953	18			0
Totals		902				5,634

Friday 6th October 2006

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	842	831	-12	848	825	2,619
Mar 2007	858	846	-12	862	841	1,152
May 2007	873	860	-11	873	856	132
Jul 2007	888	873	-12	888	871	29
Sep 2007		887	-12			0
Dec. 2007	913	899	-12	913S	897S	176
Mar-08		910	-14			0
May-08	935	920	-13	935S	935S	175
Jul-08		930	-14			0
Sep-08	944	941	-12	944	944	5
Totals		890				4,288

New York Board of Trade
(New York Futures Market – Summary of Trading Activities)
(US\$ per tonne)

Monday 2nd October 2006

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	1463 1469	1463	-9	1474	1455	4831
Mar 2007	1501 1503	1498	-6	1503	1490	724
May 2007	0 1527 ^A	1521	-6	1523	1523	97
Jul 2007	1550 0	1547	-6	1550	1550	131
Sep 2007	1570 ^B 1575 ^A	1571	-6	0	0	711
Dec 2007	1596 ^B 1600 ^A	1595	-5	1593	1593	78
Mar 2008	0 0	1624	-5	0	0	200
May 2008	0 0	1645	-5	0	0	0
Jul 2008	0 0	1667	-5	0	0	0
Sep. 2008	0 0	1680	0	0	0	500
Totals		1581				7,272

Tuesday 3rd October 2006

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	1458 1465	1449	-14	1468	1447	4357
Mar 2007	1495 1496	1484	-14	1500	1484	1065
May 2007	1517 ^B 1520 ^A	1508	-13	1522	1510	102
Jul 2007	1546 0	1534	-13	1546	1546	1
Sep 2007	1570 0	1559	-12	1570	1570	572
Dec 2007	1585 ^B 1599 ^A	1582	-13	0	0	20
Mar 2008	0 0	1611	-13	0	0	0
May 2008	0 0	1632	-13	0	0	0
Jul 2008	0 0	1653	-14	0	0	0
Sep. 2008	0 0	1672	-8	0	0	500
Totals		1568				6,617

Wednesday 4th October 2006

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	1455 1457	1448	-1	1463	1435	6138
Mar 2007	1490 1493	1483	-1	1496	1470	1899
May 2007	1518 0	1506	-2	1518	1496	420
Jul 2007	1540 ^B 1544 ^A	1532	-2	0	0	50
Sep 2007	1565 ^B 1570 ^A	1556	-3	1559	1550	85
Dec 2007	1585 ^B 1593 ^A	1580	-2	1589	1573	169
Mar 2008	0 0	1608	-3	0	0	0
May 2008	0 0	1629	-3	0	0	0
Jul 2008	0 0	1650	-3	0	0	0
Sep. 2008	0 0	1669	-3	0	0	0
Totals		1566				8,761

Thursday 5th October 2006

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
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Dec 2006	1453 1455	1475	27	1491	1453	7199
Mar 2007	1489 1490	1509	26	1524	1489	1647
May 2007	1515 0	1532	26	1545	1515	25
Jul 2007	1542 0	1556	24	1563	1541	482
Sep 2007	1555 ^b 1564 ^A	1581	25	1591	1568	598
Dec 2007	1587 0	1605	25	1587	1587	30
Mar 2008	0 1616 ^A	1633	25	0	0	0
May 2008	0 0	1654	25	0	0	0
Jul 2008	0 0	1674	24	1669	1658	29
Sep. 2008	0 0	1694	25	0	0	0
Totals		945				10,010

Friday 6th October 2006

Month	Opening Trans	Settle	Change	High	Low	Volume
Dec 2006	1468 1474	1451	-24	1478	1445	6128
Mar 2007	1504 0	1487	-22	1510	1481	2438
May 2007	1525 ^b 1529 ^A	1510	-22	1529	1510	20
Jul 2007	0 1554 ^A	1535	-21	1530	1530	40
Sep 2007	1573 ^b 1577 ^A	1559	-22	1577	1554	77
Dec 2007	1598 ^b 1605 ^A	1584	-21	1596	1595	21
Mar 2008	0 0	1611	-22	1626	1626	17
May 2008	0 0	1633	-21	0	0	0
Jul 2008	0 0	1654	-20	0	0	0
Sep. 2008	0 0	1673	-21	1680	1664	512
Totals		1570				3,125

