

### Japan facing severe economic condition

TOKYO, July 11: Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama said today, after the government's planning agency admitted the recovery trend is now "at a standstill", that the economy is facing increasingly severe conditions, says AFP.

"The conditions increased in severity compared with last month," Murayama told reporters.

"We must take comprehensive measures" to boost the economy, he added.

Economic Planning Agency (EPA) Director-General Masahiko Komura said at a news conference Tuesday the Japanese economy is "not in recession" and "still has some strength."

"The economy is not in a recession, the recovery is simply at a standstill," Komura said.

For the first time since August 1993, the EPA said in its July monthly report that the economy recovery was "at a standstill."

Komura said the government intends to take all measures necessary to "put the economy back on the recovery path."

He said the economy is showing "both dark spots and bright spots."

Komura said the government continued to be concerned about the possibility of the emergence of deflationary pressures, but he added the government would "manage the economy in order to avoid a fall into deflation."

International Trade and Industry Ministry Ryutaro Hashimoto said at a separate news conference he would also urge financial institutions to respond "positively" to regional companies that have demands for additional financing.

"I have obtained claims from regional companies during speeches for upper house elections that they are faced with difficulties in obtaining funds from banks," he said.

### Shards from beer bottle explosion causes blindness in China

BEIJING, July 11: Increasing numbers of Chinese consumers are being blinded and injured by shards from exploding beer bottles, with 6,000 such cases reported in 1994, the People's Daily newspaper said today, reports Reuters.

Most of the explosions were caused by bottles that were badly made, had been reused too often or were roughly handled during distribution, the newspaper said.

One middle-aged man identified only as Liu was blinded in one eye and lost part of his sight in the other when a beer bottle blew up in his face last year, it said.

About 70 per cent of beer bottles in circulation have been used at least once before, with some 10 years old and others recycled from soya sauce or vinegar bottles, it said.

Official quality inspections in 1994 passed only 37 per cent of new beer bottles and no recycled ones, it said.

It quoted unnamed experts as calling for government action to improve beer industry standards and protect consumers.

## Qatar set to become dominant force in world energy market

ABI DHABI, July 11: Qatar, a minor OPEC member, is set to become a dominant force in the global energy market as it presses ahead with the world's largest liquefied natural gas project, experts say, reports AFP.

Sitting on the third biggest natural gas reserves in the world, the tiny Gulf oil producer expects to become the top LNG supplier when the giant north field project is commissioned in a few years.

Japan, South Korea and several other Asian countries will be heavily reliant on its LNG under long-term supply deals, as the continent is set to become one of the biggest gas consumers in the world after the year 2000.

Qatar's new ruler, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, who overthrew his father in a bloodless palace coup last week, is expected to push ahead with the two-phase venture and spur fresh investment in the world's largest gas reservoir.

From the way he has run Qatar in the past two years, one can see the economy is one of Sheikh Hamad's priorities," an oil-industry official in Doha said.

"He will probably open the door for more investment in gas as this will expand the country's industrial base

and diversify its economy."

The north field project, part of which has been launched, will eventually produce around 16 million tonnes of LNG, according to the government, exceeding the 13.8 million tonnes produced by the world's current top LNG exporter, Indonesia.

Investments in the scheme are expected to total more than 10 billion dollars, provided by the Qatari government and several foreign partners, including US-based Mobil and Total of France.

The north field venture will tap the Emirate's huge natural gas reserves, officially estimated at 7.07 trillion cubic metres (235.9 trillion cubic feet). They are third in reserves in Russia and Iran.

"There is no doubt the project will transform Qatar from a negligible oil producer into a dominant force in the world's energy market, given the growing significance of gas as cleaner source of energy," an oil executive said.

Qatar is the second-smallest oil producer in the 12-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), with an output quota of 378,000 barrels per day (BPD). Gabon, which has threatened to pull out, has a quota of 287,000 BPD.

Experts said Qatar's massive gas reserves would also enable it to expand its petrochemical industry and secure further funds to finance development.

They noted that at the production rate expected from the north field venture, its gas reserves could last more than 360 years. This is in contrast with its small crude reserves, estimated at around four billion barrels.

