

S Africa takes IMF advice very seriously

JOHANNESBURG, Sept 15: South Africa takes very seriously International Monetary Fund advice that its monetary policy was too open, the Governor of the country's Reserve Bank Chris Stals said Thursday, reports AFP.

Stals, addressing businessmen at banquet here, said the IMF's annual report released in Washington Wednesday contained a "lot of good advice" on what could be expected from South Africa. The SAPA News Agency reported.

In its report the IMF, observing 1994's "difficult environment," warned that the sharp upturn in inflation and other factors suggested that the South African Bank's monetary stand had been "insufficiently restrictive."

The IMF also said that "any depreciation of the rand must be considered in the context of real wage correction and labour market reform... otherwise it may spark a wage-price spiral."

Stals urge South African policy-makers to study the report as it contained a number of directives applicable to the current situation in South Africa.

"South Africa is not only re-establishing position in the world economy that it was expelled from in the 1980s. We are now returning to a new world order that holds many new challenges for the old and new participants," Stals said.

Japan will present economic stimulus plan next week

TOKYO, Sept 15: The Japanese government will present an economic stimulus plan next week, but the price tag includes increasing the deficit, which could limit Tokyo's room for maneuvering in the future, reports AFP.

The government plan, which will be revealed close to September 20, calls for more than 10,000 billion yen (100 billion dollars) in new spending, which would be a record, according to the press.

Such measures were felt necessary to cope with the depressed state of the economy in Japan, where industrial production has been decreasing for four consecutive months, where unemployment is at a historical high and where business confidence has recently taken a turn for the worse.

The plan's authors, notably Minister of International Trade and Industry Ryutaro Hashimoto and the Director General of the Agency of Economic Planning, Isamu Miyazaki, have already said a large part of the spending would be financed by increasing the deficit.

"Now we need expansive measures. It would be inappropriate to talk about tax increases," Miyazaki said. For Hashimoto, an increase in the deficit is "inevitable," because of the "urgent state" of the Japanese economy.

On paper, Japan still has a comfortable margin for increasing the government

deficit as last year the deficit was less than three per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The finance ministry is, however, concerned about the trend and is protecting the surplus in Japan's social security fund. But excluding social security, where the surplus is rapidly disappearing with the aging of the population, the Japanese deficits are moving beyond six per cent of GDP.

The situation in Japan is more critical than in Italy, which is notorious for its indebtedness.

Last year, the government-incurred debt was 55 per cent of GDP, almost as

US grain prices up

CHICAGO, Sept 15: Grains were up Thursday on the commodities market, says AFP.

Wheat prices rose, pushing the other grains up in its wake, due to the purchase by a trading house of five million bushels for December delivery. Trading houses typically signify a Chinese purchase.

Wheat was up between 1.00 and 3.25 cents, while corn rose between 1.75 and 0.25 cents, except for September and December 1996, which lost, respectively, 0.25 and 0.50 cents.

Soybean prices fluctuate between 3.50 cents up unchanged. Soy meal rose by an equal amount, while soybean oil finished mixed.

much as the United States' debt, which was 59 per cent of its GDP, although Tokyo has long criticised Washington for laxity on budgetary matters.

According to the initial budget forecast, for the year 1995/96, 17.7 per cent of the state's spending will go to finance the debt — the same percentage as the French government devotes to its debt and a much higher percentage than the 11.6 per cent of public spending the United States sets aside to fund its debt.

The trend will have to continue the following year, when the debt burden increases by more than 30 per cent, according to initial information furnished by the government.

The next stimulus plan won't have a major impact on the debenture market, analysts say, in part because the effort is not as massive as the ministry of finance would like one to believe.

In the past, a considerable part of the credit freed up was unused, Miyazaki said Wednesday.

In previous stimulus plans, about half of the amounts mentioned corresponded to low-interest loans, which were not expensive for the state, but are of limited effectiveness in a time of low interest rates.

On September 8, the Bank of Japan cut its official discount rate by 0.5 points to a new historic low of 0.5 per cent.