Spot Prices (US \$ per tonne)

	2 nd October	3 rd October	4 th October	5 th October	6 th October.
Main Crop Ghana, Grade 1	1838	1824	1823	1850	1826
Main Crop Ivory Coast, Grade 1	1740	1726	1725	1752	1728
Main Crop Nigerian, 1	1718	1704	1703	1730	1706
Superior Arriba	1938	1924	1923	1950	1926
Sanchez f.a.q.	1698	1684	1683	1710	1686
Malaysian 110	1455	1441	1440	1467	1443
Sulawesi f.a.q.	1500	1486	1485	1515	1488
Ecuador Cocoa Liquor	2487	2463	2462	2508	2467
Pure Prime Press African Type Cocoa Butter	3862	3825	3823	3894	3831
10/12% Natural Cocoa Press Cake	829	821	821	836	822

Source: Cocoa Merchants' Association-

News

Bolivia: Government, Coca Growers May Meet

October 02, 2006 15 31 GMT

The Bolivian government hopes to meet with five groups of coca growers Oct. 3 but the groups have not yet replied, Prensa Latina reported Oct. 2. The meeting is an attempt to discuss reports that two hundred coca farmers allegedly attacked military personnel Sept. 29 for attempting to eradicate coca crops in central Bolivia. The government intends to go ahead with plans Oct. 3 to eradicate about 1,110 acres of coca and 1,750 illegal settlements in Carrasco National Park

Cocoa: promising farm produce staple

October 2, 2006

Many giant cocoa importers worldwide have seen Vietnam as one of major cocoa suppliers in the near future after exploring the country's potential, according to Nguyen Van Hoa, vice chairman of the Vietnam Cocoa Coordinating Committee.

Two years ago, Cargill Vietnam, a US wholly-invested company operating in southern Dong Nai province, set up cocoa purchasing stations in the Central Highlands province of Dac Lak and the southern province of Ben Tre, home to largest cocoa-cultivated areas in Vietnam. The move is aimed at preparing facilities and labour forces for the company's future development, according to the company's director in charge of purchasing cocoa products Nguyen Vinh Thanh.

Vietnam is estimated to turn out 500 tonnes of cocoa in the future though its current output is still modest with 80 tonnes. This due to the implementation of a Governmental cocoa development programme launched in 2003, according to Thanh. Apart from Cargill Vietnam, five other world famous cocoa businesses plan to import cocoa products from Vietnam while some local enterprises have invested millions of USD to build cocoa processing plants. The cocoa growing area in Vietnam increased to 4,500 hectares in 2005 from 1,500 hectares in 2004. The figure is estimated to reach 8,500 hectares by the year-end and 20,000 hectares by 2010, concentrating mainly in the southern provinces of Ben Tre, Tien Giang, Ba Ria-Vung Tau, Binh Phuoc and the Central Highlands of Dak Lak and Dac Nong.

Cocoa trees have been planted in the Central Highlands region as early as 1940. In 1998, the Agriculture and Forest Promotion Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development grew cocoa on 25 hectares in the outlying area of Buon Ma Thuot (the Central Highlands) on a trial basis, creating a positive sign for the development of Vietnam's cocoa industry. Expanding cocoa areas is part of Vietnam's policy to develop industrial crops, particularly in the Central Highlands region, which is now famous for a wide range of promising products like coffee, rubber, pepper and cashew. (VNA)

Vietnam, Lao ink deal on industrial co-operation

Vietnamese Industry Minister Hoang Trung Hai and Lao Energy and Mining Minister Bosaikham Vongdara signed in Hanoi on September 30 a memorandum of understanding on co-operation in industrial development. The two sides agreed to co-operate in developing the electricity sector; exploring, exploiting and processing coal and minerals in Laos, particularly at potassium mines in central Laos.

