

# India eases monetary policy

**BOMBAY, Mar 2:** India's central bank yesterday eased monetary policy, cutting key rates and reducing the amount of cash that commercial banks must hold in reserve in a bid to boost money available for lending, reports AFP.

The move to trim the bank rate, repo rate and cash reserve ratio was in line with New Delhi's resolve to slash interest rates.

The central Reserve Bank of India (RBI), in a statement here, said the bank rate was being cut by one percentage point to eight per cent from Monday.

The cash reserve ratio was being slashed half a percentage point to 10.5 per cent from

March 13, while the repo rate was cut by two percentage points to six per cent from Wednesday.

The bank rate is the rate at which the central bank lends to commercial banks, while the cash reserve ratio is the money that banks must keep in reserve with the central bank.

The repo rate governs debt involving a financial institution selling government securities to the central bank.

Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha had said he favoured a fall in interest rates after announcing the budget for the year to March 2000 on Saturday.

On Monday, RBI Governor Bimal Jalan said the time was

ripe.

"In view of lower inflation in recent weeks, slow credit off-take and next year's lower borrowing programme announced by the government in the budget, the RBI's judgement now is that conditions are right for such a move," he said.

Financial analyst Pradip Shah welcomed the cuts. "All the cuts are good. The government is signalling a fall in interest rates and availability of money in the system."

"The cut in cash reserve ratio is expected to release funds worth the equivalent of about 850 million dollars into the banking system. The issue now is whether the commercial

banks will cut lending rates for borrowers.

"Availability of money was never a problem with the banking sector, the high interest rates were," he said.

Analysts said the cuts were an attempt by New Delhi to hasten recovery.

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), India's premier trade body, said the central bank move was "unprecedented."

"With 48 hours of the presentation of the budget, the announcement of slashing bank rates is truly unprecedented and historic," the CII said in a statement.

# Iraqi bid to regain its oil market role

**BAGHDAD, Mar 2:** Iraq has the world's second largest proven oil reserves, but plays a minor role in world markets because of the dire state of its oil infrastructure, reports AFP.

The sector has been hit by two decades of conflict that has included more than eight years of crippling UN sanctions.

The sector suffered another blow on Sunday when US jets damaged the control centre of the pipeline to Turkey, halting the flow and cutting Iraqi exports in half.

Here is a list of figures for Iraq's oil industry, compiled from statements given by Iraqi officials and other sources.

**Reserves**  
Iraq's proven oil reserves are

about 112.5 billion barrels, the second largest after Saudi Arabia with 261 billion barrels.

**Production**  
Daily production capacity: 2.71 million barrels.  
Daily production (1990): 3.5 million barrels.  
OPEC quota (1990): 3.14 million barrels.

**Exports**  
Daily export capacity: 2.1 million barrels.  
Daily exports (1990): 2.5 million barrels.

**Refining**  
Iraq has slowly rebuilt refining capacity back to its 1990 level of 570,000 bpd by transferring spare parts from smaller refineries to larger ones.

# Global financial services deal takes effect

**GENEVA, Mar 2:** An agreement marking a turning point in liberalisation of trade in financial services took effect yesterday more than a year after 71 countries agreed to the deal at the World Trade Organisation (WTO), says AFP.

The pact widens market access in banking, insurance and fund management in countries representing 95 per cent of all global financial activity.

Participants promise it will boost investment in emerging economies including those of hard-hit Asia, bring crucial advances in technology to inefficient firms and give consumers a better deal.

WTO Director General Renato Ruggiero has stressed the accord was not aimed at liberalising capital flows but at creating opportunities for businesses to establish footholds and expand overseas.

The size of the financial service sector has exploded in the last decade.

About 1.5 trillion dollars are traded daily in the foreign exchange markets and total banking assets are estimated at more than 20 trillion dollars, and insurance premiums at two trillion dollars.

Some 53 governments have ratified the pact, including those of the United States, Japan, and all but one of the European Union (EU) states.

Seventeen governments among the 71 signatory parties, among which is the European Commission, have still not completed the necessary domestic procedures.

These countries are expected to come on board before a ratifying deadline of June 15, 1999, which replaced an original cut-off date of January 29.

Most Asian countries who joined the pact have ratified the protocol, including Thailand, Indonesia and South Korea.

