

Oil prices hover around record high points

AFP, London

World oil prices hovered Tuesday around historic closing peaks reached a day earlier when major producer Iraq stopped pumping crude from its southern oil fields.

Brent North Sea crude oil for September opened at 41.35 dollars per barrel in trading here on Tuesday, 21 cents below Monday's record high closing level of 41.56 dollars after the contract had surged 93 cents.

New York's light, sweet crude for September delivery edged down 10 cents to 44.74 dollars in pre-opening electronic trading Tuesday after soaring 9 cents to close at 44.84 dollars the previous day.

In Asian trading earlier Tuesday, the September contract had touched a high of 44.99 dollars per barrel, topping the record intra-day high of 44.98 dollars per barrel set during New York trading the previous day.

Prices had shot up Monday after Iraq's Southern Oil Company ceased production for "security reasons", spoke a spokesman for Moshed Al-Mohammed said. Shiite militia had threatened to attack infrastructure.

The south had been the only outlet for Iraqi oil. An attack on the pipeline to Turkey halted northern shipments last week.

Electronic dealing precedes the formal opening of trading in London and New York. Volumes of trade in electronic deals, which are carried out automatically by computer, tend to be much lower than during formal trading.

Meanwhile AFP from Kuala Lumpur says,

percent if prices hit 50 dollars a barrel, he said.

"It is going to hurt but it is not like the oil shock episodes in the 1970s and 80s. It is not going to derail Asia's recovery. We believe prices will come down slightly from where they are now," he said.

MasterCard Int. Regional Economic Adviser Yuva Hedrik-Wong said oil prices were experiencing a "temporary short-term spike" and would likely not plunge the region into a recession or derail economic recovery, economists said Tuesday.

They told a two-day Asian economic summit here that crude oil prices were expected to ease and a soft landing for China's economy appeared intact.

Despite the optimism, other analysts warned that supply disruptions in Iraq, persistent terrorist threats and the troubles of Russian oil giant Yukos could push oil prices to 50 dollars a barrel or beyond.

But other analysts in the region were concerned over the spectre of 50-dollar price levels.

"We are afraid prices might be on an increasing trend throughout the year, especially if there is an uncontrolled situation. That is why we should be taking preventive action," said Jakarta-based Asean Centre for Energy director Weerawat Chantanakome.

S America trade bloc, EU try to break free-trade deadlock

AFP, Brasilia

Representatives of South America's Mercosur trade bloc and EU negotiators prepared Monday to break last month's logjam to create a free-trade zone between the two blocs.

"There is no room for negotiating tactics," said Regis Arslanian, the negotiator for Mercosur, which comprises Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

"They will have to put their cards on the table," he said.

The two sides will meet in Brazil's capital Tuesday through Thursday.

An EU-Mercosur agreement would eliminate tariffs between the two blocs and raise importation quotas for a limited number of agricultural products sold in Europe.

Arslanian said that Mercosur broke off last month's talks in Brussels because the EU offer was "insufficient." Europeans had sought even lower quotas than those currently in force.

In 2003, 70 percent of Mercosur exports to the European Union were primary goods, mostly agricultural.

However, of EU exports to Mercosur, 89 percent were secondary, or manufactured, goods, while only seven percent were primary goods with little value added.

Europe is seeking further concessions allowing it access to Mercosur's services sector, investments and government procurements.

Arslanian said the outcome of this week's meeting in Brasilia will determine whether a deadline for reaching an EU-Mercosur agreement will be met by October 31.

Mercosur will also try some sweet persuasions regarding the European refusal to negotiate sugar tariffs.

EU negotiator Joao Jose Pacheco is to meet Tuesday morning in Brasilia with representatives of Brazil's agribusiness sector.



PHOTO: CITYCELL
Intekhab Mahmud (3rd from left), head of Marketing of CityCell, and Hasnain Khurshed (4th from right), executive director of International Television Channel Limited, the owning company of private television channel ntv, exchange documents after signing an agreement on Monday in Dhaka. Under the deal, CityCell subscribers will be able to get news service of ntv through their cell phone sets.

CURRENCY

Following is Tuesday's (August 10, 2004) forex trading statement by Standard Chartered Bank

Sell	Buy			
	TT/OD	BC	Currency	TT/Clean
59,6500	59,7000	USD	58,5050	58,3332
73,9481	74,0101	EUR	71,0894	70,8806
110,5672	110,6599	GBP	107,0173	106,7030
43,3894	43,4258	AUD	41,1232	41,0024
0,5468	0,5473	JPY	0,5254	0,5232
49,1476	48,1879	CHF	46,2307	46,0949
8,3038	8,3107	SEK	7,6193	7,5969
45,7088	45,7471	CAD	44,0384	43,9090
7,6558	7,6622	HKD	7,4944	7,4724
34,9771	35,0065	SGD	34,0066	33,9067
16,3730	16,3867	AED	15,8002	15,7538
16,0332	16,0467	SAR	15,4775	15,4321
10,2670	10,2756	DKK	9,2793	9,2520
202,9602	203,1303	KWD	191,3804	190,8183
			190,5899	

Exchange rates of some currencies against US dollar

Indian rupee	Pak rupee	Lankan rupee	Thai bath	Nor kroner	NZ dollar	Malaysian ringgit
46.37	58.88	104.025	41.375	6.7545	0.7036	3.80

Local Interbank FX Trading

Local interbank market was active. US dollar was mostly steady against Bangladeshi taka.