The two sides will focus on the construction of Xekaman 3 hydro-power plant, which has started and is scheduled to complete in 2009. Vietnam and Laos will continue other hydro-power projects and build power transmission lines, including those from Xekaman, and Attopeu of Laos to Da Nang and Pleiku of Vietnam. The Lao ministry also asked for Vietnam's assistance in training managers for energy, mining and information technology sectors. (VNA)

Czech Export Bank to co-finance Vietnam's industrial projects

The Czech Export Bank (CEB) will bankroll 60% of the total investment of US \$1.7 billion to Vietnam's Phu Son Cement Plant project and seven other projects in energy, construction material and food processing industries. CEB and the Bank for Investment and Development of Vietnam (BIDV) signed in Hanoi on September 29 a contract to co-finance the Phu Son project and a memorandum of understanding on investment in seven potential projects.

BIDV General Director Tran Bac Ha said the Phu Son Cement Plant will be built in northern Ninh Binh province at a cost of US \$126.7 million, to which CEB will provide 60% in equipment to be imported from the Czech Republic.

Five among seven potential projects are to build a cement plant in northern Ha Nam province, hydro-electric power plants in northwestern Son La province, central Quang Nam province and central highlands Lam Dong province, and a thermo-electric power plant in central Ha Tinh province. Two other projects are for the transfer of Czech's beer production technology and establishment of a joint-stock company to manufacture hydro-electric turbines. The signing of these documents took place during a Vietnam official visit by the Czech Republic's President, Vaclav Klaus. (VNA)

China-ASEAN Expo: opportunity for Vietnamese enterprises

The third China-ASEAN Expo (CAEXPO 2006) will be held between October 31 and November 3 in China's Nanning province, providing a chance for Vietnamese businesses to increase their exports and boost investment and tourism co-operation with Chinese partners, according to a VCCI official. The expo will focus on showcasing various commodities such as electric equipment, automobiles and auto parts, household utensils, construction materials, machines, processed food and aquatic products, said Pham Gia Tuc, General Secretary of the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI).

During the fair, VCCI will co-ordinate with the Ministry of Planning and Investment, the Trade Ministry and the authorities of several provinces and cities to organise the Vietnam-China Economic and Trade Forum. CAEXPO 2006 will be held simultaneously with the 3rd China-ASEAN Business and Investment Summit, said an official of the CAEXPO Secretariat. He added that by August 31, about 1,800 Chinese and ASEAN enterprises had registered to attend the expo.

CAEXPO, an annual fair initiated by Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao in 2004, has become an important economic and trade co-operation forum between China and ASEAN countries, as well as between China and Vietnam. At the 2nd CAEXPO, a quantity of commodities worth over US \$1 billion were sold and the value of signed co-operation projects reached nearly US \$5.3 billion. (VNA)

Vietnam, Cambodia open border gate to traffic

The Moc Bai -Bavet border gate, which lies between Vietnam's southern Tay Ninh province and Cambodia's Sway Rieng province, was officially open to traffic on September 30. The move was considered as the first step in implementing the air, sea and land transport agreement signed by the two governments. It will also help promote the economic, cultural and tourism exchanges between Vietnam, Cambodia and other member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Vietnamese Vice Minister of Transport and Communications Pham The Minh said that Vietnam and Cambodia plan to open seven other pairs of border gates along the two countries' border by 2010 to facilitate investment, trade and tourism activities. (VNA)

U.S. Labor Department Funds Project to Evaluate Effectiveness of Anti-Child-Labor efforts in the Cocoa Industry

Tue Oct 3,

/PRNewswire-USNewswire/

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao today announced the funding of a \$4.3 million project to oversee public and private efforts to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in the cocoa sector. "The global elimination of exploitative child labor requires a strong and sustained commitment from governments and industry," said Chao. "This \$4.3 million initiative will study the health of exploited children, train public officials in Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana to monitor the incidence of child labor in the cocoa industry and report to the department and Congress on the status of child labor certification, monitoring and verification systems."

