PERC says in its latest survey

Post-crisis Asia to fight with China for investment pie

SINGAPORE, Dec 26: Postcrisis Asian economies face stiff challenges in securing for-eign direct investments as China pursues its membership bid in the World Trade Organisation (WTO), an independent think-tank reported, reports

Reform and restructuring efforts undertaken in the aftermath of the regional financial crisis which began mid-1997 have boosted the level of such foreign inflows into Thailand and South Korea, said the Political and Economic Risk Consultancy (PERC) in its latest sur-

It has also improved expatriate businessmen's percep-tions of the extent of discrimination against their investments, the survey said. But China's bid for member-

ship in the World Trade Organisation "could be the single most important factor influencing foreign direct investment trends for a number of years to come — not only in China but elsewhere in Asia as well," it said.

"Increasingly, one of the key challenges for other Asian countries will be to figure ways either to compete against China as a site for foreign investment or to complement investment

"Hong Kong, Taiwan and probably (South) Korea will figure into the latter category. Singapore should also be able to carve out a niche for itself, but its track record in China investments to date is certainly mixed at best," PERC said.

It noted that even without membership in the global trade

body. China has been attracting more direct foreign investment in recent years than the rest of Asia combined.

Foreign direct investment to China is expected to fall 10 bil-lion US dollars this year from 45.5 billion in 1998, but still the amount is greater than new investments being actually committed into any other Asian country, it said.

It attributed the drop to Beijing's efforts to more accurately record such statistics, following the fallout from a scandal involving China's local investment trust companies.

Philippines, while possessing their own structural merits. could not consider cheap labor as a decisive factor attracting foreigners to invest.

"China's entry into the WTO

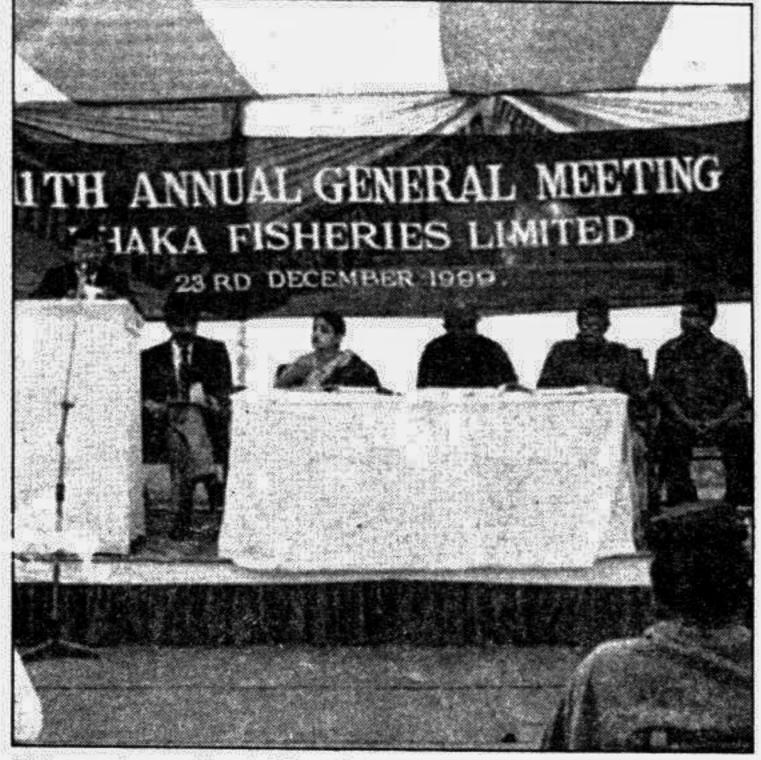
Malaysia, Thailand and the

will be coming at a time when these countries are just emerging from the regional crisis. and it remains to be seen how well they will face up to the new competitive challenges that will develop" the report said.

