

# Global markets rally amidst minor Y2K glitches

LONDON, Jan 4: European, Asian and US share markets rallied on Monday in relief at the absence of serious Y2K problems, but the appearance of a number of small glitches showed it was too soon to write the bug off as mere hype, says Reuters.

Stock markets in Frankfurt, Paris, Milan, Madrid, Helsinki and Amsterdam all reached new peaks on the hope that investors will press on with last year's rally.

In the US Wall Street opened higher as the flood of money into technology stocks on the NASDAQ market showed no sign of abating.

There's money flowing into Nasdaq... Since there was no catastrophic meltdown of civilisation as we knew it, we're going to get a rally," said Doug Myers, the vice president of equity trading at Wachovia Securities in Atlanta.

expenditure of more than \$500 billion worldwide had been worthwhile.

The story is of a panic which scrambled out of the control of all the parties, even those that sought to make money from it. I believe greed was an element of it," Professor Anthony Finkelstein, head of software systems engineering at University College London, told Australia's ABC Radio.

In France, daily France-Soir wrote: "Who stole the bug? What happened to this hyped-up monster, the virtual virus that threatened our homes, our nuclear plants and our intercontinental missiles?...Has the bug given birth to a mouse?"

Czech Prime Minister Milos Zeman attributed the hype over Y2K to "the fetishism of the computer culture" which he said was "deceitful".

But other experts said it was too early to say whether the millennium rollover had been successful.

Robin Guenter, the chairman of the UK's Taskforce 2000, the independent millennium bug

watchdog, told the Financial Times that the worst was yet to come.

### Hassles emerge

And by early afternoon a string of minor irritants was building up, from software glitches that caused problems for Internet banking customers to an Italian error which added a century onto some jail sentences.

Andy Kyte at consultancy Gartner Group said there was evidence of a software foul-up affecting some multinational corporations whose computers are synchronised using time signals.

It appears that there are problems with software, which is causing quite a bit of a headache," he said.

Analysts said governments and companies may well keep quiet about any problems.

"The companies that have admitted to problems - nobody said, 'Hey we've got the millennium bug, hooray'," said Fons Kulpjers, member of the management group of PA Consulting.

"With all the media hype

surrounding the rollover, I suspect that if anyone experienced a problem they won't report it. I see a possible transparency problem here," said Andrea di Maio, Italian-based consultant for Gartner.

### US declares Y2K 'squashed'

The Commerce Department estimated in November that US businesses and government Y2K upgrades would cost about \$100 billion by 2001, or about \$365 for every man, woman and child in the United States.

Nevertheless, the Clinton administration declared it had "squashed" the bug and began winding down an unprecedented operation to monitor automated systems worldwide.

"We can safely say what been referred to as the Y2K bug has been squashed with regard to the key infrastructure systems in the United States," President Bill Clinton's point man on the issue told reporters.

"We are likely to continue to see glitches pop up here and there in the coming days."



Traditionally dressed South Korean women dance and beat drums during an opening ceremony in front of the Korea Stock Exchange in Seoul on Tuesday. South Korean share prices jumped one per cent in early trading after the market opened for the first time in a week following an extended millennium shutdown. - AFP photo