Local Money Market

Money market was active. Call money rate was steady at 3.75 and 4.25 percent.

International Market

The dollar held near recent two-week low against euro on Tuesday but moved little on the day as investors awaited an expected Federal Reserve interest rate rise and any new signals on future US rate changes. The Fed is widely expected to raise target borrowing costs by a quarter.

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percentage point to 1.50 percent when it announces its decision at 1815 GMT, making it the second monetary tightening in four years after it began raising rates in June. But investors are also keen to hear more about the Fed's future pace of tightening after last week's disappointing non-farm payrolls report fanned worries about the health of US economic recovery. The Swiss franc held near last week's two-week high, supported by falling investor risk appetite. The other focus was higher oil prices, which hit a fresh record high near \$45 a barrel as violence in Iraq disrupted output and exports, compounding fears that tight global supplies may be inadequate to meet demand. The yen was coming under mild pressure due to Japan's reliance on oil.

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PHOTO: GP
Md Eunus Mian, company secretary of Gas Transmission Company Ltd (GTCL), and Tanvir Ibrahim, head of Sales, GrameenPhone Ltd, sign an agreement on behalf of their organisations recently in Dhaka. Under the deal, GTCL has become a corporate client of GP. Among others, Manjur Moshed Talukder, managing director of GTCL, and Mehboob Chowdhury, director, Sales and Marketing of GP, were present.

STOCK

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 10/8/2004

Berth	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. port call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import disch.
J2	Amar	Sugar(P)	Bang	Total	1/8	14/8	1173
J3	Sinhal	C.Clink	Indo	Nwsl	1/8	15/8	-
J4	Al Mohammed	Sugar(P)	Bang	Cla	4/8	14/8	1890
J5	Defiant-T	Wheat(P)	Kiki	Pacific	3/8	14/8	1023
J6	Proliv Viktoria	Sugar(P)	Sing	Otl	31/7	13/8	890
J7	Orient Freedom	Cont	Sing	Pssl	10/8	-	--
J9	Feng Kang Shan	Gl	Sing	Bdship	6/8	14/8	2504
J10	Kota Naga	Cont	Sing	P.Kel	8/8	10/8	336
J11	Banga Borai	Cont	P.Kel	Bdship	7/8	11/8	318
J12	Xpress Resolve	Cont	Col	Everbest	6/8	10/8	32
J13	Dongai Fortune	Cont	Sing	Nol	8/8	12/8	406
Cdt/1	Kota Singa	Cont	Sing	Pll(Bd)	7/8	11/8	319
Cdt/2	Banga Lanka	Cont	Sing	Bdship	6/8	11/8	135
Cdt/3	Mardios	Cont	P.Kel	Rsl	8/8	12/8	545
Doj:	Banglar Jyoti	C.Oil	K.Dia	Bsc	R/A	11/8	--
DD:	Banglar Robi	Repair	Mumb	Bsc	15/6	14/8	--
Ddj/1:	Banga Barta	Repair	P.Band	Baridhi	13/7	12/8	--
Ddj/2:	Cec Venture	GI(SL Pipe)	Bela	Beeline	9/8	--	--
Custom	Tug Sbm-1	Ballast	Sing	Otl	9/12	-	--
Jetty	Eagle Strength	Idle	Sing	Nol	21/9	14/8	--
Cuffj	Nepalne	Urea	Col	Mbl	6/8	12/8	--
BB:	F.V. Nonzee-4	Ballast	Bang	Oil	15/7	--	--

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. port call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
QC Honour	10/8	P.Kel	Qcsl	Cont	Sing
Free Atlas	10/8	Hopi	Litmond	Clink	Shah
Salamat-1	14/8	Col	Bandhi	Cont	Col
Gaz Master	16/8	Sing	Beeline	Pk/Sing	Bcic
Al-Sharifa-II	11/8	--	Jardine	Demolition	--
CC Dignity	11/8	P.Kel	Qcsl	Cont	Sing
Orient Enterprise	12/8	Hald	Pssl	Cont	Col
Tug Micnancy-10	12/8	--	Bdship	Towing Barge Mic-330	Concrete Pipe
Barge Mic-330	12/8	--	Bdship	Bdship	Bitumen/RM(3)
Continent-4	12/8	--	Col	Cla	--
Me Linh	13/8	--	Bsc	Cont	Sing
Feng Shan	12/8	--	Bdship		