The amount of income the north field project will fetch Qatar is unclear, but experts said this depended on the supply contracts with buyers.

However, they added the earnings would be sizeable given the large production and the growing consumption of gas in Asia and other areas.

Independent estimates showed world gas demand is growing faster than that of oil as several countries are switching to gas to increase environmental concerns.

A breakdown showed that while oil demand is projected to increase by around 62 per cent to 91 million BPD in the year 2020 from 56 million BPD in 1990, gas consumption is forecast to more than double to 71 million equivalent BPD from 34 million equivalent BPD.



Arati Jaha, 3rd Lt. Chairman of Indian Jute Mills Association, addressing the members of the Bangladesh Jute Spinners' Association at the conference hall of the local association on Monday. Shabbir Yusuf (2nd-Lt), Chairman and Moinul Islam Khan (1st-Lt), Vice-Chairman of the local body, are also seen in the picture.

### Real German interest rate too high: EIB

FRANKFURT, July 11: Real German interest rates are braking economic growth and credit demand, said Wolfgang Roth, Deputy President of the European Investment Bank (EIB), reports Reuters.

Long economic upswings in Europe have, until now, begun with a real interest rate level of three per cent, Roth told journalists on Monday evening. But after subtracting inflation, current German long-term rates are at 4.5 per cent.

"The EIB has seen that such change in the discount rate immediately leads to a change in long-term interest rates," Roth said.

### US House delays votes on foreign aid

WASHINGTON, July 11: The US House of Representatives delayed votes on foreign aid and the granting of top trading status to Cambodia and Bulgaria on Monday as Democrats continued a protest over the way Republicans are expanding their power in Congress, says AP.

After short discussion of extending most-favored-nation trading status to the two former communist nations, the House lapsed into lengthy roll-call votes demanded by Democrats as a way of protesting the seating of a Democrat-turned-Republican on a key committee.

Democrats resumed tactics that led to an all-night session on the 12 billion dollars Foreign Operations bill prior to last week's Independence Day recess.

Since then, the Republican majority has moved to change the rules of debate so the bill cannot be delayed indefinitely. Consideration is now limited to 20 minutes of debate on each of four remaining amendments.

But Democrats were using every parliamentary measure available to them to delay inevitable approval of Rep Greg Laughlin of Texas as a new member of the key Ways and Means Committee, adding to the Republican majority on that key tax-writing committee.

That further delayed consideration of the bills on foreign policy issues.

The foreign aid appropriations bill would cut aid in the next fiscal year by 11 per cent and is 20 per cent below President Clinton's request.

The separate bills that would grant favorable trading status to Cambodia and Bulgaria were debated briefly earlier Monday, but votes on them were delayed because of the Democratic protest.

Rep Philip M Crane, Republican head of a House trade subcommittee, praised both Cambodia and Bulgaria as newly democratic nations moving towards market economies.

He said the status for Cambodia, which has been denied normal trading relations, would open the way for more US exports to the rapidly developing Southeast Asian region.

Most-favored-nation status is given to all normal trading partners and allows the lowest tariff levels to be applied to imports from countries that qualify.

Bulgaria has received favored trading status since 1991 under authority granted to the president, and the congressional action would extend it.

"It's time that we welcome them into the family of trading nations," said Democratic Rep. Sam Gibbons.

Rep. Barney Frank, a Democrat, said his support for the Cambodia bill was contingent upon the government fulfilling a pledge to visit US labour leaders that it would improve its labour laws to allow more rights to workers.

Passage of both trade measures required a two-thirds vote.

### World Bank lends \$265m to Vietnam

HANOI, Vietnam, July 11: The World Bank signed agreements Tuesday to lend Vietnam 265 million dollars to upgrade its electricity and irrigation networks, reports AP.

The interest-free loans bring to 740 million dollars the total amount the bank has approved for Vietnam since it resumed lending here in November 1993.

Vietnam has made "extraordinary progress" in its effort to transform from a centrally planned economy to one based on the free market, said Russell Cheetham, the Washington-based bank's vice president for Asia and the Pacific.

Cheetham, speaking at a news conference after the signing ceremony, praised Hanoi for achieving rapid economic growth, reducing its budget deficit and attracting foreign investment.

