

Star BUSINESS

E-mail: business@thedailystar.net

World economy on track for strong 2007

AFP, Paris

Slowing activity in the US economy and a possible sudden cooling of overheated property markets are the main threats to the world economy in 2007 after vigorous recovery this year.

The International Monetary Fund said Tuesday it was lowering its growth estimate for next year from its current prediction of 4.9 percent.

But its chief economist John Lipsky added that the IMF nonetheless continued "to anticipate a favorable environment for growth" and said he saw "no obvious reason to be concerned" by the recent plunge in the dollar against the euro.

The world is continuing to benefit from its most prolonged economic expansion since the 1970s, with growth of about 5.0 percent for each of the last four years.

Even record high oil prices, which this year hovered around 80 dollars a barrel, did not manage to

apply the brake to economic growth.

And despite the so-called Doha round of World Trade Organisation negotiations being stalled, global commerce is booming, buoyed by emerging economies like China and India.

Prudent optimism is the prevailing mood in the international institutions that watch over the global economy.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development said last month in its latest review of the world economy: "All considered, the outlook for the OECD area remains favourable."

The 30 OECD countries should show growth next year of 2.5 percent, and in 2008, they would grow by 2.7 percent.

The United States seemed on course for a "soft landing" and the eurozone was unexpectedly robust as part of an evening-out of growth which might well avert "a major slowdown" as in 2000, the OECD said.

OECD chief economist Jean-Philippe Cotis commented that the Chinese yuan remained undervalued and that a rise of the currency would be in China's interests.

The Japanese economy would grow by 2.0 percent next year, down from an earlier estimate of 2.2 percent.

However, Asian countries, learning from their currency crises in the 1990s, had built up dollar "war chests", the OECD said.

An eventual reduction of the US current account deficit would probably involve "further adjustment in the dollar exchange rate" which could involve "sharp movements not only in exchange rates but also in interest rates."

But now, US monetary authorities should think about easing interest rates late next year, the European Central Bank should consider tightening rates further, and Japanese authorities should provide room for prices to rise so as to bury deflation.

China rules on opening oil market

AFP, Beijing

China will implement new rules governing wholesale trade in oil products and the sale of crude oil on January 1, as part of efforts to open the petroleum market, the commerce ministry said Wednesday.

The new rules were issued as part of China's 2001 World Trade Organization accession commitment to open up its oil markets within five years of joining the global trading body, the ministry said.

Currently, China operates a state monopoly over the petroleum industry with only China National Petroleum Corp and Sinopec Corp allowed to run oil products wholesale businesses.

In a statement on its website, the ministry said new wholesalers must have minimum registered capital of 30 million yuan (3.8 million dollars) and operate via a China-registered entity.

Saudi okays first private airline

AFP, Riyadh

Saudi authorities have authorised business travel specialist National Air Services (NAS) to launch the kingdom's first private domestic airline, the company said Wednesday.

The company will operate as a low-cost carrier and is the first to be awarded a licence since a 2003 royal decree ended state-owned Saudi Arabian Airlines' monopoly on domestic flights.

The new airline, whose name is as yet undecided, will begin operating early next year, a statement said, with five aircraft flying to 22 Saudi destinations from Riyadh. The company hopes for its fleet to reach 18 aircraft by 2010.



PHOTO: HSBC

Steve Banner, chief executive officer of HSBC Bangladesh, inaugurates the bank's relocated branch at City Centre in Motijheel, Dhaka on Sunday. Mamoon M Shah, head of Personal Financial Services of the bank, among others, is seen.

CURRENCY

Following is Wednesday's (December 6, 2006) forex trading statement by Standard Chartered Bank.

Sell		Buy			
TT/OD	BC	Currency	TT Clean	OD Sight/Doc	OD Transfer
70.6700	70.7000	USD	69.4000	69.3769	69.3306
95.5529	95.5935	EUR	90.9001	90.8698	90.8092
141.0432	141.1031	GBP	135.2814	135.2363	135.1461
57.0660	57.0903	AUD	53.2437	53.2259	53.1904
0.6288	0.6291	JPY	0.6000	0.5998	0.5994
60.2729	60.2985	CHF	57.0161	56.9971	56.9591
10.9144	10.8991	SEK	9.8036	9.8004	9.7938
62.9128	62.9398	CAD	60.0918	60.0718	60.0317
9.1185	9.1223	HKD	8.9166	8.9137	8.9077
47.0256	47.0455	SGD	45.0152	45.0002	44.9702
19.3994	19.4076	AED	18.7436	18.7373	18.7248
18.9973	19.0054	SAR	18.3622	18.3561	18.3439
13.2086	13.2142	DKK	11.8728	11.8688	11.8609
241.2571	241.4617	KWD	238.4799	238.4028	238.2485

Exchange rates of some currencies against US dollar

Indian rupee	Pak rupee	Lankan rupee	Thai baht	Norwegian	NZ dollar	Malaysian ringgit
44.515	61.07	107.675	35.645	6.1060	0.6868	3.56

Local Market

FX: Local interbank FX market was active on Wednesday. The USD remained almost unchanged against the Bangladeshi taka.