"If China is about to enter a period of rapid policy change for the better, other countries from India to the Philippines will have to take even more radical steps," it added.

Foreign investors would keep Indonesia in its sights due to its large population and wealth of natural resources, "no matter what happens in China."

"And if the mainland's economy continues to grow strongly. its demand for the raw materials that Indonesia has to offer could create a lot of synergies for both countries," PERC said.



Picture shows the 11th AGM of Dhaka Fisheries Ltd held at its factory premises Thursday. The meeting declared a 5 per cent dividend for the shareholders of the company.

- Dhaka Fisheries photo

WTO in bid to rebuild its image

GENEVA, Dec 26: The World Trade Organisation (WTO) is zeroing in on Thailand's success in applying neo-liberal policies as the international organisation attempts to rebuild its image after the serious damage inflicted by the failure of its ministerial conference in Seattle earlier this month, reports IPS.

"It's true that in Seattle we had a setback," said the director of the WTO Trade Policy Review Body, Clem Boonekamp, but the example set by Thailand's response to the international economic crisis is a "significant achievement for our institu-

The Trade Policy Review Body declared last week that Thailand responded appropriately to the 1997 world financial crisis when it applied the same neo-liberal policies promoted by the WTO Secretariat. In the past, the behaviour of

countries hit by crisis has normally consisted of closing their markets to foreign trade. But as a result of the liberalisation model preached by the

WTO, Thailand and many other

Bank of Korea's

2000 inflation

policy due today

a's central bank plans to an-

nounce next year's inflation

target on Monday as the econ-

omy's faster than expected re-

covery raises concerns that

pressure on prices is imminent,

measured in the consumer price

index (CPI) growth rate, has re-

mained stable throughout this

year and full-year inflation is

expected to be less than one per

owes to the base effect resulting

from the high 7.5 per cent con-

sumer price growth for 1998.

low wage growth early this year

in the aftermath of the last

year's economic recession and

CPI growth forecast for next

year is not likely to deviate

from its 3.8 per cent projection

in October, following a 0.8 per

cent growth projected for this

financial stability is not fully

restored, business conditions

could become highly unstable,"

KDI's senior economist Kim

Joon-kyong said on Thursday.

"The top priority should be

placed on establishing price

among the imminent inflation

threats. Labour Ministry data

showed the monthly nominal

wage stood at 1.56 million won

(\$1,400) on average for the first

per cent from a year earlier.

10 months of this year, up 10.5

The inflation-adjusted aver-

age monthly wage stood at 1.31

million won for the 10-month

period, up 9.7 per cent from the

same 1998 period but 1.4 per

cent lower than the level in

more aggressive during wage

negotiations early next year,

especially from speculation

that President Kim Dae-jung's

government may become de-

fensive ahead of general elec-

WASHINGTON, Dec 26: The

US economy in 2000 should

hum along at roughly the same

impressive pace it did in 1999.

but analysts warn that just

about everything depends in the

Federal Reserve and its stance

on short-term interest rates.

searchers and the National As-

sociation of Manufacturers

foresee gross domestic product

expanding 3.7-3.8 per cent next

year after growth that in 1999

should come to about 3.9-four

pansion, now more than eight

Driving the continued ex-

Projections from private re-

Workers are expected to be

A sharp growth in wages is

stability."

1997

tions in April.

says AFP.

per cent.

"It inflation develops while

The Bank of Korea's revised

the won's appreciation.

This year's low inflation

South Korea's inflation,

reports Reuters.

SEOUL, Dec 26; South Kore-

countries responded to the economic downturn with polices of greater openness, affirmed the trade official.

Boonekamp said the fact that nations in crisis turn to the multilateral system reflects an important victory for the

For this reason, he recommended that some WTO-related events, such as the failure of the Seattle conference in early December, should be evaluated from a broader perspective.