The Philippines is the one notable Asian country still outstanding. Australia, Brazil,

Luxembourg and Costa Rica are also among the have-nots.

Though committed to carry out their liberalisation commitments, countries who have not ratified cannot be judged by the WTO's dispute settlement machinery when the pact takes effect.

The deal, struck after nine months of tough negotiations in December 1997, liberalises key domestic financial sectors to varying degrees and with differing time frames.

As the United States is already the world's most open banking and insurance market, Washington pressed hard to secure more concessions for its financial services industry, mainly from previously fast-growing economies in Asia.

US negotiators insisted that serious commitments from these countries would reassure investors who had fled the region when the currency and stockmarket turmoil first started in July 1997.

# Emirates in plane buying deal with major European banks

**DUBAI, Mar 2:** Dubai's Emirates Airline has signed a 142.9 million euro (157 million dollars) financing deal with a group of banks to finance the purchase of two Airbus A 330-200s, the carrier said in a statement today, reports AFP.

The deal is structured as a 12-year operating lease arranged by Emirates Bank International and Deutsche Bank AG. It is guaranteed by the UK's Export Credit Guarantee Department, Germany's Hermes and France's Coface.

Emirates, which is owned by the government of Dubai in the north of the United Arab Emirates, will receive the two planes in March, the first of 17 such aircraft on firm order.

Launched in 1985, Emirates serves 45 destinations in 37 countries.

# Aussie current account deficit down by \$409m

**CANBERRA, Mar 2:** Australia's current account deficit blew out by 660 million Australian dollars (409 million US dollars) in the last three months of 1998 to a record of almost 8 billion Australian dollars (4.9 billion US dollars), reports AP.

Economists had expected Australia's balance of payments to deteriorate in the December quarter amid tough trading conditions for exporters in the wake of the Asian financial crisis.

The current account deficit was the largest on record, and followed a blowout in the country's goods and services trade deficit to 1.38 billion Australian dollars (855 million US dollars).

The deficit came in at 7.968 billion Australian dollars (4.94 billion US dollars) for the December quarter — the highest seasonally adjusted quarterly figure since March 1995 when it hit 7.795 billion Australian dollars (4.83 billion US dollars), the Australian Bureau of Statistics said Tuesday.

GIO Australian chief economist Akis Haralabopoulos predicted quarterly deficits should remain high for the remainder of the financial year.

"Fortunately for Australian financial markets and policy makers, international investors are focused on Australia's inflation performance and fiscal restraint, otherwise the size of Australia's current account deficit could demand a larger risk premium," he said.



Mosharraf Hossain, Managing Director of Agrani Bank, addresses as chief guest the Managers Conference of the bank's Faridpur, Gopalganj and Madaripur Zone. General Manager of the Head Office K M Badrus Salam and Deputy General Manager Abdul Gani Khan attended the conference as special guest. The conference stressed proper agri loan disbursement, deposit mobilisation, recovery of classified advances, achievement of profit target, business expansion and further improvement of customer services.

—Agrani Bank photo

# Asian stock markets close lower

**HONG KONG, Mar 2:** Most Asian stock markets closed lower Tuesday, with the key index in Tokyo slumping more than 2 per cent, reports AP.

Tokyo's 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average shed 300.69 points or 2.11 per cent, closing at 13,921.06.

It was the Nikkei's lowest closing level since Feb 9, when it finished at 13,902.66, and the first time since Feb 12 that it has closed below 14,000. On Monday, the index shed 145.79 points, or 1.01 per cent.

Share prices in Hong Kong also slumped as investors took profits following two straight sessions of sharp gains.

The Hang Seng Index, the Hong Kong market's key indicator of blue chips, fell 106.88 points, or 1.1 per cent, closing at 9,913.58. On Monday, the index had gained 161.97 points.

Bucking the trend was the Seoul Stock Exchange, where the key index rose 2.7 per cent on a fall in local interest rates.

The Korea Composite Stock Price Index rose 13.91 points to 533.97.

Elsewhere:  
**KUALA LUMPUR:** Malay share prices closed lower ahead of the release of corporate financial results and

uncertainty over the prospect of a sustainable economic recovery in the country. The benchmark Composite Index fell 1.01 per cent, or 5.51 points, to 526.03.

**TAIPEI:** Share prices closed lower following a strong sell-off in the technology sector. The market's key Weighted Stock Price Index fell 17.71 points, or 0.8 per cent, to 2,263.54.