## Exchange Rates

Currency	American Express Bank Ltd				
	Selling TT & OD	Selling BC	Buying Clean	Buying OD Slight Export	Buying OD Transfer
US Dollar	51.2300	51.2700	50.8100	50.6570	50.5590
Pound Stg	84.0531	84.1187	82.8305	82.5810	82.4637
Deutsche Mark	27.2438	27.2651	26.2281	26.1492	26.1120
Swiss Franc	32.9136	32.9393	32.2194	32.1224	32.0767
Japanese Yen	0.5022	0.5026	0.4931	0.4916	0.4909
Dutch Guilder	24.1794	24.1993	23.2779	23.2078	23.1748
Danish Krona	7.1034	7.1050	6.9460	6.9251	6.9152
Australian \$	34.1309	34.2176	32.9436	32.7447	32.6961
Belgian Franc	1.3209	1.3219	1.2716	1.2678	1.2680
Canadian \$	35.7751	35.8031	34.7419	34.6373	34.5890
French Franc	6.1231	6.1235	5.8203	5.8077	5.7967
Hong Kong \$	6.6088	6.6089	6.5206	6.5010	6.4917
Italian Lira	0.0275	0.0275	0.265	0.264	0.264
Norway Kroner	6.5046	6.5056	6.3944	6.3752	6.3661
Singapore \$	31.2399	31.2323	30.2837	30.1925	30.1496
Saudi Rial	13.6966	13.7063	13.5104	13.4897	13.4506
UAE Dirham	13.9669	13.9979	13.7958	13.7543	13.7347
Swedish Krona	6.1273	6.1320	6.0481	6.0299	6.0213
Qatari Rival	14.1118	14.1228	13.9156	13.8737	13.8540
Kuwaiti dinar	174.3110	174.4471	161.7638	161.2767	161.0474
Thai Baht	1.3852	1.3862	1.3630	1.3649	1.3629
Euro	53.2843	53.2959	51.2978	51.1433	51.0706

TT Doc	Bill buying rates				
	30 Days	60 Days	90 Days	120 Days	180 Days
50.7112	50.3866	49.9532	49.5398	49.1163	48.2695

Buying (\$)	Selling (\$)	Currency	US dollar London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR)											
			1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	9 Months	12 Months							
50.5850	51.2300	USD	5.8275	6.00375	6.13	6.31	6.5							
82.4637	84.1187	GBP	5.41172	6.07719	6.22863	6.5	6.70576							
Cash/T C	Cash/T C	Euro	3.18785	3.3462	3.5175	3.69125	3.8725							

Indian Rupee	Exchange rates of some Asian currencies against US dollars					
	Pak Rupee	Thai Baht	Malaysian Ringgit	Indonesian Rupiah	Korean Won	
43.45/43.50	51.8851/50	37.00/37.10	3.7995/3.8005	7050/7100	1128.6/1128.7	

Amex notes on Tuesday's market USD/BDT rates remains steady at 51.010-51.12 level. The call rates moved between 5.25-6.25 per cent.

The dollar initially sagged against the Japanese currency to 101.45 yen, not too far from a four-year low of 101.22 yen set in November before the BOJ began buying the currency. The BOJ stepped in today as it had to absorb dollar selling orders for now," said a European bank dealer in Tokyo. The Japanese Finance Ministry was quick to confirm the BOJ action, and its currency chief Haruhiko Kuroda warned that authorities stood ready to act as necessary. "We looked at the market's condition this morning and acted," Kuroda told reporters. "We will continue to watch the market carefully and will act decisively as necessary." Yet traders said the greenback's recovery was modest at best considering the billions of dollars the BOJ probably bought. Many overseas investors were still underweight in the buoyant Japanese equities and Japanese investors were scaling back their overseas investments, putting an upward pressure on the yen, they noted. Tokyo's benchmark Nikkei 225 share index jumped 250 points at one stage on Tuesday morning to as high as 19,157, its highest level since August 1997.

Against the Euro, the dollar held in a relatively tight range just below Monday's \$1.0280 four-week low. The euro was seen benefiting from a softer US purchasing managers index for December, contrasting with robust PMIs out of Europe that came out on Monday, coupled unwinding of year-end safe-haven dollar buying. A dealer at a US bank in London said, however, that the euro's strength might not last very long. "You may see that (Euro buying) as a trend this week - people going back into the Euro - but I don't think it's going to be a huge directional move."

