

ECB chief urges cos, workers to join fight against inflation

REUTERS, Milan

European Central Bank President Jean-Claude Trichet urged companies and workers to join the fight against inflation by not pumping up wage settlements on the back of soaring oil prices.

Trichet, in an interview that appeared in three leading newspapers across the euro zone yesterday, also said that Europe should do its utmost to crank up its growth rate by making its economy more flexible.

A recent rise in inflation will prove temporary, the world's

second most powerful central banker said, as long as rising oil prices do not feed through into higher wages.

"Looking beyond the spike in prices in the short term, inflation will fall back to align itself with our definition of price stability under two percent and close to two percent," Trichet said in the Italian daily La Repubblica.

"That presupposes there shouldn't be any secondary effects and that's why we made an appeal to social partners to avoid any inflationary spiral," Trichet added.

The ECB president's interview,

published in Italy, France and Spain, amounted to a concerted effort to convince residents in the 12-nation area that inflationary pressures should subside as long as wages pressures remain muted -- something Trichet argued at his news conference after the ECB left rates unchanged on June 3.

Euro zone inflation leaped to 2.5 percent in May from 1.7 percent two months earlier as oil prices reached record highs. The year 2004 now unexpectedly looks set to be the fifth in a row the central bank will miss its target of keeping inflation below two percent.

The ECB has in the past been lenient towards inflation being boosted by volatile components such as energy and food, pointing out that bond markets, consumers and firms all expected inflation to remain moderate.

But this time is different, as inflationary expectations are creeping up and risk causing an acceleration in consumer price growth. Analysts say that might bring forward any expected ECB monetary tightening at a time that the single currency bloc has only just started to recover and economic data are still mixed.



PHOTO: A POSITIVE ADVERTISING

M Ehsanul Haque, managing director of BRAC Bank Limited, and MH Samad, managing director and CEO of Central Depository Bangladesh Limited (CDBL), sign an agreement on behalf of their organisations in Dhaka recently. Under the deal, BRAC Bank will act as a 'custodian depository participant' of securities, treasury bills and government bonds issued by Bangladesh Bank. Senior officials of both the organisations were present.



PHOTO: MUTUAL TRUST BANK

Mosharraf Hossain, managing director of Mutual Trust Bank Limited, poses for photographs with the participants of a training course on 'Foreign Trade and Foreign Exchange' organised by the bank recently in Dhaka. Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, executive vice-president, and AF Mosihur Rahman, principal of the bank's training institute, were also present at the closing session.

Malaysia's AirAsia to acquire 80 new aircraft

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Malaysian no-frills airline AirAsia will acquire up to 80 new aircraft over the next four to eight years to cater for regional expansion, a report said Sunday.

"It is a good time to look at buying aircraft now and to be a dominant low fare airline in Asia," chief executive Tony Fernandes was quoted as saying by the New Sunday Times newspaper.

Fernandes said the carrier had many points in Asia which were not connected and the no-frills carrier needed more aircraft to make its presence felt.

AirAsia would buy the aircraft from either Boeing or Airbus, the newspaper said, adding that it was looking to buy the Boeing 737-300s, Boeing 737-800 or the A319 and A320.

The carrier currently operates only 17 Boeing 737-300s. It expects to carry four million passengers this year, doubling its annual load.

Fernandes brushed aside speculation that AirAsia was buying more aircraft in anticipation of taking over the domestic air service from national flag carrier Malaysia Airlines.



PHOTO: DBH

Anwarul Alam (3rd from left), general secretary of Gulshan Society, and QM Shariful Ala (3rd from right), managing director of Delta Brac Housing Finance Corporation Limited (DBH), exchange documents after signing a memorandum of understanding on improving the civic infrastructure facilities in Gulshan Model Town, Dhaka recently. Ishtiaq H Chowdhury, head of Operations of DBH, Dominic D' Cruze, assistant manager, Brand and Communication of DBH, and Sayeeful Islam, vice-president of Gulshan Society, Mir Lutfur Rahman Sadi, joint secretary, and Sheikh Fazlur Rahman, member of Executive Committee of the Society, are also seen.