**MANILA:** Philippine shares closed mostly lower, but the main index rose after a handful of bargain-hunters accumulated a few blue-chip stocks. The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index rose 6.11 points.

**SYDNEY:** The Australian share market closed lower on profit-taking. The All Ordinaries index fell 18.3 points, or 0.6 per cent, to 2,892.8.

**SINGAPORE:** Share prices closed mixed. The Straits Times Index fell 4.24 points, or 0.2 per cent, to 1,418.61.

**JAKARTA:** Indonesian shares closed mostly lower on profit-taking. The Composite Index fell 1,359 points, or 0.3 per cent, to 394,966.

**BANGKOK:** Thai share prices closed slightly lower. The SET index fell 2.12 points, or 0.6 per cent, to 338.82.

**Directorate General Defence Purchase**  
Ministry of Defence  
New Airport Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215

## Tender Notice

1. Sealed tenders in local currency are invited from bonafide Manufacturers/Dealers/Suppliers/Indentors (Enlisted firms and firms applied for enlistment in DGDP) for supply of the following items for Bangladesh Navy.

Sl No	Name of items & qty	Date of Selling		Date of opening	Currency	Tender No
		From	To			
a.	Spare for various Equipment (Qty-102 L/I)	14.3.99	08-04-99	11-04-99	F/C	5993
b.	MS Plate (Qty-60 M tons)	14.3.99	08-04-99	11-04-99	F/C	5994
c.	Spare parts for Main & Diesel Generator ((Qty-12 L/I)	14.3.99	08-04-99	11-04-99	F/C	6002
d.	Spare parts for various Equipment (Qty-33 L/I)	14.3.99	08-04-99	11-04-99	F/C	6003
e.	MS Plate Grade Lloyds 'A' (Qty-09 L/I)	14.3.99	08-04-99	11-04-99	F/C	6011

Tender schedule with detailed specifications/conditions will be available on payment as per I/T selling rate (Not refundable) during office hours between 0800 hours to 1300 hours. The tender can be dropped latest by 1000 hrs and opened at 1005 hours on the specified date of opening in the presence of tenderers (if present).  
ISPR/Army/99/142  
DFP-3987-25/2/99  
G-371

**Lt Commander BN**  
For Director General

**Office of the Executive Engineer**  
Faridpur O&M Division  
BWDB, Faridpur.

## Tender Notice

No. 9 of 1998-99

Sl. No.	Name of Project and description of works	Group No.	Estimated Cost Taka	Earnest Money Tk.	Token Earnest Money Tk. 1%	Cost of tender documents per set Tk.	Time allowed for works	Class of contractor/firms who eligible to submit the tender
1	1. Repair and maintenance of Modankhal Regulator (6-1.50Mx1.80M)	9/1	20,30,000/=	50,750/=	20,300/=	750/=	45 (Forty-five) days	A&B Class contractor/firm of BWDB, during 1998-99.
2	2. Construction of Sholkadia Drainage Regulator (3-1.80Mx1.50M) at Faridpur-Boalmari, during 1998-99.	9/2	43,40,000/=	1,08,500/=	43,400/=	750/=	75 (Seventy-five) days	-Do-

1. Tender documents will be available:  
1. The Divisional Commissioner, Dhaka Division, Segunbagicha, Dhaka.  
2. The Manager, Sonali Bank, WAPDA Branch, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000.  
3. The Manager, Sonali Bank, Rajbari Branch, Rajbari/Madaripur Branch, Madaripur/Gopalganj Branch, Gopalganj and Faridpur Goalchamat Branch, Faridpur.

2. The office where tender will be received:  
1. The Divisional Commissioner, Dhaka Division, Segunbagicha, Dhaka-1000.  
2. The Superintending Engineer, Dhaka O&M Circle, BWDB, Shiraj Building, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000.  
3. The Superintending Engineer, O&M Circle, BWDB, Faridpur.  
4. The Executive Engineer, O&M Division, BWDB, Rajbari/Gopalganj/Madaripur and the office of the undersigned.

3. Last date of selling tender documents: During office and banking hours on 10.03.99.

4. Date and time of receiving tender: On 09-03-99, 10-03-99 during office hours and on 11-03-99 up to 12.00 hours (F.N.).

