

**Cotton prices maintain firm trend**

KARACHI: Cotton prices maintained firm trend on the cotton market on Friday in process modest trading, dealers said.

The official spot rate halted further decline, keeping overnight levels at Rs 9050, they added. In the ready session, about 2400 bales changed hands between Rs 8000-9400, they said.

Rate of seed cotton per 40kg in Sindh low quality was at Rs 2800, while the best quality was unchanged at Rs 4100, and in the Punjab prices of low quality were at Rs 2800 while the fine type was available at Rs 4600, they said.

In Sindh, Binola prices per maund were at Rs 1400-1800, in Punjab rates were at Rs 1650-1800, they said and the rate of polyester fibre was at Rs 173 per kg, they said.

Market sources said that mills were little active because the ginnerers were away from deals below their psychological levels. In fact, the ginnerers are not willing to sell the commodity on lower rates while the millers prepare new plans to push rates down.

Cotton analyst, Naseem Usman said that the government must take timely measures against the availability of quality cotton seed, which are rare, when go to buy. In the cotton seed there is 40-45 percent germination against the 70-80 percent of the last year.

Other experts observed that the market is moving cautiously as the mills have no other option but to purchase local cotton which has naturally good colour and brightness as compared to the imported cotton

Adds Reuters: Cotton futures fell on Thursday as a stronger US dollar, which makes cotton more expensive in export markets, weighed on the natural fibre, while traders awaited federal export sales data.

Cotton contracts for May settled down 0.28 cent, or 0.4%, at 69.37 cents per lb. It traded within a range of 68.88 to 69.81 cents a lb.

Total futures market volume fell by 6,705 to 39,843 lots. Data showed total open interest gained 670 to 207,560 contracts in the previous session.

The following deals were reported: 2000 bales of cotton from Rahim Yar Khan at Rs 9200-9400 and 400 bales from Layyah at Rs 8000, they said.