

Weak oil prices may force GCC states to cut govt spending

DUBAI, Mar 11: Continuing weak oil prices could push Gulf Arab states to cut government spending, including further curbs on military outlay, a leading economist in Saudi Arabia said, reports Reuters.

"There is a clear desire to cut government spending at a time when oil revenue is expected to stay at low levels," Henry Azam of the National Commercial Bank said in a study published in Al-Khaleej newspaper.

Azam predicted Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) measures to include granting the private sector a larger share in the economy as governments cut back on public

sector projects. "The level of gross national product is expected to be lower this year than the previous year, with some GCC states recording a negative level," Azam said.

He said the six-nation GCC earned an estimated 68.6 billion US dollars from oil in 1993, a drop of 7.5 per cent from the previous year.

The study said oil earnings could drop by another 8 per cent in 1994 to 62.6 billion US dollars if production, excluding Kuwait output, remained at current levels with the average price of a barrel of oil calculated at 15.5 US dollars.

April futures for interna-

tional benchmark Brent blend crude oil is now trading in London at around 13.15 US dollar a barrel.

"Among the features for the new era are a general direction to lower military spending, cutting government subsidies for some services and goods... privatising some government holdings... and concentrating on completion and maintenance of existing projects more than starting new ones," he added.

The study said there is a limit to how much GCC states could borrow locally to balance deficits, suggesting that some form of "direct or indirect" taxation could be introduced.

The measure would cut the amount of GCC funds spent abroad and would enhance economic activity at home, the study said.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait request arms suppliers to spend a portion of a deal's worth on development projects, including technology transfer in some cases, in their respective countries in joint ventures with local investors.

Since the end of the 1991 Gulf War, the three states have concluded several deals with Britain, France and the United States for a various new weapons worth billions of dollars.

No breakthrough yet in US-Japan trade talks

TOKYO, Mar 11: After plain speaking sessions with Japanese government leaders, Secretary of State Warren Christopher was trying Friday to convince the nation's business community that trade concessions are in their interest, reports AP.

Describing his meetings Thursday with Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa and Foreign Minister Tsutomu Hata, Christopher said, "I said simply, great nations keep their commitments."

In an effort to reach beyond the Japanese government and bureaucracy, Christopher plans to lay out the U.S. view in a speech to an influential business group, Keizai Doyukai.

The group's membership includes Japanese businesses that tend to support eliminating barriers to foreign goods.

After his speech, Christopher will fly to Beijing for difficult to discussions with Chinese leaders on human rights.

During a 30-minute news conference at the U.S. embassy, Christopher said his discussions were "straightforward and, I believe, candid."

"I can't say that we reached any breakthroughs," he said.

He said he reminded the Japanese leaders of the commitments made to reduce their trade surplus and open their domestic market to more imports.

Christopher to talk on reforms with Chinese leaders

TOKYO, Mar 11: With a firm message on trade delivered to Japan, Secretary of State Warren Christopher was moving on to China, where economic ties are threatened by the communist government's refusal to meet US demands for political reform, reports AP.

Christopher will meet this weekend with Chinese leaders as the deadline fast approaches for him to recommend to President Clinton whether the United States should renew Most Favored Nation trade status for Beijing.

The administration has said repeatedly in recent weeks that China must do more to improve its human rights record or face loss of the trade privileges, which allow the lowest possible tariffs on Chinese products.

Travelling to Beijing with Christopher was Undersecretary of Defence Frank Wisner who will meet with top Chinese military and defense officials.



French riot police arrest a young man in Paris Thursday during a demonstration held by more than 12,000 students against the government's plans to cut the minimum legal wage for young people.

Most Canadians against current immigration plan

OTTAWA, Mar 11: More than half of Canadians feel the country admits too many immigrants and that most newcomers make no effort to adapt to Canadian society, according to a survey commissioned by the government, reports Reuters.

The traditional view of Canada as an open, tolerant and compassionate society is under pressure, said the survey, conducted by Ottawa-based research company FKOS Research Associates INC and made public Thursday.

More than half of those surveyed, or 53 per cent, thought Canadian immigration levels were too high, up from 44 per cent two years ago and 30 per cent in 1988, the poll found.

But at the same time, 73 per cent said the mixture of different lifestyles and cultures brought by immigrants made Canada a more attractive place to live.

The survey, conducted for the government, said 37 per cent of Canadians believed current immigration levels were "about right". Only 7 per cent of the 2,369 people polled last month said Canada took in too few immigrants.

About 60 per cent of Canadian felt that too many immigrants feel no obligation to adapt to Canadian way of life.

