

Japan to cut foreign aid budget by 3pc

AFP, Tokyo

Japan plans to cut its budget for foreign aid, long a top tool of Tokyo's foreign policy, by three percent in the fiscal year starting in April 2007 due to financial constraints, officials said Wednesday.

Finance Minister Sadakazu Tanigaki and Foreign Minister Taro Aso agreed on the plan over the telephone, officials who declined to be identified told AFP.

But the foreign ministry plans to fight for a greater aid budget, which has steadily declined over the past decade.

"This is only an agreement on

guidelines as required by the finance ministry so we will aim to increase the budget through procedures that continue until the end of this year," a foreign ministry official said.

In the current fiscal year, the budget for foreign aid was down 3.4 percent at 760 billion yen (6.5 billion dollars), the result of reductions almost every year since 1997 when it stood at 1.17 trillion yen.

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi pledged in the last year's Group of Eight Summit in Gleneagles, Scotland to double the amount of aid to African countries over the three years.

But budgetary constraints have caused frictions between the finance ministry and other ministries including the foreign ministry.

Japan's debt is the highest among industrialized nations after its government spent trillions of yen on emergency stimulus packages to try to haul the economy out of its deflationary doldrums following the burst of the asset bubble.

Japan — the second largest donor in dollar terms after the United States — has in recent years redirected its foreign aid, targeting countries in South and Southeast Asia and Africa, which are crucial for its goal of winning a permanent

seat on the UN Security Council.

Japan meanwhile plans to terminate aid to China, with whom relations are at a historic low, before Beijing hosts the Olympics in 2008.

The finance ministry is working to compile budget guidelines, better known as the "ceilings" for spending, in time for Koizumi's cabinet to approve them on Friday.

When the ceilings are set, the ministry will gather spending requests to draft the budget for release in December.



PHOTO: NAVANA GROUP

Navana Petroleum Ltd and DHL Worldwide Express recently signed an agreement on "Caltex -Lubricant Technology/ Supply Agreement". As per the deal, DHL will use Chevron Corporation's Caltex brand lubricants and related services for its vehicle fleet. Saiful Islam Shumon, director of Navana Group, Faisal A Chowdhury, director (Operations) of Navana Petroleum Ltd, Kazi S Faruqi, national marketing manager of DHL Worldwide Express, Imal Fonseka, general manger, and Ranjith Jayawardena, manager (Marketing Communications) of Chevron Global Lubricants, were present.



PHOTO: UCB

Hamidul Huq, managing director of United Commercial Bank Ltd, and Rajadury Selvaduray, chief financial officer of AKTEL, exchange documents after signing a corporate agreement on Monday. Under the agreement, AKTEL customers will receive international credit cards from the bank at a discounted annual fee. Senior officials of both the companies were present.



PHOTO: UNITREND

Shah Alam Sarwar, managing director and CEO of Industrial Promotion and Development Company (IPDC) of Bangladesh, and M H Samad, managing director and CEO of Central Depository Bangladesh Ltd (CDBL), shake hands while exchanging documents after signing an accord recently. Under the deal, IPDC IPO shares will be issued in dematerialised form in the Central Depository System (CDS). Senior officials from both the sides were present.

Cut in 75,000 jobs in ROK manufacturing industry

ANN, THE KOREA HERALD

South Korea's manufacturing sector shed about 75,000 jobs in the first half of this year, countering government expectations of a rise in employment due to strong exports.

The manufacturing sector employed a total of 4.2 million workers in the first half, down 75,000 from the same period last year, the Ministry of Finance and Economy and the National Statistical Office announced yesterday (July 18).

This is the second-lowest decline since the first half of 1999, when 104,000 jobs were lost.

The job decline comes as surging oil prices have weighed down the confidence of consumers and manufacturers, put a strain on buying power and raised costs for businesses. Manufacturers' sentiment dropped to an 11-month low in June, while consumer confidence fell in the second quarter from a four-year high.

The price of Dubai crude oil, the country's benchmark, has soared about 29 per cent this year.

To foil the fall in employment, the country's large business groups highlighted the need for a successful free trade accord (FTA) now being pursued by Korea with the United States.

CURRENCY

Following is yesterday's (July 19, 2006) forex rate statement by Standard Chartered Bank

Major Currency Exchange Rates		Exchange Rate of some currencies			
	BC Sell	TT Buy			
US Dollar	70.40	69.15	Indian Rupee	46.57	1.50
Euro	89.13	85.16	PAK Rupee	60.27	1.16
Pound	129.87	124.77	Lankan Rupee	103.98	0.67
Australian Dollar	53.59	50.76	Thai Baht	38.19	1.83
Japanese Yen	0.61	0.59	Malaysian Ringgit	3.69	18.93
Swiss Franc	56.82	54.63			
Swedish Kroner	9.89	8.96			
Canadian Dollar	62.58	60.22			
Hong Kong Dollar	9.07	8.87			
Singapore Dollar	45.20	43.30			
UAE Dirham	19.32	18.68			
Saudi Riyal	18.92	18.29			
Danish Kroner	12.30	11.12			
Kuwaiti Dinar	240.10	237.36			

*All currencies are quoted against BDT

Local Market

FX: Local inter-bank FX market was active on Wednesday. The volume of transaction was steady and demand for USD remained stable. USD remained unchanged against the Bangladeshi taka.