Despite the "setback in

Seattle," comparing the current situation with that of the early 1980s shows that there has been a "quantum change, a seachange in attitude," maintained Boonekamp, and Thailand and South Korea's reaction to the crisis is proof. The Policy Review Body periodically studies the extent to which WTO member-countries adhere to the multilateral system's policies, which tend to press developing nations to open their markets to exports coming from the larger trade powers.

The review of the Thai case

HONG KONG, Dec 26: The

Japanese yen eased this week as

most Asian currencies

strengthened against the green-

brought down by intervention

by the bank of Japan toward the

weekend after steadily edging

to a low of 103.15 to the dollar

following the midday interven-

tion on Friday but it later re-

covered to the 102 yen level.

dollar at 5:00 pm (0800 GMT),

down from 102.97-103.00 to the

103 level, there was a sustained

demand for the yen among for-

eign investors who wanted to

buy the currency for the pur-

chase of Japanese shares."

Asahi Bank dealer Shigeru

the week as investors waited for

a meeting of the US Federal Re-

serve on interest rates late

Tuesday. It gained on Wednes-

The yen held firm early in

It stood at 102.58-62 to the

"Although the yen fell to the

Japanese yen: The yen was

The Japanese unit dropped

back, says AFP.

dealers said.

Nakane said.

up against the dollar.

dollar a week earlier.

last week sparked interest because it where the financial crisis erupted in July 1997. spreading later to other countries in the region and throughout the world.

In addition to evaluating Thailand, this session of the Trade Review Body was the first formal meting held by the WTO since the tumultuous Seattle conference. The controversial meeting ended without producing the results the WTO Secretariat and other trade powers had wanted, namely, the launching of another round of

international trade talks. In the climate of disappointment that has dominated the WTO since Seattle - and reflected in the general council's decision to postpone its evaluation of the situation until early 2000 - the Trade Review director attempted to lighten the atmosphere by underscoring the success of the Thai experience.

Thailand is just one of many countries that now open their markets in response to crisis and use the multilateral trade

system to create the discipline

Weekly Asian Currency

BOJ intervention pulls yen

down, others strong

day with little impact from the

US decision to leave key inter-

in the Australian dollar will be

thin in the week ahead with

concerns over the Y2K threat

keeping buyers on the sidelines.

conditions in the coming week

verges on over-statement," said

Craig James, chief economist

Y2K will combine to dry-up ac-

tivity. It will be a case of wait

and see if the passing of Y2K

provokes a flurry of activity in

financial markets in the new

New Zealand dollar closed Fri-

day worth 51.65 US cents, up

from the 50.54 cents close of a

gapore dollar appreciated to

1.6696 against the US dollar

Friday, from 1.6730 a week ago.

Kong dollar ended Friday at

7.7682-7.7692 to the US dollar

Singapore dollar: The Sin-

Hong Kong dollar: The Hong

New Zealand dollar: The

Christmas, New Year and

at Colonial State Bank.

"Expectation of thin trading

Australian dollar: Trading

est rates unchanged.

brokers said.

year."

week earlier.

necessary for restructuring their economies, affirmed Boonekamp.

During the Trade Policy Review session, member-states agreed that Thailand "is doing very well subsequent to the ASIAN financial crisis," because the Thai government responded appropriately by implementing disciplined financial policies.

Immediately following the 1997 financial turmoil, Bangkok's authorities applied significant structural readjustments, including trade liberalization in some areas and investment liberalization, according to the WTO.

Representatives from the other 134 WTO member-countries encouraged Thailand to continue its restructuring process, "which has not yet ended."