5. Date and time of tender opening: 11-03-99 at 12.30 hours.

6. Name and address of Advertiser: Md. Shamsuddin, Executive Engineer, Faridpur O&M Division, BWDB, Faridpur.

**Md. Shamsuddin**  
Executive Engineer  
Faridpur O&M Division  
BWDB, Faridpur.

PANI-358/98-99  
GD-152

**কম্পিউটার সার্ভিস এন্ড টেকনোলজি বিভাগ**  
রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, রাজশাহী

## দরপত্র পুনঃ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের কম্পিউটার সার্ভিস এন্ড টেকনোলজি বিভাগের জন্য দেশীয় মুদ্রায় কম্পিউটার ও কম্পিউটারের আনুষঙ্গিক যন্ত্রাংশ (সিডিউইলে বর্ণিত স্পেসিফিকেশন মোতাবেক), ক্রয়ের জন্য পৃথক সর্বস্বত্বকারীদের নিকট থেকে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। সিডিউইল আগামী ০৭/০৩/৯৯ ইং থেকে ১৪/০৩/৯৯ ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর অফিসে পাওয়া যাবে। ৪ টাকার ডাকটিকিটসহ আবেদন করলে সিডিউইল পাঠানো হবে। দরপত্র আগামী ১১/০৩/৯৯ ইং তারিখ বেলা ১১টা পর্যন্ত রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের প্রশাসন ভবনের দ্বিতীয় তলায় কোষাধ্যক্ষ অফিসে সঙ্কিত টেন্ডার বাস্তবে গ্রহণ করা হবে।

**সভাপতি**  
কম্পিউটার সার্ভিস এন্ড টেকনোলজি বিভাগ  
৩০-০৩-৯৯/১১/৯৯/বিআ/পপজ রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়,  
GD-153 রাজশাহী

**কম্পিউটার সার্ভিস এন্ড টেকনোলজি বিভাগ**  
রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, রাজশাহী

৩০-০৩-৯৯/১১/৯৯/বিআ/পপজ রাজশাহী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়,  
GD-153 রাজশাহী

# Exchange Rates

**American Express Bank Ltd foreign exchange rates (indicative) against the Taka to clients.**

Currency	Selling TT & OD	Selling BC	Buying T. Clean	Buying OD. Export Bill	Buying OD Transfer
US Dollar	48.7300	48.7700	48.3100	48.1570	48.0850
Pound Stg	78.6746	78.7392	77.4892	77.2438	77.1283
Deutsche Mar	27.5039	27.5265	26.5061	26.4222	26.3827
Swiss Franc	33.4684	33.4959	32.9312	32.8269	32.7778
Japanese Yen	0.4076	0.4079	0.4004	0.3991	0.3965
Dutch Guilder	24.4102	24.4303	23.5246	23.4501	23.4151
Danish Krona	7.1883	7.1942	7.0197	6.9974	6.9670
Australian \$	30.6902	30.7153	29.4353	29.3421	29.2962
Belgian Franc	1.3335	1.3346	1.2851	1.2810	1.2791
Canadian \$	32.3143	32.3408	31.3905	31.2911	31.2443
French Franc	8.2007	8.2074	7.9092	7.8782	7.8654
Hong Kong \$	6.3022	6.3074	6.2229	6.2032	6.1940
Italian Lira	0.0278	0.0278	0.0268	0.0267	0.0266
Norway Kroner	6.1551	6.1602	6.0501	6.0309	6.0219
Singapore \$	28.4971	28.5205	27.5899	27.5026	27.4651
Saudi Rial	13.0392	13.0499	12.8409	12.8002	12.7811
UAE Dirham	13.3033	13.3142	12.8999	12.8590	12.8398
Swedish Krona	5.9095	5.9144	5.8317	5.8133	5.8046
Qatari Riyal	13.4224	13.4334	13.2302	13.1883	13.1686
Kuwaiti Dinar	167.1125	167.2497	153.0735	152.5887	152.3606
Thai Baht	1.3017	1.3028	1.2884	1.2844	1.2824
Euro	53.7930	53.8372	51.8415	51.6773	51.6000

**Bill buying rates**

TT Doc	30 Days	60 Days	90 Days	120 Days	180 Days
48.2112	47.9074	47.5048	47.1023	46.6997	45.8945