French youths protest bid to cut minimum wage

PARIS, Mar 11: Masked youths wielding clubs set fire to cars and smashed shops and bars in central Paris yesterday as more than 12,000 students marched to demand that the government drop plans to cut the minimum legal wage for young people, reports AFP.

Between 500 and 1,000 youths broke away from the main demonstration and they tried to break into a shopping complex, but the doors had been locked.

Police charged to drive off several hundred students occupying a nearby square. Hundreds of other demonstrators staged a sit-in on a main boulevard.

But most of the demonstration was peaceful as the university and high school students paraded through the city's left bank carrying banners reading "equal pay for equal work."

The marchers demanded that the conservative government of Prime Minister Edouard Balladur withdraw its measures completely, although Balladur has considerably watered them down.

Several thousand students also staged demonstrations in the French provinces, at Dunkerque and Charleville-Mezieres in the north, Besancon, Belfort, Vesoul and

Montbéliard in the east and at Bayonne in the south-west.

One of the march organisers, Philippe Campinchi, President of the pro-socialist student union UNEF-ID, called on all Parisians to join in. "Workers, youths, jobless, come and join us," he said, and called for a strike Friday in all high schools.

A delegation of students met a Balladur aide Thursday afternoon and announced there would be another day of action in a week's time.

Initially the government planned to allow firms to recruit youths at less than the minimum take-home pay of 880 dollars a month whatever their qualifications, in an attempt to cut unemployment.

Argentina to spend \$4b for edn

BUENOS AIRES, Mar 11: The Argentine government will invest 4 billion US dollars in its education reform during the period 1995-1999, President Carlos Menem announced on Tuesday, reports Xinhua.

The head of state said he believes it is absolutely necessary for provincial government to restructure their educational system and make necessary changes so that the salaries of the teachers can be increased.

China's budget deficit will be more than triple this yr

BEIJING, Mar 11: China's budget deficit will be more than triple this year, to reach nearly eight billion dollars, due to a leap in public spending and a change in accountancy methods, Finance Minister Liu Zhongli said Friday, reports AP.

The 66.919-billion-yuan deficit, up from 20.5 billion yuan in 1993, reflects slower revenue growth of 7.7 per cent to 475.995 billion yuan, compared to total expenditure of 542.914 billion yuan.

National defence spending is to jump by just over 20 per cent from 1993 to 52.04 billion yuan, Liu said, attributing the increase to price rises, army wage reform and higher living expenses.

Liu announced the figures in his budget report to the annual session of the National People's Congress (NPC) which opened Thursday.

He said the increase in the deficit was mainly due to a 15-per cent jump in public spending in order to keep economic reforms on track.

However, economists here quick to point out that the statistical leap in the size of the deficit was chiefly due to a change in the method of calculating the budget shortfall.

US to reduce subsidies for cargo ships

WASHINGTON, Mar 11: The US Transportation Department announced Thursday it will reduce subsidies over the next decade for cargo ships flying the US flag, reports AP.

The Maritime Security Programme will take effect October 1, if approved by Congress. It would provide funds to subsidize the operation of 52 merchant vessels.

The current programme provides subsidies from the US Treasury to cover the higher operating costs of US ships. The annual subsidies start at about three million dollars.

The subsidies are in 20-year contracts, which will be expiring in the next few years.

Shippers will be invited to join the new programme which sets up annual subsidies of 2.5 million dollars per ship through 1997 and then two million dollars per ship per year from 1998 through the year 2004.

While some ship owners in the subsidy programme may be tempted to put their ships under another country's flag because of the lower subsidies, others will welcome even reduced subsidies because a ship must be under a US flag if it is carrying cargo between two US ports.

Unemployment — a political bombshell in Europe!

PARIS, Mar 11: The four European countries within the Group of Seven — Britain, France, Germany and Italy — have had differing degrees of success in handling unemployment, but in each of them it is a political bombshell, reports Reuters.

Following is a summary of their experiences and attitudes toward the G7 jobs conference on March 14-15 in Detroit.

BRITAIN. Chancellor of the Exchequer Kenneth Clarke and Employment Secretary David Hunt go to the meeting convinced other countries are coming round to Britain's strategy of loosening shackles on its job market and cutting firms' costs.

Britain has managed to bring unemployment down by 205,000 since January 1993 to 2.8 million people, or to 9.9 per cent from 10.6 per cent of the workforce. Since 1979, Britain has enacted trade union reforms and amended employment protection legislation to ensure flexibility of wages and work conditions. But critics say many of the jobs were low-wage and part-time.

FRANCE. The conservative government of Prime Minister Edouard Balladur has been hobbled by record unemploy-

ment which stood at 3.3 million people, or 12.2 per cent, in January.