Sterling steadied against the dollar on Tuesday, holding about half a cent below the two-month highs it had set a day earlier as traders awaited the release of a UK purchasing managers survey for the manufacturing sector. Traders said sterling was continuing to track the euro's moves against the dollar, although the PMI survey at 0930 GMT could provide sterling some independent impetus. Euro/dollar was eyeing 3-12 - week highs early in Europe on Tuesday. "What you are seeing in cable (sterling/dollar) is related to the euro. Cable is more or less following the leader," said Daniel Kazyba, currency market analyst at Standard & Poors MMS. "The manufacturing survey could provide a bit more support ahead of the (Bank of England). Meanwhile, sterling faces a strong barrier at \$1.6400 against the dollar, while support was expected to come in at around \$1.6200, traders said."

At GMT 9:00 exchange rates of major currencies against USD were GBP/USD 1.6354/1.6364, USD/CHF 1.5659/5676, USD/JPY 102.71/102.79 EUR/USD 1.0232/1.0237.

## Shipping Intelligence

Chittagong Port							
Berth position and performance of vessels as on 04.01.2000							
Berth No	Name of vessels	Cargo	L Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival	Leaving	
J/2	Peleas-K	C Clink	Indo	MBL	27/12	10/1	
J/3	Lady Emily	Wheat (P)	Sing	MSA	23/11	5/1	
J/4	Phoenix-M	Cont	Lapa	MSA	20/11	7/1	
J/5	Apj Anand	GIL(Copra)	Sing	Allseas	3/12	6/1	
J/6	Eep Karashasan	DP/ET(P)	Sing	MSA	26/11	15/1	
J/7	Delos-1	Wheat(G)	K Dia	SSST	R/A	12/1	
J/8	Xiang Cheng	Cont	BD Ship		19/12	10/1	
J/9	Ayubia	Cont	Kara	Litmond	27/12	8/1	
J/10	Banglar Shourabh	Wheat(G)	Sing	Seacom	9/12	10/1	
J/11	Jin Bi	GID(P)	Sing	QCSL	27/12	5/1	
J/12	ST Irens	Cont	BD Ship		26/12	4/1	
J/13	Banga Birol	Cont	Col	Baridhi	25/12	5/1	
CCT/1	Xpress Maakala	Cont	Sing	PI (BD)	26/12	7/1	
CCT/2	Kota Singa	Cont	Sing	PI (BD)	26/12	7/1	
RM/14	Jidi	GI(WT,CE)	Bang	Cindy	22/12	12/1	
RM/15	Hai Hing	Urea (G) Ummsa	Litmond		27/12	9/1	
CCJ	Al Shams	C Clink	Krab	RMI	29/12	10/1	
GSJ	Seri Ibornda	Wheat(G)	Rouen	Lams	26/12	12/1	
TSP	Tia Estela	R Sulp	BABB	Seacom	13/12	7/1	
RM/3	Yusuf-K	CDSL	Sanl	Rainbow	27/12	6/1	
DOJ	Banglar Jyoti	C Oil			R/A	5/1	
DDJ/1	Banglar Maya	Repair			BSC	R/A	10/1
RM/9	Banglar Kalol	Cont			BSC	R/A	7/1
KAFCO(U)	Martina	Fert (Bag)	Mong	SMSL	17/10	10/1	

Vessels due at outer anchorage						
Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L Port	Local agent	Cargo	Loading	port
Ocean Leo (48) 26/12	6/1	Hald	JF	GI(ST Coil)		-
Fairbanks	2/1	Col	Ancient	Wheat(G)		-
Gur Madlen	4/1	Baha	Rainbow	R Seed		-
Ocean Grace	3/1	Mong	Benam			-
Mel San	4/1	Mala	OGL			-
Osterlor	4/1		Sichy	Ding'S survey Purpose		-
LordP	5/1	Yanc	SSST	Wheat		-
QC Pinal (Cont) 26/12	4/12	P Kel	QCSL	Cont	Sing	
Banga Birol (Cont) 23/12	5/1	P Kel	BD Ship	Cont	Sing	
EIWA	5/1	Ban	SSL	GI (ST Coil)		-
Esterella Elora (Roro24) 26/12	6/12		Everett	Vehi		-
Azaler	9/1	Bont	BNSC	Urea(G)		-
Mary Nour	8/1		BSC	Cement		-
Bunga Mas Lapan (Cont) 28/12	5/1	P Kel	BD Ship	Cement		-
BULTI	9/1		BD Ship	Cement		-
QC Mallard (Cont) 22/12	7/1		ACSL	Cont	Sing	
Kota Cahaya (Cont) 29/12	8/1	Sing	PI (BD)	Cont	Sing	
Yasminra	10/1	Sing	NOL	Cont	Sing	
Tarpoon Santago	10/1	Mumb	UMTL	GI (ST Coil)		-
Banglar Moni (Cont) 30/12	10/1	Sing	BSC	Cont	Sing	
Jug Ena Fortune	10/1	Sing	MBL			-
Banglar Shuka (Cont) 21	11/1	Sing	BSC	Cont	Sing	
Oscar Venture (Roro24) 26/12	19/1	Sing	JF	Vehi		-

