Oil prices find support above \$25 a barrel

LONDON. Jan 19: Oil prices stuck above 25 dollars a barrel in morning trade on Friday as traders fretted about the potential effects of Wednesday's OPEC output cut and the prospect of fitful supplies from Iraq.

ing for 25.65 dollars a barrel. on Thursday.

In New York, the light sweet | report AFP. crude February contract lars a barrel overnight.

speculation that US Presidentelect George W. Bush might take a hard line against Iraq. which analysts said could provoke Baglidad to impose a new oil embargo.

Iraq has delivered a significantly reduced supply of crude in dribs and drabs since it blocked exports in early December over a pricing dispute with the United Nations.

Analysts warn that crude stocks risk being drained down again if Iraq continues to hold back supplies once the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries' five-per cent output cut kicks in at the beginning of

The International Energy Agency estimated on Friday that OPEC production fell to 27.86 million barrels a day in December from 29.54 million the previous month, largely owing to the 12-day Iraqi em-

It also forecast that worldwide demand for oil would slow to 75.6 million barrels a day in 2001 from 77.3 million this year because of a global economic slowdown.

The latest official figures on US stocks meanwhile from the US Department of Energy on Thursday showed a fall of one million barrels a day last week, offset somewhat by a large increase in distillate inventories.

Blackouts seen chasing Silicon Valley firms

away

SANTA CLARA, California. Jan 19: Top Silicon Valley companies, worried about California's worsening energy crisis and losing millions of dollars from mandatory power blackouts, are considering leaving here, the president of the Silicon Valley Manufacturers Association warned yesterday, says

This is not a threat this is just what's happening." association president Carl Guardino said. "The reason these companies want to leave is because high-tech competes on a global stage and they can't tolerate a loss of productivity."

The association represents high-tech giants such as Cisco. IBM and Intel, all of which have lost millions from California's first mandatory energy blackouts since World War II.

The group also wants the state legislature to completely deregulate the state's power system, calling he current system "the worst of both worlds." Guardino said.

A second wave of rolling blackouts Thursday 639,000 customers in northern California without electricity. A day earlier, Californians experienced the state's first mandatory blackouts since World War II, affecting at least half a million people in the San Francisco Bay area.

OPEC to go for further cuts if price drops below \$22

KUWAIT CITY, Jan 19: Oil- prices and stabilise the market. producers will make further Benchmark Brent North Sea | output cuts before March if the the output by 1.5 million bpd is oil for March delivery was sell- price of OPEC basket falls be- wise. Its a precautionary measlow 22 dollars a barrel. Kuwait's ure for the spring and summer" from 25.62 dollars at the close | Oil Minister Sheikh Saud Nas- when demand for oil is expected ser al-Sabah said yesterday, to fall.

climbed 80 cents to 30.45 dol- dropped below the minimum the current prices and stabilise Prices found support from rel, we will activate the price said. band mechanism" which stipu- . "We have agreed that the lates that the price of oil should situation would be constantly

> output will be taken," Sheikh March," he said. Saud told reporters on his remillion barrels per day (bpd).

cision as essential to boost oil bpd.

"I believe the decision to cut

"It will certainly lead to sta-"If we find that the oil price bility in the oil market, boost limit which is 22 dollars a bar- it (in the future)," the minister

remain between 22 and 28 dol- monitored, and if measures are lars a barrel, the minister said. necessary to boost prices, they "If price drop's below that will be taken even before the level, another decision to cut forthcoming OPEC meeting in

Under the new OPEC proturn from Vienna, where he duction quota, which will come attended an OPEC meeting that into force from February 1, Kudecided to slash output by 1.5 wait's production quota will be reduced to 2.02 million bpd Sheikh Saud praised the de- from the current 2.141 million

West frets over supply reduction

Meanwhile Reuters from London says: Oil prices motored higher yesterday as major consuming nations complained that OPEC's deep new output cuts will leave oil supplies too tight for comfort this year for the world economy.

