

Star BUSINESS

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Economic decline in Asia next year feared

AFP, Hong Kong

Asia's regional economy could see a period of contraction next year with a currency crisis, a widening wealth gap, rising protectionism and bird flu posing longer-term threats, a study by a regional think-tank warned Monday.

Based on a survey of opinion leaders and the views of a panel of experts, the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council forecasts regional growth of 5 percent this year slowing to 4.3 percent next year.

The bulk of the decline is expected to be linked to the contrac-

tion of the United States' mighty economy, where demand for Asia-produced products is due to weaken.

"A slowdown in 2007 has been widely anticipated and is largely due to faltering demand in the United States and the effect of monetary tightening around the world," the survey report, entitled "The State of the Region", released Monday said.

While the report says Japan's once faltering economy was back on the up and looking likely to stay that way, China was becoming a concern as its booming economy threatened to overheat and a decline in American demand for

its goods posed the possibility of a hard landing.

Economic growth and globalisation, the report says, has planted the seeds of possible strife in the near-term as wealth disparities increase political tensions throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

Also, it warns, energy security and the increasing scarcity of resources such as water -- with 300 million people in China with no access to potable water -- are becoming hot topics that the region is going to have to get to grips with.

Oil down 1pc

REUTERS, London

Oil fell one percent on Monday after an early rally toward \$60 ran out of steam and prices returned to the middle of a six-week trading range.

U.S. crude was down 69 cents a barrel at \$58.90 by 1128 GMT, extending Friday's 2.6 percent drop. London Brent crude was down 49 cents to \$59.22.

"There's nothing really driving the market, so we may be hovering around \$60 until the U.S. stock numbers on Wednesday," said Steve Rowles, analyst at Hong Kong-based CFC Seymour. "\$60 seems to be where Opec wants the price."

Oil gained just 0.6 percent over last week, touching a two-week high of \$61.33 before the International Energy Agency's monthly report of a huge build in third-quarter stocks and reduced demand for Opec oil sparked profit-taking on Friday.

UAE fund mulls \$5b investment in Pakistan

AFP, Dubai

A state-managed fund in the United Arab Emirates is considering investing five billion dollars in an oil refinery in Pakistan, the federation's official WAM news agency reported Sunday.

The project was discussed at a board meeting of the International Investment Company (IPIIC) of the largest UAE emirate of Abu Dhabi, WAM said.

"With an estimated capacity of 200,000 to 300,000 barrels per day, the refinery is expected to play a positive role in boosting the Pakistani economy. It will also support the UAE drive to diversify its sources of income."

The board expects IPIIC's profits in the current year to hit one billion dirhams (270 million dollars), the news agency added.



PHOTO: FRONTLINE COMMUNICATIONS

MA Mannan, chairman and managing director of Butterfly Marketing Ltd, inaugurates an LG-Butterfly showroom at Shewrapara in Mirpur, Dhaka on Friday. Directors and senior officials, among others, were present at the ceremony.

US, China agree on more trade

AFP, Washington

China's huge trade surplus with the US should be addressed through increased US exports to China and not protectionist moves by Washington, commerce chiefs from the two sides agreed here on Monday.

US Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez and his counterpart Bo Xilai offered an upbeat assessment of bilateral trade ties after meeting on Monday, despite continued growth in the political sensitive trade imbalance.

Both noted growing American imports to China and the need for more.

"Our exports to China are up 34 percent in 2006 on a year-to-date basis. We now export about 50 billion dollars of services and merchandise to China. The future should be focused on exporting to China," Gutierrez said.

Gutierrez arrived Sunday for a five-day visit aimed at pushing for

greater access to China's markets for US goods and halting the pirating of American copyrights.

The meeting comes amid speculation over whether the new Democrat-led US Congress could get tougher on China over its trade surplus with the United States.

The surplus hit a record 201 billion in 2005, according to US government statistics, and is on pace to expand even further this year as Americans continue to snap up cheap Chinese-made goods.

Gutierrez, who is traveling with a delegation of 25 top American business leaders, said he was confident the relationship could stay on track.

"The initial signals and comments that we've heard from Congress have been very positive from the standpoint of supporting trade and trade agreements."

But he added: "We all have to be very aware of any steps that we take that would signal protectionism."



PHOTO: SINGER BANGLADESH

Mahbub Jamil, chairman and managing director of Singer Bangladesh Ltd, among others, poses for photographs with the senior officials of the company who participated in a recent two-day workshop on 'Strategic Marketing Communication' in Dhaka.