West Africa represents the world's major source for cocoa production, accounting for 70 percent of the world market. Cocoa farming is labor intensive and, as a result, thousands of children are involved in work on cocoa farms, including tasks considered to be among the worst forms of child labor. For many of these children, working in the cocoa sector deprives them of the chance to attend school. The three-year project will be spearheaded by the Payson Center for International Development and Technology at Tulane University in New

Orleans. The Payson Center is the university's newest interdisciplinary center for education, research and service. In implementing this project, Tulane University will partner with the West African Health Organization.

The university will study the health effects on children working under exploitative conditions in the cocoa sector and train government officials in both Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana to monitor the incidence of work in this sector. Tulane University will also prepare annual reports for the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and the U.S. Congress on progress being made toward implementation of a child-labor-free cocoa certification system, covering at least 50 percent of the cocoa growing areas in Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana. The reports will also cover efforts to establish child labor monitoring and verification systems to assess progress made toward meeting obligations under the Harkin- Engel Protocol.

The Harkin-Engel Protocol is a voluntary agreement signed in September 2001 by the Chocolate Manufacturers Association (CMA) and the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) and witnessed by the congressional offices of U.S. Sen. Tom Harkin (news, bio, voting record) (D-Iowa) and U.S. Rep. Eliot Engel (news, bio, voting record) (D-N.Y.). The protocol, together with the joint statement of Oct. 1, 2005, calls for action by the chocolate and cocoa industry to address the issue of exploitative child labor, especially the worst forms, in the West African cocoa sector. The Harkin-Engel Protocol also includes a commitment by industry to develop and implement voluntary, industry-wide standards of public certification that cocoa beans and their derivative products have been grown and processed without the worst forms of child labor.

The Labor Department's Bureau of International Labor Affairs is responsible for monitoring the progress of all DOL-funded international child labor projects, including this one. Since 1995, DOL has provided \$530 million for international technical assistance to combat exploitative child labor around the world. U.S. Labor Department releases are accessible on the Internet at <http://www.dol.gov>. The information in this news release will be made available in alternate format upon request (large print, Braille, audio tape or disc) from the COAST office. Specify which news release when placing a request at 202-693-7765 or TTY 202- 693-7755. The U.S. Department of Labor is committed to providing America's employers and employees with easy access to understandable information on how to comply with its laws and regulations. For more information, visit <http://www.dol.gov/compliance>

Côte d'Ivoire customs strike over toxic-waste case

Loucoumane Coulibaly | Côte d'Ivoire

03 October 2006 12:23

Abidjan, (Reuters)

Customs officials in Côte d'Ivoire began a strike on Tuesday to demand the release of three colleagues imprisoned over a toxic-waste scandal, preventing registration of cocoa shipments for export, an official said. "Ships which already have their [customs] documents signed can leave [the port] but ships which will try to obtain them today [Tuesday] will be blocked," one customs officer, who asked not to be named, told Reuters.

The strike started just days before the world's number one cocoa producer was due to open its new 2006/2007 harvest season. Customs officers in the West African country were among several officials detained over the dumping in the economic capital Abidjan in August of poisonous chemical slops unloaded from a Panamanian-registered tanker. Eight people have died from inhaling noxious fumes from the dumped waste and thousands more have been treated in hospitals.

'Healthy Communities' Program Expands Work to Improve Life for Cocoa Farm Families

Wednesday October 4,

Source: World Cocoa Foundation

/PRNewswire/

WASHINGTON -- Bill Guyton, President, World Cocoa Foundation, today announced a significant expansion of efforts to strengthen cocoa farmers and their communities in West Africa. The "Healthy Communities" program will benefit up to 150,000 farm families over the next five years by supporting economic, social and environmentally sustainable development at the farm level.

"Healthy Communities" will be one of the largest public-private partnerships focused on sustainability in West Africa and is funded by chocolate and cocoa industry members and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). "We know that profitable crops can create healthy rural communities in developing regions of the world," said Guyton. "Industry-supported programs providing education, information and support

for sustainable agriculture already are forming the foundation for stronger, more prosperous cocoa farm families and communities in Africa, Asia and the Americas. Today, we're taking a significant step to expand this work through the launch of the 'Healthy Communities' program."