London Brent crude surged to close 83 cents higher at \$25.62 a barrel as dealers digested OPEC's Wednesday agreement to cut production by just over five per cent. US crude last traded 85 cents higher at

"We have completely retraced yesterday's losses and almost touched Wednesday's high but overall the close has been quite neutral - there was some on close selling which

capped the market." said a dealer in London. OPEC's deal to trim quotas for 10 members by 1.5 million bpd to 25.2 million bpd saw prices slide on Wednesday, even though some in the cartel said further supply cuts could soon follow.

President-elect George W Bush helped propèl prices higher when he said Iraqi leaders Saddam Hussein was a "big threat" who must be contained by military force if necessary.

Bus made the comments in 45-minute interview with Reuters on the 10" anniversary of the Gulf War two days before his inaugurations as the 4:1 president of the United Sates.

Bush also called Saddam a wild card" who could destabilise the world's oil supplies.



Japan's electronics giant Sony employee Emi Yamazaki displays the new-styled headphone MDR-G73SP, hanging on the ears and linking with the neckband, at the company's headquarters in Tokyo yesterday. The new headphone, weighing only 30 grams, will be available on the domestic market February 21at a price of 4,400 yen (\$38.00 USD). - AFP photo

Indian industry wants budget to

boost infrastructure investment

Although the government

cent economic growth for the

Bharat Ram said the gov-

Iraq was giving "priority to

Egypt, the top supplier of

sanction-hit Baghdad under the

UN oil-for-food programme.

exported 1.2 billion dollars of

goods to Iraq in 2000, up from

400 million dollars in 1999.

political ties between the two

Trade has followed improved

Egyptian ministers say.

Rain said.

savings scheme.

Pakistan to seek second round of foreign debt rescheduling

Paris Club creditors meet Monday But Aziz said Pakistan will tory," said Aziz, "One indicator, ISLAMABAD, Jan 19: Paki- scheduling by Pakistan since stan said yesterday it would 1998 when it was tipped into a

seek a second round of rescheduling on its external debt cause of international sanctions from the Paris Club of official over its nuclear tests. The creditors on Monday, says country also imposed curbs on

Finance Minister Shankat investors. Aziz told a news conference he hoped \$1.5 billion payments on foreign debt of \$32.73 billion would be rescheduled for 10 months as part of the International Monetary Fund standby loan of \$596 million approved in November.,

"The Paris Club meeting on debt rescheduling is on Monday. We are hopeful that it will be done and its impact would be about \$1.5 billion," he said but gave no other details.

This will be the second re-

balance of payment crisis beforeign exchange, scaring away

Aziz said the country's economic performance was almost on track with the targets agreed with the IMF, but he added there was a five per cent shortfall in the tax revenue target. In the first six months of

the year, the government collected 180.14 billion rupees, or nine billion rupees short of its target for that period. The fullyear target is 430 billion rupees, a 22 per cent jump from a formance. revenue collection of 351 billion rupees in the previous year.

try to overcome the shortfall in the remaining six months of the fiscal year that ends in June or else it would cut nondevelopment expenditures to meet a key budget deficit target.

"We had a very ambitious tax target... We remain committed to the target. If we, unfortunately, don't meet it entirely, we have a contingency plan to cut expenditure so that the budget deficit target is protected," said Aziz.

He said a team of IMF officials would come to Pakistan next month to review the country's six months economic per-

ance target was quite satisfac-

revenue target, is where we have a five per cent shortfall," he added.

In the past Pakistan has roads, and railways to ensure usually cut its annual development plan to maintain budget deficit in line with agreed terms but Aziz said the government would ensure that programmes for the poor or social sectors would not be touched.

Financial analysts say Pakistan's tax revenues are unlikely to cross 400 billion rupees this year and that could jeopardise Pakistan's efforts to cut its fiscal deficit to 5.2 per cent of gross domestic product, a target agreed with the IMF. Pakistan's The last quarterly perform- fiscal deficit stood at 6.5 per cent of GDP last year.