Delegates from around the world agreed they are happy with Thailand's economic performance in liberalising its economy and urged the ASIAN nation to continue the reform process," and not to rest on its

from 7.772-7.773 the previous

piah remained stagnant during

the four-day trading week to

close at 7,085 to the dollar on

Thursday or at the same level it

strengthened by 1.2 per cent

against the dollar this week,

closing at 40.100 pesos on Fri-

day from 40.635 pesos on De-

weakened against the US dollar

to 1.132.00 to from 1.130.30

won a week ago. Analysts say

the currency will get strong

again before the close of the

dollar surged against the green-

back over the week to close at

31.608 Friday on the back of a

strong Japanese yen and in-

creased foreign remittance for

stocks investment, dealers said.

pected to move in an upward

trend in the near term, dealers

ব্যাংক লিমিটেড

য়উদ্শ ৰাহিক সাধারণ সভা

ROOM BONEST: NA

The local currency was ex-

Taiwan dollar: The Taiwan

South Korean won: The won

Philippine peso: The peso

closed a week earlier.

cember 17.

Indonesian rupiah: The ru-

Auto sales in southeast Asia jump 46pc

SINGAPORE, Dec 26: Sales of automobiles in Southeast Asia jumped 46.2 per cent in the first 10 months of 1999 compared to the same period last year, experts said, reports AFP.

A total of 519,039 vehicles were sold during the 10 months of 1999 against 355,029 sold last year with monthly sales in Indonesia reporting the highest growth, Visteon, one of the largest automotive component makers in the world, said in a

Sales of vehicles in Indonesia rose 22 per cent to 13,506 in October compared to the same month last year, the highest monthly sales total of the year and the fifth consecutive monthly sales in the country. Total sales in the first 10

months also increased by nearly 20 per cent to 64,894 units, according to Visteon. "The strong sales performance in October is a welcome

change from earlier in the year

when the country was selling

only a few thousand vehicles

ASEAN manager for Visteon said in the report. "Hopefully, the upward trend will continue as the country re-

per month," Gregory Adams,

bounds from two years of economic difficulties, he said. In October alone, sales of vehicles in Malaysia totalled 26,310 nearly equal to its

record-setting sales of 26,455 units in September. Sales in the Philippines also increased seven per cent in October to 6,914 units, the country's third consecutive month

increase, but sales for the first 10 months fell 8.42 per cent to 60,663 units. Despite the drop in sales this year versus the first 10 months in 1998, the market in the

Philippines is showing signs of

steady growth, Visteon said. Thailand was the only market to record a significant month-on-month decrease, Visteon said, with sales dropping ten per cent to 18,322 units in October from 20,379 units sold last year.

within the framework of the

"The government has won

European Union acquisitions.

confidence both here and

abroad with its performance

since the April 18 elections," he

Turkey must meet EU

ANKARA, Dec 26: President Suleyman Demirel said yesterday Turkey must do all it takes to abide by European legal and economic criteria after the 15nation bloc awarded Ankara full candidacy statues earlier

"The road to the European Union passes through the reforms Turkey has to carry out," Demirel told his regular end-ofyear news conference.

"We must meet not only the Copenhagen criteria but the conditions outlined at Maastricht, as well as those of the European Monetary Union," he

The 15-nation bloc granted Ankara candidate status in early December at its Helsinki summit but made clear Turkey needs to improve human rights and make progress on economic and democratic reforms before EU entry negotiations can be-

"It is partly in our hands to

Demirel said. "We must also review our administrative structure and

membership in 2004, we must reduce the rate of the rate of inflation to between two to three per cent in 2003 and below two per cent in 2004," Demirel said. Copenhagen criteria outline

general political and economic take, and Maastricht principles set out targets for EU members

exchange and monetary policy in early December to cut inflation from 60 per cent now to single digits in 2002 by linking lira depreciation to targeted inflation instead of past levels.

criteria: Demirel

this month, says Reuters.

determine when we can become a full member of the EU,"

carry out all the legal and constitutional arrangements

The three-party government, grouping leftists, nationalist and conservatives, has man-

aged to pass through parliament several key reform bills including measures on banking and pensions - as well as a constitutional amendment to allow for international arbitration in commercial disputes. "If we intend to accede to full

steps candidate countries must

in fiscal and monetary matters. Turkey unveiled a foreign

for US homeless

WASHINGTON, Dec 26: US President Bill Clinton yesterday hailed as "a Christmas gift" the government's plan to grant 900 million dollars in aid aimed at helping the country's millions of homeless citizens. says AFP.

proven, successful programmes ... They are a Christmas gift all of us can be proud of," he said in his weekly radio address.