Dollar's outlook against yen ok over next 6 months

SINGAPORE, Sept 15: An investment conference in Singapore has been told by currency experts that the resurgent US dollar could reach 110 yen in six months before weakening once again, a business daily reported today, reports BSS.

The dollar's outlook against the Japanese unit is "okay over the next three to six months" because of short-term interest-rate differentials, Jim O'Neill of Goldman Sachs was quoted Thursday as saying by Business Times.

"But over the longer term, there will be renewed dollar weakness because of structural reasons," said O'Neill, who is soon to become the investment house's chief currency economist.

Long-term real interest-rate differentials were non-existent and would lead the dollar to weaken again, he was quoted as saying at the conference of investment bankers.

O'Neill predicted that the dollar would reach 105 yen in three months, 110 yen in six months and then fall back to 100 yen in a year's time and 75 yen in five years.

Baring Securities Director Alan Butler-Henderson said the dollar's rise was only a correction of exchange rates and the greenback had yet to bottom out, Business Times said.

It was appreciated about 30 per cent against the yen since its April low of 79.75 yen.



Secretary of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Islam Uddin Malik and Representative of UNHCR in Bangladesh, Nguen-Tang, signed an agreement to transfer the UNHCR assets to Bangladesh government in Dhaka on Thursday. — PID photo

Asian stock markets close higher

HONG KONG, Sept 15: Asian stock markets ended the week high Friday, with share prices in Hong Kong surging for the third straight day, says AP.

The Hang Seng Index, the Hong Kong market's key indicator of blue chips, rose 117.30 points, or 1.2 per cent, to 9,797.40, its highest closing level this year. On Thursday, the index had gained 98 points.

In the past week, the index has surged 404.19 points or 4.3 per cent.

Turnover soared to its highest level since June rising to 6.854 billion Hong Kong dollars (US 878 million dollars), up from Thursday's 6.151 billion Hong Kong dollars (788 million US dollars).

Traders said investors were becoming increasingly confident that there will be a cut in US interest rates later this month.

They said the Hong Kong market also rose in reaction to the overnight record rally on Wall Street.

Thai share prices also closed sharply higher, buoyed by a hefty influx of foreign money and a return of confidence in the market.

TAIPEI: Share prices closed higher on bargain-hunting. The market's Weighted Price Index rose 39.51 points to 4,995.53.

WELLINGTON: New Zealand share prices closed higher as the market recovered from the Reserve Bank of New Zealand's forecast Thursday of continued inflationary pressures. The NZSE 40 Capital Index rose 2.30 points to 2,124.30.

SYDNEY: Australian share prices closed broadly higher after a late rally prompted by solid gains in share price index futures. The All Ordinaries Index rose 14.8

points to 2,165.7.

MANILA: Share prices closed higher on expectations of a cut in local interest rates. The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index of 41 selected issues rose 25.95 points to 2,757.43.

SEOUL: Share prices closed higher in active trading. The Korea Composite Stock price index rose 19.92 points to 985.64.

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian share prices closed higher in slow trading. The KLSE Composite Index rose 0.33 of a point to 993.53.

SINGAPORE: Share prices closed higher, boosted by institutional buying. The 30-share Straits Times Industrials Index rose 9.78 points to 2,139.67.

JAKARTA: The stock exchange's Composite Index slipped 0.097 of a point, closing at 495.323.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয় (সওজ)
ফেরী বিভাগ, তালতলা, বনানী
বজড়া-৫৮০০
সড়ক ও জনপথ দপ্তরের দরপত্র
আহবান বিজ্ঞপ্তি



Energy and Mineral Resources Minister, Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, speaking at the seminar on 'Vegetable Export Promotion: Problems and Prospects' at Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) in Comilla on Thursday. — PID photo

Jewish leaders hail meeting with Swiss bankers' assoc

JERUSALEM, Sept 15: World Jewish leaders hailed a meeting on Thursday with Swiss bankers' association heads as a first step toward helping heirs of holocaust victims find lost accounts that may total millions of Swiss francs (dollars), reports Reuter.