"Healthy Communities" builds on progress achieved by the Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP), launched in 2002 as a pilot effort to determine how best to help cocoa farm families in West Africa, where 70 percent of the world's cocoa is grown. STCP pilot projects were undertaken in the Ivory Coast, Ghana, Cameroon and Nigeria. Program partners included USAID, WCF, the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), SOCODEVI, CABI Bioscience, host country farmer cooperatives, and local and national governments and organizations.

"We have seen the positive impact strong public-private partnerships can have in building agricultural sustainability and improving lives in the developing world," said Jeff Hill, Senior Agriculture Advisor, Africa Bureau, USAID. "Healthy Communities' capitalizes on the strong partnerships already in place and uses such innovative approaches as Farmer Field Schools and development of business-oriented organizations to make measurable and sustainable differences in the lives of cocoa farmers and their families."

A central element of "Healthy Communities" is the significant expansion of Farmer Field Schools. Designed to teach farmers about disease and pest control, crop management and improved farming techniques, Farmer Field Schools have proven highly effective in driving change in cocoa communities. Over the past four years, approximately 200,000 cocoa farmers around the world have benefited from Farmer Field Schools, principally in Southeast Asia. Participating West African farmers, who also have marketed their crops collectively, have seen their incomes increase by 20 to 55 percent. Farmer Field Schools also are helping ensure that cocoa is grown responsibly and that children are not exposed to unsafe working conditions on family farms. Through the "Healthy Communities" initiative, 150,000 additional West African farmers are expected to benefit from Farmer Field Schools between 2007 and 2011.

"We know from experience the difference programs like this can make for a farm family," said Stephan Weise, of the IITA and STCP. "The skills farmers acquire through Farmer Field Schools and related learning approaches can result in a significant increase in family incomes, improving the standard of living and providing opportunities for young people to continue their education. Increasing and diversifying farmer incomes through greater production and marketing efficiency are the key to driving long-term change in West Africa."

"Healthy Communities" also will provide farmers with business advice to help them sell their cocoa crop more effectively. A partnership with Canadian development organization SOCODEVI will organize cocoa farmers into selling groups through farmers' organizations, increasing their ability to capture a better price for their crop.

"We want to provide farmers with the knowledge they need to be more effective not just at farming, but at the business of farming," said Mario Boivin of SOCODEVI. "By enhancing the individual cocoa farmer's skills and by building the capacities of the farmers' organizations, we can bring about real, sustainable change."

"Healthy Communities" is sponsored by the World Cocoa Foundation as well as through additional grants from ADM Cocoa, Blommer Chocolate Company, Cadbury, The Hershey Company, Ferrero, Kraft, Mars, Inc., and Nestle.

"Healthy Communities" is the latest in the cocoa industry's broad approach to driving economic, social and environmentally sustainable development in the world's cocoa-growing regions. The industry and its partners also are working to improve rural access to education through teacher training and vocational education programs that are benefiting thousands of young people in West Africa. The industry also is a leader in efforts to ensure that cocoa is grown responsibly and in ways that support a healthy tropical ecosystem.

"The well-being of cocoa farmers and their families is of utmost importance to Cote d'Ivoire," said Ambassador Daouda Diabate, Cote d'Ivoire's ambassador to the United States. "We are pleased to strongly support the 'Healthy Communities' program along with USAID and the World Cocoa Foundation. Partnerships like this can make a difference for millions of people in Cote d'Ivoire who depend on cocoa for their livelihood."

"We are seeing progress in many of the cocoa-growing communities in West Africa," added Bernadette Paolo, President and CEO of the Africa Society. "I want to thank the World Cocoa Foundation for its commitment and

its leadership in developing the partnerships and programs that are creating change and improving the quality of life for farm families around the world."

World Cocoa Foundation

Established in 2000, the World Cocoa Foundation plays a leading role in strengthening the partnership between industry and cocoa farmer. Through its nearly 60 member companies, the WCF supports a range of economic, social and environmental programs in cocoa communities in Africa, Asia, Central and South America. For additional information on cocoa farming and programs helping rural families around the world that depend upon this important crop for their livelihood, please visit <http://www.worldcocoa.org>.