But with the National Law Centre on Homelessness and Poverty estimating some two million people go homeless each year in the United States, the federal grants will offer less than 450 dollars per homeless person, a hefty portion of which is consumed by administrative

cial told AFP the president's Christmas announcement of "nearly one billion dollars in new federal grants" referred to funds already approved by Congress over a year ago.

needs to be approved by Congress. This is money that was already approved" in 1998, for fiscal year 1999, the official

highest rate of poverty and homelessness in the industrialised world, despite having the most powerful economy.

A government study released December 8 showed one third of the homeless are families with children and another third are US military veterans.

more than half have no medical insurance. Among the uninsured are one out of every five homeless children, according to the study, "Homelessness: Pro-

grammes and the People they

The president acknowledged the gravity of the situation earlier in the week in a speech at Washington organisation, the DC Central Kitchen. "We have the lowest unem-

ployment in 30 years ... but when I left church Sunday morning there were still a lot of people in Lafayette park lined up behind those vans waiting to get fed," he said, referring to vans that offer food to the homeless at a park facing the White House.

Clinton personally helped Wednesday to prepare holiday meals for those in need at the charity, which offers some 3,000 meals daily, and which this year benefited from the help of nearly 5,000 volunteers, the president told his Saturday morning radio audience.

"That's America at its best when neighbour helps to lift up neighbour, and together we shine a light in the darkness. That is also the true spirit of Christmas," he said.

This year's 900 million dollars in federal grants homeless programmes is a four per cent increase over last year's allotment.

The National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH) and other social service groups have asked the Clinton Administration to request 3.6 billion dollars in funds for fiscal 2001 when it submits its budget proposals to Congress in February.

"It will have a deleterious effect on their ability to provide services to uninsured persons and (they) will be forced to use federal grant and other funds," the statement said.

Exchange Rates

Currency		т	Selling TT & OD		Selling BC		Buying T.T Clean		Buying OD. Sight Export Bill		Buying OD Transfer		
US Dollar		51	51.2300		51.2700		50.8100		50.6570		50.5850		
Pound Stg		83	83.2641		83.3291		81.5399		81.2944		81.1788		
Deutsche	Mark	26	26.9348		26.9558		25:921	6	25.8435		_	5.8068	
Swiss Franc		32	32.5125		32.5379		31.8319		31.7360		31.6909		
Japanese Yen		0.	0.5028		0.5032		0.4888		0.4874		0.4867		
Dutch Guilder		23	23.9051		23.9237		23.0058		22.9366		22.9040		
Danish Krona		7.	7.0249		7.0304		6.8712		6.8505		6.8408		
Australia		33.4788			33.5049		32.1373		32.0406		31.9950		
Belgian I	Franc	1.	1.3059		1.3069		1.268		1.2530		1.2512		
Canadiar	ı \$	35.2848			35.3123		34.2639		34.1608		34.1122		
French F	ranc	8.	8.0310		8.0373		7.7289		7.7058		7.6947		
Hong Kong \$ *		6.6069			6.6121		6.5258		6.5062		6.4969		
Italian Lira		0.0272			0.0272		0.0262		0.0261		0.0261		
Norway Kroner		6.	6.4254		6.4305		6.3212		6.3022		6.2032		
Singapore \$		3	31.0862		31.1104		30.0473		29.9568		29.9143		
Saudi Rial		13	13.6979		13.7086		13.5115		13.4708		13.4517		
UAE Dirham		13	13.9877		13.9986		13.7958		13.7543		13.7347		
Swedish Krona		6.	6.0740		6.0787		5.9993		5.9812		5.9727		
Qatari Riyal		14	14.1188		14.1298		13.9205		13.8786		13.8589		
Kuwaiti dinar		1	174.1037		174.2396		161.6351		161.1484		160.9194		
Thai Baht		1.	1.3667		1.3677		1.3508		1.3467		1.3448		
Euro		53	52.6798		52.7209		50.6982		50.5456			50.4737	
Bill I	ouying	rat	es	9.5	-1146	SEVE:						0.1101	
TT Doc			30 Days		60 Days		90 Days		120 Days		180 Days		
50.7112		50.3866			49.9632		49.5398		49.1163		48.2695		
US de	ollar Lo	ndo	n Intert	ar			Rate (L		2)		_	10,2030	
Buying	Sellin		Currenc				3 Months		6 nths	9 Months		12 Months	
50.5850	51.2300	554	USD		6.49		6.18375	6.16625		6.3125		6.48125	
81.2294	82.8287	-	GBP		5.43875		6.06844	6.28406		6.49875		6.69156	
Cash/TC	Cash/1			-	3.53438		3.44875	3.55		3.71		3.87625	
Exch	ange r	ates	of som	e	And the Control of the Control	200	rrencie	3-37-5-7	S-11	No. of the last transfer of the	lol	Annual Control of the	
Indian		Pak T		T	Thai Ma		alaysian Ringgit	In	Indonesia n Rupiah		Korean Won		
				_			3.7995/	-	6975/		1131.6/		
1678,050,050,050 (1.10) (1.10) (1.10)					CONTRACTOR OF COMME		3.8005		7015		11132.6		