More work needed on US-S'pore trade pact

WASHINGTON, Jan 19: The United States and Singapore said yesterday they have made substantial progress on a free trade agreement, but much

work remains to be done, says In a joint statement at the | tian news agency MENA. end of a second round of negotiations on the proposed pact, | cord, Iraq will abolish customs

ble" in Singapore. The first two rounds of talks have been in the United States. but US officials visited the prosperous Southeast Asian city state this month on a fact-

In a separate statement, for such a market. Singapore chief negotiator Tommy Koh said he was confident the incoming Bush administration "will agree to set

Singapore Prime Minister Coh Chok Tong launched the negotiations in November, with a goal of reaching an agreement

Iraq, Egypt sign deal on free trade zone CAIRO, Jan 19: Iraq and mercial relations between the

that investments start flowing had set a target of seven per

effect as it will create demand nance Minister Yashwant Sinha

for a number of ancillary in- has conceded that that growth

dustries," CII president Arun would be one per cent lower.

"There will be a multiplier financial year to March, Fi-

"We believe that whether it is out the February 28 budget in

the new economy or the old, the accordance with a five-year

Egypt signed an agreement in two countries despite the un-Cairo yesterday to set up a free just embargo imposed on Iraq". trade zone, amid growing ties between the two countries de- Arab countries in the framespite 10 years of sanctions work of the (UN) oil-for-food against Baghdad, says AFP. programme," under which Iraqi Vice President Taha Baghdad exports crude in ex-Yassin Ramadan and Egyptian change for imports of food, Prime Minister Atef Ebeid medicine and other essential signed the deal, which was to goods, he said.

government for a massive boost

to infrastructure investment in

next month's budget to combat

a slowdown in the economy.

Industry (CII) said the govern-

ment should give a 15-year tax

holiday to power generation.

Bharat Ram told a news confer-

reports AFP.

into the sector.

take effect immediately, according to the state-run Egyp-Under the terms of the acthe two countries pledged to barriers for Egyptian products resume talks "as soon as possi- and the two countries will form

a single market, officials say. The Egyptian-Iraqi agreement represents a first step for establishing an Arab common market", Ebeid said during signing ceremonies. Arab officials have set a target of 2007

Ramadan said meanwhile that "this agreement, is the first to be signed in the Arab world. I invite all the Arab brothers to join in". Egypt, Iraq and Libya intend to set up a trilateral free trade zone, according to Arab League sources. Before heading for Cairo on

Tuesday. Ramadan "welcomed the level of economic and com-

Investment in S'pore seen falling this yr

SINGAPORE, Jan 19: In vestments in Singapore's core manufacturing sector are seen falling this year to 9.0 billion Singapore dollars (5.17 billion US) from a record 9.2 billion dollars due to the US economic nomic outlook was healthy and slowdown, officials said Friday, reports AFP.

> Board chairman Philip Yeo said investments in services are also seen falling, going down from 1.9 billion Singapore dollars to

But Yeo said the government remained confident of achieving its target for gross domestic product growth (GDP) of 5-7 per cent. The forecast is based on a US economic growth of 3.0 per

landing, the (Singapore growth) figure will be affected." he told a news briefing.

and everybody knows the US economy is slowing down. Fortunately the European economy is still doing well and the Japanese economy has still not really recovered so our numbers are more modest," Yeo said.

He said fixed asset investments in manufacturing and the services sector for 2000 exceeded the government's

Economists have warned that Singapore's trade-driven economy will struggle through the first half as demand from the US, its biggest market. slows but will gain through the second half in line with a pro-

The key non-oil domestic exports (NODX) fell 4.9 per cent year-on-year in December, "My impression is that the which economists saw as an indication the US slowdown was affecting Singapore earlier | G-156 than expected.

NEW DELHI, Jan 19: Indian single biggest bottleneck to blueprint aimed at reviving industry on Friday asked the higher growth is the lack of proper infrastructure," Bharat He said consumer demand needed to be stoked and that

The industry association could only come through a also urged the government to stimulus to different industries. set aside two billion dollars for Higher global oil prices have The Confederation of Indian infrastructure development out pushed up India's inflation rate of 5.5 billion dollars raised from to more than eight per cent in Indian expatriates through a

the last six months, hitting purchases of goods ranging from cars, televisions and household goods. Omkar Goswami. senior economist at CII, said the gov-

ernment also needed to set a high target for privatisating state industries. The government has repeatedly fallen ernment now needed to work short of previous disinvestment targets. CII also urged the govern-

ment to find new financial instruments to increase household and corporate sector savings, pare high corporate taxes and bring down additional duties on imports.