CURRENCY

Following is Saturday's (June 20, 2004) forex trading statement by Standard Chartered Bank						
Sell			Buy			
TT/OD	BC	Currency	TT Clean	OD Sight Doc	OD Transfer	
62.1000	62.1500	USD	60.3550	60.1777	60.1057	
76.4575	76.5191	EUR	72.3777	72.1651	72.0787	
115.2576	115.3504	GBP	110.0875	109.7642	109.6328	
43.8737	43.9090	AUD	40.7094	40.5899	40.5413	
0.5779	0.5784	JPY	0.5499	0.5483	0.5476	
50.3323	50.3728	CHF	48.0610	47.9198	47.8625	
8.2290	8.2356	SEK	7.5713	7.5491	7.5401	
45.9218	45.9587	CAD	43.9169	43.7879	43.7355	
7.9722	7.9786	HKD	7.7293	7.7066	7.6974	
36.3796	36.4089	SGD	34.9884	34.8856	34.8439	
17.0450	17.0587	AED	16.2994	16.2515	16.2321	
16.6913	16.7047	SAR	15.9665	15.9196	15.9006	
10.5771	10.5856	DKK	9.4746	9.4468	9.4354	
211.4330	211.6033	KWD	196.7820	196.2040	195.9691	
Exchange rates of some currencies against US dollar						
Indian rupee	Pak rupee	Lankan rupee	Thai bath	Nor kroner	NZ dollar	Malaysian ringgit
45.57	57.94	101.05	40.945	6.8749	0.6768	3.80
Local Interbank FX Trading						
Local interbank market was subdued on Sunday as the international market was closed. US dollar remained at the same level against the Bangladeshi taka.						
Local Money Market						
Money market was active. Call money rate was almost unchanged and ranged between 4.00 and 5.25 percent previously.						
International Market						
International market was closed on Sunday due to weekend. On Friday, the dollar weakened broadly after a report showed the US current account gap widened more than expected in the first quarter. The wide current account deficit, the broadest measure of the nation's global trade, has been a persistent drag on the dollar over the past two years. The market's focus now turns to next week's US data on durable goods orders, new and existing home sales and consumer sentiment.						
This memorandum is issued by Standard Chartered Bank and is based on or derived from information generally available to the public from sources believed to be reliable. While all reasonable care has been taken in its preparation no responsibility or liability is accepted for errors of fact or any opinion expressed herein.						

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 20/6/2004

Berth No.	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import disch
J/1	Khanak Ocean Pride	Gl	Yang	PSAL	14/6	24/6	693
J/2	Pagan	Sugar(P)	Bank	GPSL	27/5	22/6	--
J/3	Pathein	Sugar(P)	Bank	GPSL	29/5	24/6	--
J/4	Kranj	Gi	Sing	ANCL	11/6	20/6	301
J/5	Jin Cheng (Liner)	Gi	Qing	Bdship	15/6	24/6	19
J/12	Orient Enterprise	Cont	P. Kel	PSSL	17/6	20/6	114
J/13	Jaami	Cont	Col	Everbest	18/6	22/6	192
CCT/1	Xpress Manaslu	Cont	P. Kel	RSL	19/6	22/6	85
CCT/2	Banga Borat	Cont	P. Kel	Bdship	19/6	22/6	394
CCT/3	Tiger River	Cont	Sing	Pil (Bd)	19/6	21/6	242
GSJ:	Salamat-2	Survey	Sing	OLM	7/6	24/6	
TSP:	Pearl	R. Phos	Sing	Pacific	30/5	23/6	
DD:	Taraman Bibi	Repair	B. Abb	Nishat	25/4	22/6	

Vessels due at Outer Anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. Port call	Local agent	Cargo	Load port
Straits Express	21/6	Sing	Purbachal	Vehi	--
Maris	20/6	Krabi	Litmond	Clink	Shah
Shivaji	20/6	P. Band	Intraport	Scraping	
New Blessing	21/6	P. Kel	Everbest	Cont	Sing
Black Forest	21/6	P. Kel	Everett	W/Ld Urea	
Meta	21/6	Vanc	ASCL	Wheat (G)	
Kota Tampan	21/6	Sing	Pil (Bd)	Cont	Sing
Banga Bonik	22/6	Col	Baridhi	Cont	Col
Banga Bodor	23/6	Pkl	Bdship	Cont	Sing/Pkl
Me Linh	22/6	Sing	BSC	Cont	Sing
Kota Singa	24/6	Sing	Pil (Bd)	Cont	Sing
Orient Excellence	22/6	Hal	PSSL	Cont	Col

Tanker due

At Sabiyah	23/6	Kuwa	MSTPL	SKO/JP-1
Salamat-1	21/6	Sing	OLM	Bitumeen(RM/3)

Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of vessels	Cargo call	Last Port	Local agent	Date of arrival
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Outside port limit

Dea Captain	--	--	IBSA	R/A (14/6)
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Vessels at Outer Anchorage

Vessels ready				
QC Honour	Cont	PTP	QC SL	19/6
Tank Oil	CPO	Lumot	Rainbow	19/6
Aurora	CDSO	P. Louis	Rainbow	18/6
Flame	GI(Hr.C)	C. Town	MTCL	19/6
Kota Cahaya	Cont	Sing	Pil(Bd)	20/6
Yapi	CDSO	Toma	USL	20/6

Vessels not ready

Novgorod	Sugar (P)	Durb	KSM	11/6
Banglar Robi	Sugar (P)	Mumb	PML	15/6
Noblesse	Fert/Mop	Russ	Angelic	17/6
Seaboss-1	Slag (GBFS)	Japan	SSST	14/6

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

STOCK