Avraham Burg, Chairman of Israel's quasi-governmental Jewish agency, said in a Jewish agency statement issued in Jerusalem: "potential for a breakthrough in the relations between US and the Swiss banks has been created on an historic scale."

Arms fair in Bangkok SEA emerging as major market for weapons

BANGKOK, Sept 15: Some 200 weapons manufacturers from 27 countries showed off their wares in Bangkok on Thursday, hoping to take advantage of Southeast Asia's rapid economic growth and uncertainty over future stability, reports Reuter.

"The region of Southeast Asia is one of the last in the world where defence budgets continue to expand in the post-cold war era," Derek Da Cunha of Singapore's Institute of South East Asian Studies told a meeting of defence officials at the defence Asia '95 Exhibition.

Da Cunha said the regional

upgrading of weapons systems, and an increasing reliance on high-technology defence systems, was caused by several factors.

Increased resources available to the defence sector as a result of robust economic growth" was a primary reason for upgrading the military across the region, he said.

Those attending the arms fair agreed that South East Asia was emerging as a major market for weapons.

"South East Asia is very important," said Brian Lowe, Director General of Britain's Defence Manufacturers Association.

IMF quintuples financial backing for dev nations

WASHINGTON, Sept 15: The International Monetary Fund said it nearly quintupled its financial backing for developing countries and former Soviet bloc nations in 1994/95 to a record 24.5 billion dollars, reports Reuter.

Mexico was by far the biggest beneficiary of IMF support in 1994/95 as it struggled to cope with a currency crisis that drove it to the brink of default on its foreign debt. But Russia and Ukraine also received large loans.

"History will probably regard the Mexican crisis as a defining moment for the fund," IMF Deputy Managing Director Stanley Fischer told a news conference unveiling the fund's 1995 annual report.

The 24.5 billion US dollar the IMF promised to lend member nations in the year that ended April 30 compared with loan commitment of under 5 billion dollar the previous fiscal year and 21 billion dollar in 1983 at the height of the international debt crisis.

The 1994/95 figures actually understate effective IMF commitments because they do not include 10.1 billion of the 17.8 billion US dollars promised to Mexico because of technical reasons.

Fischer defended the IMF's jumbo loan for Mexico and voiced optimism the country's economy had weathered the worst and was set to resume growing soon.

"There is significant distress (in Mexico)," Fischer said. "But I think you will find

that the turn-around is very fast."

In its annual report, the IMF admitted that both it and Mexico erred in the run-up to the December crisis. Mexico did not provide the IMF with key economic data on a timely basis and the fund failed to give the country a clear early warning of the potential financial difficulties that lay ahead.

"The (IMF) board agree that the responsibility was shared by the member (Mexico) and the fund," the annual report said.

In the wake of the crisis, the IMF has strengthened its oversight of member nations' economies and has encouraged them to publish more economic data so that investors have a better understanding of the risks and benefits involved.

Fischer said he expects the IMF to come up shortly with a list of 10 to 20 economic indicators that it believes countries should publish on a timely basis.

The United States and its industrial national allies have also proposed beefing up the IMF's resources by doubling a 27.3 billion dollar international line of credit now available to the fund or use in economic crises.

Fischer said it was not clear whether the IMF's policy making interim committee will be able to reach agreement on the proposal at its semi-annual meeting next month. "It may go over to the next meeting (in April)," he said.

Developing Asian states will need to invest \$ 1.5 t in 10 yrs : WB

WASHINGTON, Sept 14: Developing countries in Asia will need to invest 1.2 to 1.5 trillion dollars in infrastructure over the next decade, according to a World Bank report released yesterday, reports AFP.

China represents 51 per cent of those needs, followed by Korea (18 per cent), Indonesia (10 per cent), Malaysia and the Philippines (three per cent), according to the report "infrastructure development in Asia and the Pacific: toward a new public private partnership."