Tanker Due				
Spiros			C Oil	

Name of vessels	Cargo	L Port	Local agent	Date of arrival
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Vessels of Kutubdia				
Energuy Explorer-IV			BBAL	5/1
Den Champlon		Kdia	BBAL	R/A (1/12)
Isayara			BBAL	17/8
MFB Devi Matha			BBAL	24/1
MFB Sona			BBAL	24/10
MFB Lakshmi			BBAL	24/1
Seabulk Command			IRS	R/A (26/12)
SMIT LLOYD-27		Sing	SICHY	2/12
Marmc-305		Sing	SICHY	2/12
Smithdoy-110		D Mat	SICHY	29/12
Keiko		C Oil	BSC	27/12
Banglar Shourabh		C Oil	BSC	R/A (1/1)
Chesspoker Trader	Wheat(G)	P Land	Benam	25/12
Banglar Robi	Wheat(G)		BSC	R/A (3/12)
Power	Wheat(G)	Mong	Benam	31/12
Sandy Bay	Wheat(G)	P Land	Benam	31/12

Ready on				
Pira	Wheat(P)	Varna	Seagroy	28/11
Join Jim	GI (Maizil)	Chtr	Apex	5/12
Vero	GI	Bassa	Prog	20/12
Sarra	GI (Rog)	Yanc	AMBL	24/12
Xpress Makuta (Cont)	Cont	Cal	Baridhi	25/12
Kota Singa (Cont)	Cont	Sing	PI (BD)	26/12
Delos-1	Wheat (G)	KDIA	SSST	R/A (19/12)
Uttyi	Wheat (G)		SSST	R/A (25/12)
Kota Berlaya (Cont)	Cont	Sing		28/12

The above are shipping position and performance of vessels of Chittagong port as per berthing sheet of CPA supplied by HRC Group, Dhaka.

# Pakistan won't seek IMF loan to improve balance of payment

ISLAMABAD, Jan 4: Pakistan would not seek International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans for improving its precarious balance of payment position but to mainly alleviate poverty in the country, reports AP.

A decision has been taken to change the entire emphasis of the economy to increase overall growth rate and alleviate poverty with the help of the World Bank and the IMF.

In the first place Extended Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) programme of the IMF was being converted into the proposed Poverty Reduction Growth Reform (PRGR) programme.

All funds to be received from the IMF under ESAF would now be used for increasing GDP growth, reducing unemployment and removing growing poverty in the country. The government expected to have increased funds from the IMF under the new arrangement.

Now the government would not be using cash money to be received from the IMF for improving its balance of payment position as has been the practice for the last many years.

"We are adopting a new strategy to address our basic problems, like slow growth rate, unemployment and poverty with

the help of the new IMF financial assistance," said an official.

He said that IMF and the World Bank have agreed to support the new one grown massive poverty alleviation programme by diverting their financial support to social sectors.

The government is likely to announce a poverty reduction package later this month. It was being finalised in light of the economic reform programme announced by the Chief Executive General Pervez Musharraf on December 15, 1999.

Both the donors, sources said, have expressed willingness to soften their conditionalities for offering their new line of funding to Pakistan.