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 13/11/2006

Berth No.	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import disch
J/2	Eid-E-Mostafa	Salt(A.Ash)	Purb	Intraport	10/10	16/11	62
J/4	Jin Cheng	Gli	Tian	Cosco	5/11	15/11	758
J/6	Mir Damad	Cont	Kol	BSCA	10/11	15/11	--
J/7	Vullturnus	TSP/S.Ash	Chin	Unique	23/10	14/11	347
J/8	Sea Bridge	Urea(B/CIC)	Chin	PSAL	3/11	22/11	220
J/10	Marisa Green	Cont	P. Kel	Everbest	1/11	15/11	--
J/11	Banga Bodor	Cont	P. Kel	Baridhi	1/11	15/11	37
J/12	Banga Bijoy	Cont	Col	Baridhi	9/11	14/11	--
J/13	QC Wisdom	Cont	Tanj	QCSL	3/11	17/11	76

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. Port call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
Banga Biraj	13/11	Sing	Bdship	Cont	Sing
QC Teal	13/11	Col	QCSL	Cont	Col
Protector	14/11	Tong	BSL	C. Clink	--
Capbrett	14/11	Sing	JF	Scraping	--
Coastal Express-1	15/11	Chenn	BSCA	Cont	Kol
Hanoi Tampa	14/11	Sing	Angelic	Wheat(P)	--
Vien Dong-1	16/11	Busa	Oil	GI(Hr.C)	--
Kota Rakayet	14/11	Sing	Pi(Bd)	Cont	Sing
Ja Vesta	15/11	P.Kel	Vega	Cont	Sing
Banga Bonik	15/11	Col	Baridhi	Cont	Col

Tanker due

Borak	13/11	Hald	FSA	Bitumen	RM/3
Pro Victor	13/11	Brita	PSL	Naptha	DOJ/7/6
Phya	14/11	Kuwa	MSTPL	HSD/SKO	--
Ocean Six	14/11	Lumut	Rainbow	CPO(RM/4)	--
Endurance	17/11	Kuwa	MSTPL	HSDJP-1	--

Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of vessels	Cargo call	Last Port	Local agent	Date of arrival
Ocean Melody	--	--	IBSA	R/A (6/11)
Wira Kenis	--	--	IBSA	R/A (9/11)
Hawaiian Star	Crude Oil	Jebel	DSLL	4/11
Banglar Jyoti	C. Oil	--	BSC	R/A (12/11)

Outside port limit

Banglar Moni	Cont	Sing	BSC	3/11
Dail	Cont	Col	Seacon	5/11
Cape Henry	Cont	Sing	APL	5/11
Eagle Progress	Cont	P. Kel	Everbest	5/11
Phi Tan	Cont	Sing	PSSL	7/11
Oel Freedom	Cont	Col	PSSL	7/11
Eagle Progress	Cont	P. Kel	Everbest	8/11
Precious River	Cont	Sing	Vega	10/11

Vessels ready

Al Muhieddine	Wheat(P)	Russ	MTCL	3/11
Luo Qing	TSP/S. Ash	Fang	Unique	4/11

Vessels not ready

Al Muhieddine	Wheat(P)	Russ	MTCL	3/11
Luo Qing	TSP/S. Ash	Fang	Unique	4/11

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



PHOTO: AAL

Jahangir Sattar, director of ATCO Appliances Ltd (AAL), and UK Ghosh, CEO and board member of German-based G-Hanz FZCO, shake hands after signing an agreement recently in Dubai. Under the deal, ATCO Appliances has become sole distributor of G-Hanz brand electronics products and home appliances in Bangladesh.

CURRENCY

Following is Monday's (November 13, 2006) forex trading statement by Standard Chartered Bank

Major currency exchange rates			Exchange rate of some currencies		
	BC Sell	TT Buy		Per USD	BDT per Currency
US dollar	71.53	70.41	Indian rupee	44.56	1.59
Euro	93.50	89.18	Pak rupee	60.71	1.17
Pound	138.62	133.03	Lankan rupee	107.50	0.66
Australian dollar	56.27	52.54	Thai baht	36.52	1.94
Japanese yen	0.62	0.60	Malaysian ringgit	3.63	19.53
Swiss franc	58.52	55.79			
Swedish kroner	10.56	9.55			
Canadian dollar	64.31	61.56			
Hong Kong dollar	9.21	9.03			
Singapore dollar	47.05	45.15			
UAE dirham	19.63	19.01			
Saudi riyal	19.23	18.63			
Danish kroner	12.90	11.65			
Kuwaiti dinar	244.04	241.57			

Local Market

FX: Local inter-bank FX market was active on Monday as the International Markets opened for the week. The demand for USD remained stable and the volume of cross currency transactions was more compared to yesterday. The USD rose marginally against the Bangladeshi taka.

Money Market

Money market was active on Monday. Call money rate remained unchanged and ranged between 6.50-7.00 percent. Bangladesh Bank accepted one to three day reverse repos worth Tk. 28.68 billion (\$418.7 million) at an interest rate of 6.5 percent.

International Market

The dollar held near last week's lows versus major currencies on Monday on persistent worries that central banks might gradually shift their foreign exchange reserves away from the greenback. China's State Information Centre, a government think tank, said on Monday that China should diversify its \$1 trillion foreign

exchange reserves -- the world's largest -- by building up strategic reserves of crude oil, metals and bulk commodities. Sterling hit an 18-month high against the dollar at the end of last week. The dollar eased to a one week low of against the yen, before recovering some ground to trade 0.1 percent down on the day. BOJ governor Toshihiko Fukui said last week he is very cautious about a sharp unwinding of carry trades, where traders borrow cheaply in yen and invest in higher yielding currencies. And deputy governor Kazumasa Iwata said the yen was likely to move back to fundamental value if financial markets are resilient. The Swiss franc gained about a quarter of a percent against the dollar and also rose versus the euro after Swiss National Bank Chairman Jean-Pierre Roth told a Swiss newspaper on Sunday that further rate rises were in the pipeline to fight inflation due to a weak currency.