U.S. Agency for International Development

The U.S. Agency for International Development has provided economic and humanitarian assistance worldwide for more than 40 years. For more information on USAID's programs, please visit <http://www.usaid.gov>.

Abidjan moves to end customs strike

Reuters

October 04

ABIDJAN, -- Ivory Coast on Tuesday released three customs officials held over a toxic waste scandal, ending a customs strike which briefly halted registration of cocoa exports days ahead of a new crop, officials said. "The strike has been lifted. We have gone back to work. We have been informed that they have been released," a customs official told reporters.

Tuesday's strike came just days before the world's top cocoa producer was due to open its new 2006/2007 harvest season, although some exporters told reporters they were still waiting for new harvest beans to arrive so shipments were not affected. The three customs officers were among 10 people detained over the dumping of deadly chemicals in the main port city of Abidjan in August which caused at least eight deaths and prompted tens of thousands of people to seek medical help.

The customs agents were arrested on suspicion they failed in their mission to control goods and substances being unloaded, enabling the waste to enter the city, but the customs service argued it was not their responsibility to check the waste. Customs officials said earlier that bail had been set at 50 million CFA francs each, but a senior customs officer told reporters that an investigating judge had released the three on bail of a tenth of that sum. "I think it was the Economy and Finance Ministry which paid the five million francs for each of them," said the senior official, who declined to be named.

Justice ministry spokesperson Ali Yeo was unable to confirm how much was paid in bail but he said the three had made personal requests to be released. "They requested bail and the judge decided it was justified," Yeo told reporters by telephone. He added that two French executives from Trafigura, the firm which chartered the tanker which offloaded the waste, had also submitted bail requests but the ministry had not yet responded. -

Ghanaian govt to review cocoa price

October 4, 2006,

By Nqobile Ndlovu

Johannesburg (AND) The government of Ghana is currently in the process of reviewing upward, the producer price of Cocoa for the 2006/2007 Season, revealed Kwadwo Mpiani, chief of staff and minister for presidential affairs.

Currently, producer price is pegged at ₵562,500.00 (\$60.7), said Hi Ghana. Mpiani last Sunday announced that government was to embark on the tarring of selected roads in the cocoa growing areas. The occasion, said the reports, was the celebration of the National Cocoa Day, under the theme "Towards Increase Local Processing And Consumption of Cocoa And its Derivatives". According to Mpiani, government had decided to revive the sheanut and coffee industries and that the Ghana Cocoa Board would soon meet with the buyers and producers of the two commodities to agree on minimum producer prices so as to provide the necessary incentives to the farmers, said Hi Ghana. He also explained that the move would provide the basis for funding arrangements for sheanut and coffee, production. As part of the school feeding programme, the Chief of Staff indicated that cocoa products would be served the children. The chief executive of the Ghana Cocoa Board, Isaac Osei, reportedly called for a change of marketing strategies to increase the sale of domestically processed cocoa. He announced

that COCOBOD had entered into supply agreements with a number of reputable cocoa processing companies interested in establishing factories in the country. "The long term goal is to develop the capacity to process locally about 50 percent of our cocoa productions", Hi Ghana quoyed him. Johannesburg Bureau, AND

Ivorian gendarmes block bridge during protest

October 04 2006

By Ange Aboa and Peter Murphy

Abidjan - Ivory Coast gendarmes protesting about unpaid bonuses fired shots and briefly blocked a key bridge in Abidjan on Wednesday, but later withdrew after senior military officers persuaded them to leave, witnesses said. They said the protesters blocked for more than an hour a road bridge across a lagoon to the Plateau business district in the economic capital of the world's top cocoa grower. There were no reports of injuries and traffic was flowing by late morning.

The incident reflected tensions in the volatile city, where a toxic waste scandal that killed eight people and the postponement of elections have increased uncertainty in a country split by a 2002-2003 civil war. The protesting gendarmes, who witnesses said numbered between 15 and 40, withdrew after Armed Forces chief General Philippe Mangou and the Commander of the Gendarmes, Edouard Kassarate, went to talk with them, officers said. "This was stupidity on the part of our men who said they weren't happy. They are demanding bonuses and that's why they blocked the bridge," one gendarme told Reuters by telephone. "Some of them had weapons. It was just a handful," he said.