Aussie phone co offers discount for online

SYDNEY, Jan 19: Australia's largest telephone company is offering discounts to customers who give up paper bills and settle their accounts through the Internet in a move designed to save millions of dollars, says

Telstra said Thursday that customers who receive their bills and pay them online would get discounts of up to five Australian dollars (US

Sthree) a month. Dhaka WASA **Tender Notice**

(পানির অপচয় রোধে কাজ শেষে কলের মুখ বন্ধ করুন) Tenders are invited from Dhaka WASA-enlisted class I. II

ABC licence holder mechanical and electrical contractors for the work of installation of 11/0.415 KV sub-station on the recently installed deep tubewell premises at South Ananda Nagar (South Badda). The amount of estimated money for the work is Taka 2,84,113/-. Tenders will be received on 1.2.2001 till 12-00 noon and will be opened the same day at 2-30 pm before tenderers or their representatives (if anyone remains present). Schedule of tender will be available in the office of the

Chief Accounts Officer of Dhaka WASA, WASA Bhaban, 98, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue Dhaka and all MODS zone offices of Dhaka WASA. Other details will be available in the office of the undersigned.

Address: WASA Bhaban 98, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue Dhaka WASA-PI-12/2001 DFP-1009-14/1

AKM Zafar Ullah Project Director, Interim Project-4 Dhaka WASA



BCIC International Re-Tender Notice

বিসিআইসি'র পণ্য শিল্পায়নে জাতীয় অগ্রণতির প্রতীক

Managing Director, Khulna Newsprint Mills Ltd., Town

Khalishpur, Khulna invites sealed quotation under 2 (two) envelope system against International Tender Enquiry No KNM/PD(F)-22A/2000 dated 4-1-2001 for purchase of 400 ADMT Bleached Soft Wood Kraft Pulp (Sheet) on C&F (C) Mongla liner term basis under CASH FOREIGN EXCHANGE. The quotation will be received within 11:00 AM on 12-2-2001 in the office of the Sr General Manager (PUR), BCIC, Dhaka, Dy Police Commissioner (North). Khulna and Addl. Chief Manager (Purchase). KNM Ltd, Khulna which shall be opened immediately thereafter. Tender documents shall be available on payment of Tk 1000.00 (one thousand) per set (non-refundable) from 1) KNM Ltd, Khulna, 2) BCIC, 30-31, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka & 3) BCIC Branch Office, 6, Agrabad C/A, Chittagong. Earnest money is Tk 1% of the total quoted C&F(C) value. No tender documents shall be sold on the date of opening. The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids without assigning any reason thereof.

BCIC-1183-11/1/2001 DFP-1066-15/1

Addl Chief Manager (Pur) For Managing Director.

Bangladesh Jatiya Sangsad Secretariate Common & Coordination Section Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207

gon border.

Tender Notice

No-9(1)/2001 Common/1732/1 Dated: 08.01.2001/25.9.1407

Tenders in sealed envelopes are invited from bonafide contractors involved in this work for supplying name plate, rubber stamp, seal, signboard of teak, board of teak, brassmade seal etc. for the offices of honourable VIPs', offices of the Senior Officials of the Parliament Secretariate, Officials of Section and Unit of Bangladesh Jatiya Sangsad.

2) Schedule containing detailed description of work can be procured from 23.01.2001 to 25.01.2001 during office hours on payment of Taka 450/- (four hundred fifty) (nonrefundable) by applying in the pads of respective establishments by producing original trade licence of the current fiscal year from Cash & Accounts Section-1.

3) Tenders can be deposited in the tender box kept at the office of the Deputy Secretary of this Secretariate (Administration-1) on 28.01.2001 (15.10.1407 Bang) from 9 in the morning to 12 at noon. Tenders will be opened the same day at 12-30 PM in presence of the tenderers (if anyone remains present).

4) Attested photocopy of trade licence and income tax and VAT certificates for the current fiscal year, original receipt for purchasing schedule and 2.5% of the total estimated expenditure in the forms of Bank Draft/Pay-Order (refundable) as the earnest money in favour of the undersigned will have to be submitted.