**US dollar London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR)**

Buying	Selling	Currency	Months				
			1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	9 Months	12 Months
48.0850	48.7300	USD	4.9650	5.02750	5.12250	5.26	5.3800
48.0850	48.7300	GBP	5.60563	5.44516	5.38859	5.35547	5.35547
Cash/TC	Cash/TC	EUR	3.06	3.05	3.04	2.98	2.98

**Exchange rates of some Asian currencies against US dollar**

Indian Rupee	Pak Rupee	Thai Baht	Malaysian Ringgit	Indonesian Rupiah	Korean Won
42.50/42.530	51.280/51.30	37.420/37.460	3.7998/3.8002	8850/8870	1223/1225

**Amex notes on Tuesday's market**

The USD/BDT was higher than previous day's range because of scarcity of the greenback which raised the rate between 48.75 and 48.79. The inter bank call money market ranged between 9.00 and 9.50% which was lower than that of the previous day.

The dollar remained in a narrow range for much of the afternoon trade in Tokyo on Tuesday as profit-taking offers blunted the greenback's rise.

The dollar sentiment remained positive due to strong US fundamentals, but the Tokyo market was thin because many Japanese participants were sidelined ahead of corporate book closing at end of March.

In late trade, the greenback edged as high as the upside weighed by selling offers, possibly by US operators.

The euro was mired near lifetime lows against the dollar and sterling on Tuesday amid concern the European Central Bank's reluctance to cut interest rate could jeopardise growth in the 11-nation euro zone. Comments by members of the ECB's policy-making board so far this week have reinforced expectations that it will leave interest rates unchanged at its meeting on Thursday.

Traders are therefore betting that the US economy will continue to outshine its euro-zone rival, and beginning to speculate that the Federal Reserve could raise rates at the end of March.

At 07:47 GMT the majors were traded against US \$ at 120.08/120.13 JPY, 1.7971/1.7980 DEM, 1.4627/1.4632 CHF, Euro at \$ 1.0875/1.0886 and GBP at \$ 1.6078/1.6088.

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Ministry of Food  
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka

Dated: 24/2/99

## International Tender Notice for Import of Non-Basmati Parboiled Rice

Tenders in sealed cover are invited from bonafide traders for supply of 40,000 (forty thousand) metric tons of Non-Basmati Parboiled Rice in cash. The particulars of tender are furnished below:

- Quantity: 40,000 (forty thousand) MT (5% more or less at seller's option). Minimum quantity to be offered 10,000 MT.
- Basis: 40,000 (forty thousand) MT at Chittagong & Mongla port on 60-40 basis on C&F liner terms at both ends (Lighterage, if any on seller's account up to jetty). Price per MT to be quoted in US dollar.
- Mode of payment: Cash through L/C.
- Quality & specification: Details given in the tender schedule.
- Country of origin: Any country.
- Crop year: Last crop of 1998-99 or latest crop.
- Packing: 50 or 75 Kg new jute bags having B-twill size 33"x26.5" and 41"x26.5" respectively and weight 1.71 lbs and 2.10 lbs respectively.
- Date of shipment: 30 (thirty) days from the date of signing of the contract.
- Earnest Money/Bid Bond: 2% value of the total quantity to be quoted along with the tender (details given in the tender schedule).
- Cost of tender: Tk. 5,000.00 (five thousand) non-refundable by Pay Order/Bank Draft drawn in favour of Secretary, Ministry of Food.
- Last date of selling tender schedule and other terms & conditions etc: 4th April, 1999 up to 17.00 hrs.
- Place of selling of tender schedule and other terms & conditions: Room No. 106, Section-12, Building No. 4, Ministry of Food, Dhaka.
- Place of receiving tender: In the tender box to be kept in the Room No. 119, Building No. 4, Ministry of Food, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka or in the office chamber of Director (Procurement), Room No. 501, Food Directorate, 16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka.
- Time and date of closing tender: 13:00 hrs BST on 5th April, 1999.
- Time & date of opening: 13:30 hrs BST on 5th April, 1999. Tenderers or their representatives may attend the same.
- Validity offer to be kept: Up to 17:00 hrs BST on 15th April, 1999.
- Other terms & conditions: Incomplete and conditional tender will not be considered. Ministry of Food reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the bids partly or wholly without assigning any reason.

**Md Faruque Hossain**  
Sr. Asstt. Secretary  
Phone: 867938.

DFP-4012-28/2/99  
G-364