American Express Bank Ltd foreign exchange rates

(indicative) against the Taka to major currencies.

USD/BDT rates have fallen slightly to 51.08-51.10 level.

The call rates have remained steady at 5.25-5.75 per cent level The dollar held modest gains at midday on Friday as traders tidied up for Christmas a few hours after Japan's central bank interrupted the latest yen buying spree by selling its own currency. Shortly after noon (1700 GMT) the dollar traded more than three quarters of a per cent firmer against the yen near 102.91 yen in New York, having first erased sharp overnight losses and then trimmed similarly sharp gains. The dollar traded 0.31 per cent firmer against the euro as the single European currency was also up nearly a half per cent against the yen. The dollar was also firmer against the Swiss franc and British pound. Trading volumes, already thin at the start, dried up even more in the last hour, reported several dealers who remained at their desks. Overnight, the Bank of Japan staged a surprise Christmas Eve intervention, buying an estimated \$ 1 billion to \$ 2 billion for yen starting below the 102 yen level. This helped the dollars surge to 103.15 yen, its highest level this week. During most of the New York day, the dollar hovered just below 103 yen, failing to break higher but also well supported above 102.50 yen where dealers has suspected central bank activity earlier. The intervention, the 13th round since June, appeared ineffective because the dollar did not hold all of its gains, but it helped sap an already listless market's appetite for more action. Looking ahead to 2000, traders remain confident the dollar will hit 100 yen amid renewed interest for Japanese assets, the beginning of the yearly funds repatriation for Japanese corporations and improving economic fundamentals.

Euro/yen strength was keeping the Euro/USD propped above \$1.01, although the single European currency was still below six-day highs around \$1.0180 set on Thursday. The euro was aided a little bit as the region's stock markets performed well with the Paris CAC-40 hitting its 37th record of the year, closing up 2.11 per cent at 5852.5 points. London's FTSE rose 0.44 per cent to 6806.5 points. Chartists said the euro had yet to tackle key chart barriers above \$1.02 prove parity was definitely out of the picture.