Vietnam, faced with virtual economic collapse, began to adopt free market reforms in the late 1980s. Its gross domestic product grew by 8.8 per cent last year, and foreigners have pledged investments worth more than \$15 billion.

However, Vietnam needs to do more to reform its inefficient state-run companies, modernize its banking system and upgrade its crumbling roads, ports and power systems, he said.

The World Bank is lending 165 million dollars to improve electricity distribution in central and southern Vietnam. More than 20 per cent of the electricity generated there is lost due to old cables and equipment.

The bank will also lend 100 million dollars to refurbish irrigation systems for 130,000 hectares (321,000 acres) of farmland along Vietnam's central coast. Central provinces such as Quang Tri are among the nation's poorest, due partly to inadequate irrigation for rice and other crops, bank officials said.

"This is already one of the largest programmes the World Bank has in this part of the world," Cheetham said of the bank's commitments in Vietnam.

Vietnam has 40 years to repay the new loans, which carry a 0.75 per cent annual administration fee.

Bullion finished the morning at \$85.30/80 US dollars an ounce, down slightly from the local opening of \$85.50/386.00 US dollars and New York's \$85.40/90 US dollars close on Monday.

### Dollar's rebound not yet enough, says Takemura

TOKYO, July 11: Japanese Finance Minister Masayoshi Takemura said today the dollar was not yet high enough against the yen even after a rebound above 87 yen, reports AFP.

"The current exchange rates are not yet reflecting economic fundamentals," Takemura told a news conference.

"The US and Japan will continue to intervene in the foreign exchange market if necessary," he said.

"What is important is that the US and Japan make clear the intention of a further turnaround of the dollar-yen rate as agreed at the Halifax summit (of the Group of Seven)," Takemura said.

### Exchange Rates

Following are the Sonali Bank's dealing rates to public for some selected foreign currencies effective on 11th July.

CURRENCY	Selling				Buying			
	TT & OD	BC	TT	OD	TT	OD	TT	OD
US Dollar	1=TK 40.2635	40.3160	39.9600	39.8125	39.7150			
GBP	1=TK 64.2075	64.2910	63.2267	62.9933	62.8390			
DM	1=TK 28.9821	29.0199	28.4672	28.3622	28.2927			
FFranc	1=TK 8.3278	8.3387	8.1777	8.1476	8.1276			
C. Dollar	1=TK 29.9031	29.9420	29.3407	29.2523	29.1806			
J Yen	1=TK 34.9985	34.9940	34.2613	34.1348	34.0512			
S\$	1=TK 0.4677	0.4683	0.4545	0.4528	0.4517			
Pak Rupee	1=TK 1.2984	1.3081	1.2764	1.2572				
Iranian Rial	1=TK 0.0230	0.0232	0.0226	0.0223				

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Iranian Rial	1=TK 0.0230	0.0232	0.0226	0.0223				