After leaving the bridge, the gendarmes were taken first to the headquarters of the Republican Guard in the southern side of the city before being driven for questioning at the Gendarmerie training school, another gendarme told Reuters. Abidjan residents say increasing street protests and strikes reflect a crumbling of law and order as a peace process drags on in the West African country, which is split between a rebel-held north and the government-held south where Abidjan lies.

Political tensions have risen ahead of a meeting of regional West African leaders in the Nigerian capital Abuja later this week to discuss how Ivory Coast should be governed once a UN-backed year-long transition expires this month. In the northern rebel stronghold of Bouake, scores of local residents turned out to demand President Laurent Gbagbo step down after his UN-extended mandate runs out on October 31. But he insists he will remain the lawful president until elections are eventually held.

Polls have been delayed in the former French colony as progress on a string of peace deals has been repeatedly hindered by bickering and violent protests over the key issues of disarmament and the voter identification process. Cocoa exporters said Wednesday's incident had no effect on their operations, despite initial alarm. "We've heard it's over so I'm reassuring our partners upcountry," said the buying manager for one international exporter in Abidjan.

Liberia: Farmers Detest Produce Smuggling, Seeks LPMC Intervention

The Analyst (Monrovia)

October 5, 2006

In the wake of reported produce smuggling in the country as a result of increase in cocoa harvest in rural Liberia mainly in Lofa, Bong, and Nimba Counties, farmers and produce buying agents have called on the Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation (LPMC), to intervene to abort the cheap sale of the produce outside the country. According to reports, there are stockpile of cocoa beans in these counties in the face of heightened expectation among farmers that the PMC would purchase their produce.

However, sources told The Analyst that the farmers seem to be running out of patience and they could possibly be tempted to take their produce to neighboring Guinea, Sierra Leone or Ivory Coast for sale if the LPMC continues to delay in responding to their call. The LPMC recently published its price circular and the corporation is said to be exerting frantic efforts to move into the interior to embark on its traditional role of buying and selling produce for and on behalf of the Liberian Government.

Recently, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf emphasized the relevance of the corporation during a press interview and promised to empower the entity to perform its statutory functions, which include among other activities, rice importation and purchasing of produce respectively. Despite the President's commitment, the corporation continues to encounter financial difficulty in carrying out its duties; a situation, which most farmers said was responsible for the current produce smuggling in the counties.

Observers cautioned that the corporation stands to lose its traditional value should it allow the farmers' interests and expectations to be dashed due to lack of financial resources, saying this could be a big minus to government's revenue generation drive. Many agricultural experts and ordinary Liberians have expressed concern over the slow pace at which the LPMC is moving in working along with farmers as a result of government's delay to provide needed support to the once viable agricultural entity to help resuscitate the local economy.

Supplies increase, says cocoa board

Thursday | October 5, 2006

Clive Bryan, Gleaner Writer

The Cocoa Industry Board (CIB) is reporting a significant increase in cocoa supplied by farmers in the months following the announcement of a 100 per cent increase in the price paid per box for raw cocoa. Nauburn Nelson, secretary/ manager of the CIB, says that a growing number of cocoa farmers are now seeking technical assistance to revive existing fields. Farmers are also requesting seedlings and other inputs to plant new fields, Mr. Nelson told Farmers Weekly. He says there has been a marked improvement in the supply of raw cocoa from farmers since the price increase was announced in August. He explains that the CIB bought just over 600 boxes from farmers in August this year, compared with 40 boxes in August last year. This trend continued in September with the board buying close to 700 boxes, compared with 36 boxes in the same period last year.

New price

The new price comes into effect for this fall's crop - October 2006 to March 2007. One tree has the ability to produce about a box of raw cocoa. According to Mr. Nelson, the current weather pattern is good for planting cocoa, and so the CIB is working to ensure that farmers take full advantage of the favourable conditions. He says emphasis is being placed on rehabilitating existing farms in the main cocoa growing parishes of St. Mary, St. Thomas, St. Catherine and Clarendon.