Money Market

Money market was active. Call money rate remained unchanged and ranged between 6.50-7.00 per cent. Bangladesh Bank accepted one to five dt reverse repos worth Tk 5.63 billion (\$80.8 million) at interest rates between 6.25-6.50 per cent.

International Market

The dollar homed in on three-month highs against the euro and the yen on Wednesday ahead of comments from

Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke that could give clues on the outlook for US interest rates. In Europe, attention was turned towards euro zone trade data that is expected to show a narrowed deficit, and Bank of England minutes from its latest rate. The yen has fallen more than 3.5 percent against the dollar since the start of last week, brushing off the Bank of Japan's first rate rise in six years to 0.25 percent on Friday. Despite an end to the BOJ's zero-rate policy, which had driven Japanese investors to higher-yielding assets overseas, the central bank emphasized that rates would rise slowly, suggesting domestic rates have a long way yet to catch up to those in the United States.

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 19/07/2006

Berth No.	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import disch
J/1	Continent-1	Sugar	Tuti	Cia	5/7	23/7	1770
J/2	Kanok Naree	Wheat(p)	Turk	Litmond	21/6	21/7	1700
J/3	Xuan Cheng	Gypsum/TSP	Fang	Cosco	17/6	20/7	331
J/4	Thiji	Slag	Viza	CLM	10/7	21/7	--
J/5	Qc Dignity	Cont	P. Kel	QCSSL	15/7	23/7	--
J/6	Banga Borti	Cont	Sing	Bdship	12/7	22/7	146
J/7	Xiang Jiang	GI	Inch	Cosco	18/7	22/7	351
J/8	Pacific Envoy	Cont	Sing	Pil(Bd)	11/7	21/7	205
J/9	Golden Star	Urea(Boic)	Ruwei	PSAL	27/6	20/7	275
J/10	Kota Berjaya	Cont	Sing	Pil(Bd)	11/7	19/7	--
J/11	Banga Bijoy	Cont	Col	Baridhi	8/7	20/7	--
J/12	Qc Honour	Cont	Sing	QCSSL	11/7	21/7	421

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. Port call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
Banga Borak	19/7	P.kel	Baridhi	Cont	P. Kel
Ocean Blue	19/7	P. Kel	Everett	Vehi	49 Pkgs
Heng Yu	19/7	Viza	Saraf	G. Slag	--
Maritime Songkhla	19/7	Tarj	Bsl	C. Clink	Hobl
Banga Lanka	20/7	P.kel	Bdship	Cont	Sing
Osg Bosstec	20/7	P.kel	Seacom	Cont	Sing
Sujitra Naree	20/7	--	Seacom	R. Phos	--
Marisa Green	20/7	P.kel	Everbest	Cont	Sing
Kranj	22/7	Sing	ANCL	GI	2 Units
Oel Freedom	21/7	--	PSSL	Cont	Sing
Fu Wen Shan	21/7	Osaka	Cosco	GI	--
Banga Bonik	23/7	Col	Baridhi	Cont	Col
Ammon Ace (liner)	22/7	Sin	Prog	GI(St.pa)	--
Banga Bodor	22/7	P.kel	Baridhi	Cont	P. Kel

Tanker due

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. Port call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
Lotus	19/7	Jebel	OWSL	Crude Oil	--
Team Ace	20/7	Jian	USL	Caus Soda (RM/4)	--
Al Sabibah	21/7	Kuwa	MSTPL	HSD/Sko	--
Al Barakat-1	24/7	Dumai	MTCL	CPO(RM/8/3)	--

Vessels At Kutubdia

Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Wira Keris	--	--	IBSA	R/A (7/7)

Outside oort limit

Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Wira Keris	--	--	IBSA	R/A (7/7)

Vessels at outer anchorage

Vessels ready

Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Oel Excellence	Cont	Col	PSSL	8/7
Amer	Cont	P. Kel	CEL	13/7
Xpress Resolve	Cont	Col	Seacom	13/7
Phu My	Cont	P. Kel	RSL	15/7
Ullima	Cont	Sing	PSSL	15/7
Ja Vestra	Cont	Sing	Vega	15/7
Rio Lawrence	Cont	Ptp	QCSSL	16/7
Evangelos-4	Wheat(p)	Ukra	Poi	5/7
Tu Qiang	GI	Vanc	Mutual	10/7

Vessels not ready

Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Maris	C. Clink	Krabi	Litmond	6/7
Al Kuwaitiah	HSD/MS	Kuwa	MSTPL	7/7
Al Badiyah	HSD	Kuwa	MSTPL	10/7
Port Alice	Gr. Slag	Japan	Everett	12/7
Amalia	Raw Sugar	Parana	Seacom	13/7

Vessels awaiting employment/instruction

Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Banga Barta	Ballast	Col	Baridhi	10/3
Banglar Shourabh	--	--	BSC	R/A(21/6)
Banglar Jyoti	--	--	BSC	R/A (16/7)

The above are the shipping position and performance of vessels at Chittagong Port as per Berthing Sheet of CPA supplied by Family, Dhaka.

STOCK