### Shipping Intelligence

#### Chittagong Port

Birth position and performance of vessels as on 11.07.1995

Berth No.	Name of Vessels	Cargo	I. Port	Local Agent	Date of Arrival	Leaving
E-1	Macca-1	Passenger/Bomb	ISC	10/7	11/7	
E-2	Abwarran	Coal	Sing	ASL	26/6	14/7
E-3	Ocean Crest	Rice (P)	Bang	AMR	R/A	14/7
E-4	Lanary Star	Rice (P)	Para	PSAL	7/6	14/7
E-5	Orange Breze (Roro/2)	Vehi	Sing	EBPL	9/7	11/7
E-6	Nci Jiang	Gl	Sing	Prog	24/6	15/7
E-7	Bang Jiang	Gl	Dale	Prog	19/6	11/7
E-8	Qing He Cheng	Gl	S. Hai	BD/Ship	24/6	12/7
E-9	Indian Yakour	Rice (P)	Kaki	Dehane	22/6	16/7
E-10	Yamut	Rice (G)	Kaki	MSA	7/6	12/7
E-11	Albarani	Rice (G)	Bang	AMR	5/6	11/7
E-12	Yong Niit	Cont	Sing	BD/Ship	8/7	13/7
E-13	Aristotels	Cont	Sing	API (B)	9/7	14/7
E-14	The Jim	Cont	Sing	RSC	8/7	11/7
E-15	Kota Bantang	Cont	Sing	CTS	8/7	12/7
E-16	Antea-A	Cont	Sing	PSAL		
E-17	Long Son	Cement	Sing	Jaycee	20/6	11/7
E-18	Calvito Garcia	Cement	Sing	Dehane	16/6	14/7
E-19	Pvt Shmidt	Veg Oil	Darb	Seacomb	18/7	13/7
E-20	Geshard	Cement	Indo	ISC	30/6	14/7
E-21	Banglar Bazar	Choker	Sing	ISC	R/A	11/7
E-22	Wawan Setia	SKO/MS	Sing	MSP	7/7	11/7
E-23	Subik Star	Cement	Sing	GEL	5/7	12/7
E-24	Al Farabi	Repair	Mang	Litmond	2/6	15/7
E-25	Al Gochard	Repair	ISC	R/A		
E-26	Banglar Asha	Repair	ISC	R/A	15/7	
E-27	Banglar Karon	Repair	Agaba	ISC	13/6	15/7
E-28	Banglar Sampad	Repair	ISC	R/A	16/7	
E-29	Yayasan Imam	Urea	BMC	R/A	12/7	

#### Vessels due at Outer anchorage

Name of Vessels	Date of Arrival	Last Port	Local Agent	Cargo	Loading Port
Banglar Kallol	11/7	Mang	ISC	Banking/Repair	
Dimitris Y	11/7	Sing	ANCL	Coal	GI
Nikolay Karantin	11/7	Sing	PSI	Cement	
Uzer Bright	11/7	Col	MBL	C/Link (M. Jetty)	
Pattu	13/7	Col	AMBI	Rice (P)	
Havist	13/7	Mad	SBS	Rice (P)	
Pratigada	14/7	Bomb	Cross	GI (Cr Coals)	
Meng Yang	16/7	Sing	AMR	Cont	Sing
Yang Yun	15/7	Sing	BD/Ship	Cont	Sing
S. Yang Acc	12/7	Kang	Prog	GI (Cont)	
Suiza	13/7	Sing	CTS	Cont	Sing
Jinji	13/7	Sing	ISC	Cont	Sing
Gallantry	14/7	Gallantry	MMI	Cement	
Meng Lee	15/7	Sing	AMR	Cont	Sing
Mikhal Steblo	15/7	Col	Burkhi	Cont	Sing
Jerry	15/7	Sing	ISC	Cont	Sing
Banglar Robi	14/7	Sing	ISC	Cont	Sing
Handy Ukang	14/7	Sing	Rainbow	M Seeds	
Al Shams (89) 97	14/7	Sing	KSL	Hot Rolled Steel	
Ryokoh-1	15/7	Sing	EBPL	GI	
Guang Ming	15/7	Sing	Prog	GI	
Banglar Ima	15/7	Sing	ISC	Cont	Sing
Jakhkhola (L-113)	20/7	MCA	SSI	ISC	E.I. B. Abbas
Eagle Breze	15/7	Sing	API (B)	Cont	Sing
Vidya Yash (24) 29/6	16/7	Mad	SPL	GI	
Tug Venkat B	16/7	Sing	BTNA	Cont	Sing
La Bao (24) 86	17/7	S. Hai	BD/Ship/Cont/Provl	Cargo	
Adrian	17/7	S. Hai	SSST	R/P Plan	
San Pablo (Roro) 24	17/7	Agaba	JE	Vehicles	
Meng Kiat	17/7	Sing	AMR	Cont	Sing
Combsbridge	13/7	Sing	ISC	Cont	Sing
Guyon Island	20/7	Karu	GI (Lash)	Cont	Sing

#### Tanker due

Name of Vessels	Date of Arrival	Last Port	Local Agent	Cargo	Loading Port
Munro d'Almeida	12/7	Sing	MSPL	HSD	

#### Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of Vessels	Cargo	Last Port	Local Agent	Date of Arrival

#### Vessels at outer anchorage

Name of Vessels	Cargo	Last Port	Local Agent	Date of Arrival

#### Vessels not ready