The annual demand for Jamaica's fine flavoured cocoa is estimated at 1,500 tonnes. However, Mr. Nelson says only 220 tonnes of the product was produced last year. About 15,000 farmers are involved in the production of cocoa on about 12,000 hectares of land.

Cameroon: Cocoa Quality to Improve by End of Year

Cameroon Tribune (Yaoundé)

October 6, 2006

Lukong Pius Nyuylime

This is one of the forecasts by BEAC for economic activities in the fourth semester of 2006. Primary sector commodities are generally expected to maintain stability during the fourth semester of 2006, a quarterly report of the Bank of Central African States (BEAC) has said.

According to the report, cocoa is among the few commodities in the primary sector that will experience an almost significant improvement in quality. "With the putting in place under the HIPC , of the cocoa/coffee development fund, activities in the cocoa sub-sector are expected to regain steam", the report said. The reason advanced for this change hinge on the new strategy to maintain cocoa farms as well as commercialisation of the product. The report said the quality is equally expected to improve thanks to the redefinition of conditions for intermediaries who have been operating in the sub-sector and above all the rehabilitation of more than 2500 dryers in the South West province.

That notwithstanding, coffee production is on its part expected to experience a drop in production, the reason being that coffee is poorly maintained. As if that were not enough, many farmers have abandoned its cultivation to the benefit of other crops and activities. However, BEAC report says the perspectives are not very bleak compared to the past. In effect, following the program re-launch by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, peasant farmers have started acquiring improved seeds freely given out to them through the several agricultural posts located in production zones.

The 2006/2007 cotton season will begin in the fourth semester of 2006 with the same ambition to increase production from 1,032 kilograms per hectare to 1,414 kilograms. This, of course will depend on the policy of

cost reduction, a policy that is based on progressive use of organic matter in order to improve and preserve the fertility of the soil. Information on this policy is said to have been furnished to all actors in the cotton sub-sector.

Other products of the primary sector that may experience an improvement in performance include natural rubber, banana, and oil palm.

In the meantime, activities in the secondary sector will equally intensify notably as concerns production of alcoholic and non alcoholic drinks. One major reason has been advanced to justify the intense activities; end of year festivities. In the same light, activities related to transformation will heighten, notably as concerns cocoa by-products. This is the cocoa season and the raw materials are available for transformation. The same reason goes for vegetables which are in increased production.

The end of year festivities will equally boost industrial activities. These include printing, textile, chemical, feed manufacturing and soap industries. In the same manner, government's measure to pay its debt owed the railway company will step up activities in the sub-sector. However, this will be retarded by successive increase in the price of fuel. The BEAC report equally makes forecast on telecommunication, building and construction, trade, tourism, and distribution of petroleum products among others.

TIT BITS

(Source: Business Recorder – www.brecorder.com)

US MIDDAY: cocoa settles down

NEW YORK (October 04, 2006): US cocoa futures settled down nearly 1 percent Tuesday amid general weakness in commodity prices and soft technicals, which could pave the way for further declines, sources said.

Slow start seen for Ghana main cocoa crop

ACCRA (October 04, 2006): Ghana's 2006/07 main cocoa crop is likely to make a slow start but recent heavy rains bode well for crop development in the world's second-biggest producer, buyers said on Monday.

US MIDDAY: cocoa ends a touch lower

NEW YORK (October 05, 2006): US cocoa futures ended down but off their lows on Wednesday as the market extended a sell-off from the previous session, which was tempered with trade buying before the close.

New York cocoa softens

NEW YORK (October 05, 2006): US cocoa futures settled down nearly 1 percent on Tuesday amid general weakness in commodity prices and soft technical, which could pave the way for further declines, sources said.

US MIDDAY: cocoa ends up

NEW YORK (October 06, 2006): US cocoa futures ended up more than 2 percent after touching a one-week high on Thursday, but dealers foresaw erratic trades without major disruptions to Ivory Coast's harvest.

cocoa futures drift lower in New York

NEW YORK (October 06, 2006): US cocoa futures ended down but off their lows on Wednesday as the market extended a sell-off from the previous session, which was tempered with trade buying before the close.