5) The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any tender without assigning any reason.

DFP-953-14/1 G-151

Md Rabiul Islam Assistant Secretary (Common) Phone: 9124762

Euro zone finance ministers optimistic on economy

BRUSSELS, Jan 19: Euro says Reuters.

A San Francisco traffic officer directs traffic at a busy intersection when traffic lights were not

working after electrical power was turned off in California due to rolling blackouts Thursday.

Over a million customers were without power in California, from Bakersfield north to the Ore-

too early to predict the impact of OPEC's decision a day earlier a bit less growth elsewhere in to cut oil output. finance ministers' meeting that Greek Economy Minister Yan-Papandoniou had at tended as a full member of the euro zone. Finance ministers

raised champagne glasses to

toast Greece becoming the 12" member of the single currency area at the start of this year. The finance ministers could also savour a recovery in the euro, which has risen by about 15 per cent against the dollar since its record low last Octo-

up within a few months. Asked if the weakening US conditions had hit Europe. Niinisto said there were "no signs"

that when we get to the spring time it might be a lot better were up. 22 down, four were globally," he told reporters. US growth slowed sharply trade in the closing months of 2000.

Niinisto declined to comment than nine million shares on the rebound in the curo changed hands for a value of against the dollar since last 1.4 billion rivals (375.7 million month, but signaled that a dollars), compared to last statement might be made after week's exchange of six million the finance ministers' conclude shares for 758.4 million rivals

zone finance ministers voiced Gerrit Zalm said a slowing out optimism yesterday about the look for world growth could cool outlook for the European econ- conditions in the Netherlands omy despite a US slowdown, while not denting the outlook for the euro zone as a whole.

have had signs of overheating. A stronger euro and low oil and the world is not bad for us," The meeting marked the first Zalin told reporters as he arrived for the meeting.

RIYADH, Jan 19: The Saudi

in the world's top oil exporter and producer closed the week at 2,339.07. up from 2,278.65 On the contrary, I believe points the previous week.

Trading boomed, as more

finding mission.

an early date" to resume talks. President Bill Clinton and

by the end of 2000.

- AFP photo

But as they arrived for their

"We could use some slowfirst meeting of the year, the down in the Netherlands. We ministers cautioned that it was

Asked if conditions for the euro zone overall were still en-Weekly Saudi stocks

Market up on OPEC output

Finnish Finance Minister stock market surged 2.7 per Sauli Nimisto said European cent in the week ending yestergrowth was not suffering the day on the back of strong 2000 slowdown that had hit the banking results and OPEC's United States and he predicted decision to cut oil output. Bakthe global economy would pick heet Financial Advisors (BFA) reported, says AFP. The NCFEI all-shares index

> Stock prices of 35 companies unchanged and 14 did not

(202.2 million dollars).

Dutch Finance Minister couraging, he answered: "They are still very positive." Greece's Papandoniou said he believed the euro area's eco-

> that inflation had passed its The euro area economy is doing better than expected a few months ago because the oil price is down, the euro i strengthening, and we hope the US slowdown may be less steep than expected a month ago.

Papandoniou said. "So I think

the euro zone will grow at a

reasonable rate this year." Asked what he meant by a "reasonable" rate, Papandoniou said: "My benchmark figure would be between 2.5 and 3.0 per cent. If that is right then the Greek economy would grow by something like 5 per cent which is consistent with our targets for real (economic) con-

Papandoniou said it was too early to judge the impact of OPEC's decision to cut output by 1.5 million barrels a day. "We have to see how it functions. So far it does not

Luxembourg's Prime Minister and Finance Minister Jean-Claude Juncker said he was optimistic about the outlook for the euro area economy. He cautioned however that

estimate the impact on growth and inflation of OPEC's decision to cut oil production. European economy is still on a good track," Juncker told reporters.

Development Economic

"If the US has a harder

"Our main concern is 2001

seem to have had a substantial effect on the oil price, but we original targets

the bloc should not lose sight of the need for further economic reforms and it was too soon to jected US recovery.