Sterling rose to 1-1/2 week highs against the dollar <GBP=> on Friday, underpinned by growing expectations that the Bank of England would raise interest rates early next year. Thin market conditions ahead of a four-day Christmas weekend in Britain amplified the pound's gyrations after its initial failure to overcome resistance at \$1.62 but that barrier eventually gave way to growing bullish sentiment

At NY close on December 24, exchange rates of major currencies against USD were GBP/USD 1.6148/1.6153, SD/CHF 1.5857/5862, USD/JPY 102.89/102.94, EUR/USD 0128/1.0133.

Shipping Intelligence

CHITTAGONG PORT

Berth position and performance of vessels as on 26.12.99 Name of Vessels Cargo L.Port Local Date of Leaving agent arrival GI Sing ASA 20/12 C.Clink Jaka NWSL 16/12 Wheat(P) Sing 23/11

J/1 Bao Lian Shan (48) 27/12 Ocean Grace 28/12 Lady Emily 29/11 Chahaya Star 26/12 Yang Uniship 4/12 Apj Anand GI(Copra) 31/12 Sing Allseas Sing Seaglory 26/11 Global discovery GI(Peas) 31/12 Phonix-M R.S/WT(P) 20/11 2/01 Saigon-I Urea(G) Sing BNSC R/A 28/12 Jin Cheng Cing Bdship 28/12 4/12 Banglar Urmi Wheat(G) BSC R/A 29/12 GI(D.P) Sing Jin Bi 2/01 9/12 Seacom J/12 Banglar Moni Cont Sing BSC 22/12 27/12 J/13 QC Mallard QCSL 23/12 28/12 Cont Sing CCT/1 NOL Artemis 28/12 Sing 19/12 Cont CCT/2 Bunga Mas Lapan EOSL 26/12 Cont P.Kel 18/12 CCT/3 Xpress Nilgiri RSL 28/12 Cont P.Kel 14/12 RM/14 JIDI GI(WT.CE) 30/12 Bang Cindy 22/12 ∞ Al Marzan RML 29/12 C.Clink Pada 21/12 GSJ Evrimedon Wheat(G) Jord Ancient 3/12 30/12 TSP Tia Estela 31/12 R.Sulp B.Abb Seacom 13/12 DOJ Sibirsk Apex 22/12 4/01 C.Clink Pada DDJ/ BSC R/A Banglar Maya Repair 1/01 Al Muztuba 28/12 Repair Cla 19/11 Banglar Shourab Repair BSC R/A 27/12 KAFCO(U) Martina 30/12 Fert(Bag) Mong SMSL 17/10 Kafco(A) Lin Colin Shire Ammonia MBL 26/12 Rayo 24/12

VESSELS DUE AT OUTER ANCHORAGE Name of vessels Date of L.Port Local Cargo

Loading

	arrival	call	agent	1-ASSOLTAN	port
Peleas-K	27/12	Pada	MBL	C.Clink (Confd)	
Banga Birol(Cont) 15/12	26/12		Bdship	Cont	Sing
Hai Hing	27/12	Mesa	Litmond	Urea	
Ayubia	27/12	Mesa	Litmond	Urea(G)	15 02
St.Irene(Cont)19/12	27/12	U.58	QCSL	Cont	Sing
Banglar Shikha(Cont)12/12	26/12	Sing	BSC	Cont	Sing
Bunga Mas Enam(Cont)17/12	28/12	P.Kel	EOSL	Cont	Sing
Sheng Yang(48)21/12	26/12	Sing	RML	GI(St.Coil)	
Pacific Centurion	26/12	Sing	S.I.Chy	DrilingMat:	C
Kea	27/12	Viz	Benam		82
Norbulk Oak(48)15/12	27/12	Eol	Seacom	GI(St.Coil)	3
Al Bauraq	27/12	Pen	Viking	Cement	
Sarah-1	28/12	Yang	SMSL	GI(Onion)	S. T.
Banglar Kakoli	28/12	Male	BSC	CI	27 <u>4</u>
Kota Berjaya(Cont)17/12	28/12	Sing	Pil(Bd)	Cont	Sing
Chesapeake Trader	28/12	P.Lan	Benam	Wheat(G)	-
Bunga Mas Lima(Cont)22/12	29/12	P.Kel	EOSL	Cont	Sing
Joy World	29/12	Sec. 343	SSLL	GI(St.Coil)	
Achiever(Cont)20/12	30/12	Sing	RSL	Cont	Sing
Osg Argosy(Cont)22/12	30/12	Cbo	Baridhi	Cont	Col.
Qc Teal(Cont)22/12	31/12		Qcsl	Cont	Sing
Da Fa(Cont)20/12	1/01	Sing	Rsl	Cong	Sing
Sea Happiness	2/01	Hald	JF	GI(St.Coil)	ě
Kota Naga(Cont)23/12	2/01	Sing	Pil(BD)	GI(St.Coil)	3
Bangabiraj(Cont)23/12	5/01		Bdship	Cont	Sing