A five-year jobs plan adopted last year emphasised lower taxes on employers and more flexible hours for workers. But a government bid to move to a four-day, 32-hour work week with reduced pay from the current five-day, 39-hour week failed.

And a measure allowing firms to pay young workers less than the national minimum wage in exchange for training contracts has met firm opposition from unions and a revived opposition left.

Paris has a somewhat sceptical view toward the meeting. "It's a US domestic, political affair," a senior official said.

GERMANY. Unemployment standing at 4.0 million, or 10.5 per cent in February, has been rising steadily since 1991 and is sure to be a major issue in this October's national elections.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl's centre-right government rejects stimulus packages and instead is pressing for structural reforms — more flexible working conditions, longer machine running times, reduced red tape — and cuts in high wage costs.

German Economics Minister Guenter Rexrodt,

Finance Minister Theo Waigel and Labour Minister Norbert Blum expect to be quizzed about their well-developed vocational training system.

ITALY. Unemployment rose to 2.6 million people, or 11.3 per cent, last October, up from 9.7 per cent one year earlier.

Employment in Italy's public sector, one of Europe's largest, is due to fall as the government privatises companies.

The government of Prime Minister Carlo Azeglio Ciampi has set up an emergency task force which helps institute early retirement packages, enhanced layoff terms and solidarity contracts aimed at cutting hours. Treasury Minister Piero Barucci and Labour Minister Gino Giugni plan to attend.

EUROPEAN UNION. The EU agreed a jobs blueprint last December featuring labour market deregulation, wage curbs, training, tax changes and a multi-billion dollar spending programme on road, rail, energy and telecommunications networks.

European Commission President Jacques Delors has been invited and Economic Affairs Commissioner Henning Christophersen and Employment Commissioner Padraig Flynn will go.

Exchange Rates

The following are the Sonali Bank's dealing rates to public for some selected foreign currencies effective as on Mar 10 and 11. (Figures in Taka)

Currency	Selling		Buying	
	TT & OD	EC	TT	OD
US Dollar	40.1805	40.2105	39.9805	39.8960
Pound Sterling	60.1904	60.2353	59.4019	59.2764
DM	23.8421	23.8599	23.4735	23.4239
F Franc	6.7617	6.7669	6.6589	6.6449
C Dollar	29.7250	29.7472	29.2612	29.1994
S Franc	28.3378	28.3590	27.8966	27.8377
Jap Yen	0.3845	0.3848	0.3746	0.3738
Indian Rupee (AMU)	1.2844	1.2883	1.2741	1.2583
Pak Rupee (AMU)	1.3178	1.3218	1.3072	1.2910
Iranian Rupee (AMU)	0.9231	0.9231	0.9229	0.9226

A) T. T. (DOC) US Dollar Spot Buying Tk 39.9382

B) Usance Rates:

30 Days DA 60 Days DA 90 Days DA 120 Days DA 180 Days DA

39.6312 39.3480 39.0648 38.7816 38.2152

C) US Dollar sight export bill 3 months forward purchase: Tk 39.8960

D) US Dollar 3 months forward sale: Tk 40.6105

Currency	Selling		Buying	
	T.T. & O.D.	EC	O.D. Transfer	Transfer
S Riyal	10.7158			10.6050
UAE Dirham	10.9425			10.8294
Kuwaiti Dinar	134.7451			133.1470
Singapore Dollar	25.3828			25.1080
D Gulders	20.8278			20.6099
S Kroner	5.0316			4.9771
Malaysian Ringgit	14.7887			14.6325

Note: AMU = Asian Monetary Union

Shipping Intelligence

Chittagong Port
Berth position and performance of vessels as on 10-3-94

Berth	Name of Vessels	Cargo	L Port	Local Agent	Date of Leaving
J/2	Banglar Urmi	Idle	Col	BSC	5/3
J/4	Sukarawan Marec	D Peas	Sing	Litmond	1/3
J/5	Dorianne	Wheat(P)	Hald	MBL	27/2
J/6	Gold Finch	MOP (PI)	Ukrat	MSA	4/2
J/7	Tahalia	GI	Conat	OTL	26/2
J/9	Continent-1	GI	Kala	CLA	4/3
J/10	Dolores	Idle		Seacom	R/A
J/12	Lanka Mahapola	Cont	Col	Baridhi	8/3
J/13	Kota Buana	Cont	Sing	RSL	8/3
CGJ	Alexander Perederly	Gypsum	Viza	Seacom	26/2
TSP	Seam Nymph	Cement	Viza	PSAL	19/2
RM/3	Antares	CPO	P Kela	Royal	8/3
RM/4	Tanaya Star	Cement	Tuti	USTC	20/2
RM/6	Tanja Jacob	HSD	Sing	MSPL	8/3
DOJ	Banglar Shourabh	Repair		BSC	R/A
ID	Loyal Bird	Repair	Mong	Seacom	15/11
DOJ/2	Banglar Asha	Repair		BSC	R/A
DOJ/2	Iokasti	Cement	Vita	Litmond	1/1
RM/9	Ronlay Victory	Cement	Vita	USTC	7/1