Money Market

Money market was active on Wednesday. Call money rate remained unchanged and ranged at around 6.50 per cent.

International Market

The yen held near the previous day's four-month high versus the dollar and rose against the Euro on Wednesday, supported by a series of comments from

Bank of Japan policymakers that have fulfilled expectations interest rates may soon be raised. The dollar ticked up against the euro, but stayed within sight of recent 20-month lows, getting only a modest boost from Tuesday's surprisingly strong US service sector survey. Taken together with a weak manufacturing survey earlier this week, the data did little to alter expectations that the Federal Reserve's next move will be to cut interest rates from 5.25 per cent currently. This contrasts for more rate hikes in other countries.

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 6/12/2006

Berth no.	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import disch
J/1	Qing Jiang	GI	Lian	Cosco	30/11	10/12	1864
J/2	Sarm	Sugar	Kohsi	Litmond	25/11	15/12	--
J/4	Yaad-E-Mohammed	GI(S. Ash)	Okha	Intraport	19/11	8/12	1209
J/5	Qc Pintail	Cont	Col	QCSL	1/12	7/12	352
J/7	Dan Yang(Liner)	GI	Inch	Cosco	3/12	8/12	1876
J/8	Orionis	Urea(Bcic)	Damm	PSAL	20/11	8/12	640
J/9	Bao Xing	Sugar	Kand	Mutual	26/11	12/12	1161
J/10	Dali	Cont	Col	Seacon	29/11	7/12	102
J/11	Xpress Resolve	Cont	P. Kel	Seacon	28/11	8/12	292
J/12	Qc Wisdom	Cont	P. Kel	QCSL	28/11	8/12	408
J/13	Marisa Green	Cont	P. Kel	Everbest	27/11	7/12	111

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. Port call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
Xpress Manasu	6/12	Col	Seacon	Cont	Col
Caraka Jaya Niaga-iii-4	6/12	Kol	Mutual	--	--
Sea Bulker	6/12	--	Total	Wheat(P)	--
Banga Bonik	7/12	Col	Baridhi	Cont	Col
Cape Bonavista	7/12	P. Kel	Bdship	Cont	P. Kel
Guo Shun	7/12	Fang	Unique	Dap	--
Eastern Star	7/12	Sing	PML	Cont	Sing
Banga Lanka	7/12	P. Kel	Bdship	Cont	P. Kel
Mare Hibernum	7/12	Kohsi	Seacon	Cont	Sing
Ks Harmony	7/12	P. Kel	ANCL	C. Clink	--
Golden Trader	7/12	Niko	Angelic	Mop	--
Vinashin Mariner	8/12	Ptp	PSSL	Cont	Sing
F.V. Nahar-1	8/12	--	NFT	--	--
F.V. Khadem Ali-1	8/12	--	NFT	--	--

Tanker due

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. Port call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
Padang Halaban	8/12	Mala	USL	CPO(RM/4)	--
Bw Havsol	8/12	Viza	MBL	Ammonia	--
Kyoto	9/12	Kuwa	MSTPL	HSD/Sko	--

Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Wira Keris	--	--	IBSA	R/A(1/12)
Elli	Crude Oil	Rast	DSL	4/12

Outside Port Limit

Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Wira Keris	--	--	IBSA	R/A(1/12)
Elli	Crude Oil	Rast	DSL	4/12

Vessels at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Josco View	Cont	P. Kel	RSL	22/11
Zhe Hai-315	Cont	Sing	Vega	23/11
Gao Cheng	Cont	Sing	PML	24/11
Banglar Shikha	Cont	Sing	BSC	30/11
Phu Tan	Cont	Col	PSSL	1/12
Oel Freedom	Cont	Sing	PSSL	2/12
Banglar Moni	Cont	Sing	BSC	2/12

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



PHOTO: SINGER BANGLADESH

Mosharrif Hossain, manufacturing director of Singer Bangladesh Ltd, receives on behalf of the company ISO 9001:2000 certificate from Asher Bilal, country manager of United Registrar of Systems Ltd (URS), at a function in Dhaka on Tuesday. Mahbub Jamil, vice president of Singer Corporation and chairman and managing director of Singer Bangladesh, among others, was present.

STOCK