/ilyuysk Keiko	26/12St. 27/12	Plam TSL - BSL	CDSO Crude Oil	*
Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Port	Local agent	Date of arrival
V	ESSELS O	F KUTUBI	A	
Energuy Exdpl Orer-IV	100		BBAL	5/04
Dea Champion	3 8 3	Kdia	BBAL RA	A(01/12)
emaya	No.		DDAT	17/0

Mfb Devi Matha 24/10 BBAL Mfb Sona 24/10 BBAL Mfb Lakshmi BBAL 24/10 Seabulk command IBS R/A(28/11) SmitLloyd-27 2/12 S.I.Chy Marine-305 S.I.Chy The above are shipping position and performance of vessels of

Chittagong Port as per berthing sheet of CPA supplied by HRC Group, Dhaka.

years old, is a soaring stock market that has inspired businesses to invest - notably in computers and telecommunications devices - and consumers to spend.

At the same time, substan-

ity — the quantity of a product turned out per hour of work have held inflation in check, as have lower import prices in re-What could go wrong? The

tial gains in worker productiv-

meeting in the city on Thursday.

Interest rates hold key to sustained

US growth in 2000: Analysts

sponse to a strong dollar. principal threat, according to analysts, is a sharp rise in short-term interest rates that could in turn discourage investment and spending and ultimately undermine momentum.

"We're fairly bullish on the US expansion continuing next year but we're also highlighting the serious risk that interest rates could move up much more than we anticipate, especially if inflation takes off or the economy doesn't slow enough," said Sal Guatieri, senior economist at the Harris Bank/Bank of Montreal in Chicago.

The Federal Reserve, the US

central bank, earlier this week no secret of its anxiety over the pace of growth and its potential to drive up prices.

Chairman of Pubali Bank Ltd EA Chowdhury speaks at the bank's 16th annual general

The Fed's policy making Open Market Committee, loath to intervene ahead of possible Y2K disruptions, backed off raising interest rates but warned that "over time increases in demand will continue to exceed the growth in potential supply, even after taking account of the remarkable rise in productivity growth."

That trend, it added, could "foster inflationary pressures that would undermine the economy's exemplary performance. For financial circles, the

tone of the Fed message points to another quarter-point increase in interest rates - complementing the three carried out in 1999 — when the commit-

fundamentals driving the economy one or two rate hikes might not do the trick. But an aggressive Fed move against inflation carries the risk of unsettling investors and bringing the upward thrust in the stock market to an abrupt halt. "Going back at least to the Second World War," according

The fear is that given the

tee convenes in February

- Pubali Bank photo

to Guatieri, "It looks like every time there was a serious stock market correction it was preceded or triggered by a dramatic runup in interest rates." The World Bank recently warned that the risk of a sharp

contraction in US momentum is "substantial" this year, a development it said could hurt poor countries dependent on US markets and international capital flows.

Clinton hails new aid

"Those grants will fund

And an administration offi-

"This is not money that still

The United States has the

Two thirds have acute. chronic health problems but