Taiwan's forex reserves stand at \$ 98.96b

TAIPEI, Sept 15: Taiwan's foreign exchange reserves stood at 98.96 billion US dollars at the end of July, the central bank said today, reports AFP.

The July reserves, the world's second highest after Japan, represented a decline of 1.45 billion dollars over the previous month's all-time high of 100.4 billion dollars, it said.

The central bank also holds 13.6 million troy ounces of gold reserves worth 5.8 billion dollars.

The reserves were 52 per cent denominated in US dollars, 25 per cent in marks and 16 per cent in yen, it noted.

Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD Ferry Division, Barisal (RHD), Tender Notice
1. Tender Notice No : 25 of RHD, Ferry Division, Barisal/1995-96.
2. Name of work : As described below.
3. Eligibility of contractor : (RHD), general category contractor as per financial capacity and territorial jurisdiction.
4. Availability of tender schedule : (1) Executive Engineer, RHD, Mechl Ferry Divn, Barisal/Khulna. (2) Sub-Divisional Engineer, RHD, Mechl Ferry Sub-Divn, Faridpur (only office hours). No tender will be sold on the date of opening of tender schedule.
5. Tender receiving officer : (1) Superintending Engineer, RHD, Mechl Ferry Circle, Khulna. (2) Executive Engineer, RHD, Mechl Divn/Barisal/ Khulna (only office hours).
6. Last date of selling tender schedule : 24-9-95
7. Last date of receiving tender schedule : 25.9.95/10.6.1402 at 12 Noon.
8. Date and time of opening tender schedule : 28.9.95/13.6.1402 at 1 PM.

UNSC agrees to easing of sanctions on Yugoslavia

UNITED NATIONS, Sept 15: As a reward for help in Bosnian peace talks, the UN Security Council plans its longest extension yet of an easing of sanctions on Yugoslavia, officials said Thursday, says AP.

The council proposal lengthens the suspension of a UN ban on sports and cultural contacts with Yugoslavia and flights to and from the country. More severe trade sanctions, however will remain in place.

The proposal is expected to be approved on Friday. The current suspension expires on Monday.

The penalties were imposed on Yugoslavia in 1992 for its role in the Bosnian war, but the council voted last year to suspend some of the measures after Belgrade closed its border with Bosnian Serb areas to all but humanitarian aid.

Council members have voted several times to continue the suspension. The last extension was for 75 days, but Security Council President Francesco Pulci said the new measure would cover a longer period. He said members were considering an extension of six months.

"What is new is that for the first time, the restrictions are lifted for a longer

period than they used to be," said Pulci, Italy's UN ambassador. "This, of course, in recognition of the role played by Belgrade."

The sanctions were originally meant to punish Serbia and Montenegro — the two republics remaining in Yugoslavia — for inspiring and aiding Serb rebellions in Croatia and Bosnia. But Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic has now taken on a peacemaking role in a campaign to placate the west and get the sanctions lifted.

Armed with authority from the Bosnian Serbs to negotiate on their behalf, Milosevic, helped broker a tentative plan in Geneva this month to split Bosnia roughly in half between the Serbs and a Muslim-Croat alliance.

On Thursday, sources in Washington said a US envoy had gained a pledge from Milosevic that the Bosnian Serbs would pull their heavy weapons from around Sarajevo.

Russia, a traditional ally of Serbia, has pushed for an indefinite extension of the watered-down sanctions and it was not clear if Russia would abstain on the vote as they have done previously. The economic sanctions have ruined the Yugoslav economy.

Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD Ferry Division, Barisal (RHD), Tender Notice
1. Tender Notice No : 24 of RHD, Ferry Division, Barisal/ 1995-96.
2. Name of work : As described below.
3. Eligibility of contractor : (RHD), general category contractor as per financial capacity and territorial jurisdiction.
4. Availability of tender schedule : (1) Executive Engineer, RHD, Mechl, Ferry Divn, Barisal/Khulna. (2) Sub-Divisional Engineer, RHD, Mechl, Ferry Sub-Divn, Faridpur (only office hours) No tender will be sold on the date of receiving tender schedule.
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