There will be no more mega projects like motorways, airports, highways, etc. because they have a long gestation period and thus, significant contribution in the growth of the economy," sources said in the Ministry of Finance.

"The whole concept of the budget is being changed and re-oriented to have new focus on development and social sectors," he stated.

Also the government had decided to change its priorities to spend funds on un-viable development projects. There would no more be hundreds of devel-

opment schemes and projects and that only couple of dozens of such projects would be allowed to be undertaken by the government during fiscal 2000-2001.

Then the demand management strategy was also being changed, which according to sources, has only contributed to slowing the growth rate and increasing the incidence of poverty in Pakistan.

By implementing the new strategy officials believed, that the overall expected GDP growth of about 5.5 per cent for fiscal 2000-2001 will not only be achieved but would set the pattern to have around seven per cent growth rate every year in future.

Sources said it took time to convince the World Bank and the IMF that Pakistan needed parting of ways with the old traditions of pursuing economic objectives which were not only causing more unemployment and more poverty but also increasing frustration and dependency among the masses.

They were told that some 200 people committed suicide only during the past two years in Pakistan and one of the major reasons was unemployment and people living below the poverty line.

## Utara Bank earns Tk 55.60cr operating profit

Utara Bank Limited has made a total operating profit of Tk 55.60 crore in 1999 which was Tk 38.38 crore 77 lakh in 1998, registering a growth rate of 43.40 per cent, says a press release.

The deposit of the bank has stood at Tk 2181 crore 73 lakh in December 1999 which was Tk 1801 crore 17 lakh in the corresponding period of 1998 registering a growth of Tk. 380 crore 56 lakh.

On the other hand the loans and advances has stood at Tk. 1850 crore 90 lakh in December 1999 against Tk. 1517 crore 67 lakh in the corresponding period of 1998 registering a growth of Tk. 333 crore 23 lakh.

The bank has handled export and import business to the tune of Tk 3122 crore 74 lakh in 1999. The progress in this sector is Tk. 302 crore 98 lakh over 1998.

## Dacca Dyeing okays 10pc dividend

The Dacca Dyeing & Manufacturing Co Limited has confirmed a 10 per cent dividend for the shareholders for the year 1998-99.

The confirmation was made at the 21st annual general meeting of the company held at city hotel recently with Chairman Salauddin Quader Chowdhury presiding, say a press release.

Giasuddin Quader Chowdhury, Managing Director, Chairman of the Board, Chairman of the Board, Director and Md Amir Islam, Director (representing BSRs) were also present at the meeting. A large number of shareholders actively participated in the meeting.

The shareholders unanimously approved the audited accounts for the year 1998-99 together with the auditors' report thereon and also report of the directors.

The shareholders also approved the appointment of the external auditor for the year 1999-2000.

Speaking on the occasion, the chairman narrated the expansion programme of the company mentioning inclusion of the versatile high efficiency broadloom, sizing machine, direct warping machine, printing, anti-stretching machine, m/crising machine, bleaching and washing unit which will ensure a very good performance from the month of March 2000 onward to feed the demand in the global market.

He mentioned that a large pre-fabricated steel factory building is now under-construction and after completion of the building preparatory unit will be installed there.

On completion of installation of all the machines, he said the company will be able to produce 15000 yards of high quality household linen and Jacquard sheetings and towel, which will be finished and printed in the same premises.

This increase in production capacity, he added, is expected to bring an increase of about 500 per cent in the company's turnover.



Salauddin Quader Chowdhury, Chairman of Dacca Dyeing & Manufacturing Co Limited, speaks at the 21st annual general meeting of the company at a city hotel recently. - Dacca Dyeing photo

# China to scrap all obstacles to pvt sector development

BEIJING, Jan 4: China gave one of its clearest endorsements to private enterprise today, saying all obstacles to its development should be scrapped, says Reuters.

A statement by the powerful State Development Planning Commission said private companies should enjoy the same access to the country's stock markets as state-run firms.