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of Vessels	Date of Last Port	Local Agent	Cargo	Loading Port
Fong Yun	10-3-94	Sing	BDSHIP	Cont
Arcadia-1	11-3-94	Viza	CSL	C Clinker
Banglar Baani	12-3-94	Mong	BSC	GL
Empy Kiat	11-3-94	Cal	ALM	Cont
Eponyma	12-3-94	Sing	GTS	Cont
Sils	11-3-94	P Land	Royal	D C Peas
China Star	13-3-94	Sing	HA	GI
Lamda	13-3-94	Niko	Cosmo	Mop (PI)
Victoria	13-3-94		MSAPeas in Budk	
Eattana Naree	14-3-94		Seacom	Wheat
Banglar Robi	14-3-94	Mong	BSC	Cont
Ultima	15-3-94	Col	BTSa	Cont
Ilyeverett	15-3-94		EBPL	GI
Green Island	16-3-94		Kama	GI
Feng Ming	16-3-94		OTL	Cement
Imke Wehr	16-3-94	Sing	APL (B)	Cont
Meng Lee	17-3-94	Sing	AML	Cont
Banglar Mori	17-3-94	Sing	BSC	Cont
Amarecia	17-3-94	Mong	OWSL	GI
Cattleya	17-3-94	HKG	Prog	GI
Vishva Bandhan	18-3-94		SSL	GI
Marichristina	18-3-94		JF	Scraping
I Yamburenko	18-3-94	Sing	CT	Cont
Infinity	18-3-94		RSL	Cont
Fong Shin	18-3-94	Sing	BDSHIP	cont
Karabievett	20-3-94		EBPL	GI
Andrian Goncharov	22-3-94	Sing	CT	Cont
Safina-e-ismail-2	23-3-94		Prog	GI
Astro Jyoti	25-3-94		JF	Vehicles

Tanker due

Tenshoo	13-3-94	Seacom	Ballast
Jiya Chavchavade	21-3-94	CT	L Oil (RM/1)

Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of Vessels	Cargo	Last Port	Local Agent	Date of Arrival
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Vessels not ready:

Salem Nine	SSP	Sing	MSA	R/A
Myohyang-2	Cement	Sing	PSAL	3/3
Trainer	Cement	Sing	Bright	7/3
Zang San	Cement	Tuti	Delmure	9/3

Vessels awaiting instruction

Banglar Jyoti		BSC	R/A
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Vessels not entering

Sea Sprite	Scraping	Sing	JF	27/2
Tina-V	Cement	Lian	Eastwest	5/3
Akademi Semenov	HSD(P)	Sing	QOSL	27/12
Mirinski	Cement	Yant	PSAL	6/3
Mytishi	Cement	Sing	PSAL	6/3
Amazilia	Scraping	R/A	TSL	9/3

Movement of vessels for 11-3-94 & 12-3-94

Outgoing	Incoming	Shifting
J/12	L Mahapola (Cont)	J/13
J/13	Kota Buana (Cont)	J/5
TSP	Sea Nymph	Salem Nine
RM-3	Antares	

The above were the Thursday's shipping position and performance of vessels of Chittagong Port as per berthing sheet of CPA supplied by HRC Group, Dhaka.

Dhaka Stock Prices

Weekly comparison: At the close of tradings on March 3 and March 10, 1994

					1993-94	
		March 3	March 10	High	Low	
Company	FV/ML*	Taka	Taka	Taka	Taka	
BANKS (12)						
Al Baraka Bank	1000/1	810.00	807.50	908.00	800.00	
AB Bank	100/5	190.00	190.00	200.00	180.00	
City Bank	100/5	292.00	286.00	355.00	290.00	
Eastern Bank	100/20	110.00	110.00	110.00	105.00	
IDLC Ltd	100/20	293.98	334.50	325.00	200.00	
I.F.I.C	100/5	1580.00	155.00	198.00	140.00	
Islami Bank	1000/1	1473.75	1500.00	1705.00	1300.00	
National Bank	100/5	125.60	125.00	130.00	85.00	
Pubali Bank	100/5	100.00	100.00	100.00	85.00	
Rupali Bank	100/10	80.00	95.00	95.00	65.00	
U.C.B.L	100/5	108.00	108.00	120.00	80.00	
Uttara Bank	100/5	90.00	90.00	103.00	80.00	