

Oil crisis to cut Asia's 2004 GDP growth: UN

APP, Beijing

Soaring oil prices could shave as much as one percentage point from Asia's gross domestic product (GDP) growth this year, forcing the region to make painful adjustments, the United Nations said.

"If it hits 50 dollars, maybe we can estimate (a reduction of) around one percentage point of economic growth," Kim said.

Kim, who is on a visit to Beijing, Thursday released a revised UNESCAP GDP growth estimate for Asia of between 5.7 percent to 5.2 percent for this year.

Looking at the region as a whole, oil

prices of "around 40 dollars (a barrel) will mean a 0.5 percent reduction of growth," Kim Hak-Su, UNESCAP's executive secretary told the news agency in an interview.

Asian governments will have to make difficult decisions of whether to increase interest rates to control inflation, sacrificing economic growth, or to allow inflation to reflect oil prices and adopt costly pump priming measures to create more jobs, Kim said.

"It's going to be a tradeoff -- growth or inflation," said Kim, who has worked as an international economist specializing in oil.

More than two-thirds of the world's poor live in the Asia Pacific, and Kim warned the oil crisis could worsen the

situation.

"The resources are limited ... so if countries use more resources on oil, of course the allocation of resources will suffer for the poor, especially health and education budgets which are normally (already) small but very vulnerable to be cut," Kim said. The region, however, was better equipped to survive this crisis compared to the oil shocks in the early and late 1970s with oil-consuming countries having enough foreign exchange reserves to serve as a buffer, he said.

China's power consumption growth to slow in 2nd-half

APP, Shanghai

Growth in China's power consumption is expected to ease in the second half of 2004 as government measures to slow investment and rising electricity prices cool demand, state press said Thursday. China's energy needs were forecast to slow to growth of 12-15 percent this year, compared with a 15.4 percent rise in 2003, the China Economic Times reported, citing an official from the State Grid Corp.

"The central government's macroeconomic measures to cool overheated industries in the steel, aluminum and cement sectors will limit power demand in the second half," the newspaper quoted Zhang Muhong as saying.

Industries are expected to curb electricity usage after the government raised electricity prices in four major regions by an average 0.022 yuan (0.0026 US cents) per kilowatt hour, the second price hike this year. The National Development and Reform Commission raised retail electricity prices by 0.008 yuan per kilowatt hour earlier this year.

Electricity demand should rise to 16 percent on a yearly basis in the first half, driven by energy-hungry industries, according to state-owned power transmission, the State Grid Corp.



PHOTO: ATDP

ATDP (Agro-based Industries and Technology Development Project) Chief of Party Ron Gillespie (L) signs a contract with Niaz Rahim, managing director of Rahimafrooz Superstores Ltd that runs supermarket Agora, in Dhaka yesterday to develop quality standards and supply chain for Agora. Under the deal, ATDP will assist Agora to source quality agriculture products and develop quality standards for Agora suppliers.

CURRENCY

Following is Thursday's (August 19, 2004) forex trading statement by Standard Chartered Bank

Sell	Currency		Buy		
TT/OD	BC		TT Clean	OD Sight Doc	OD Transfer
59.6500	59.7000	USD	58.5050	58.332	58.2633
74.3179	74.3802	EUR	71.4580	71.2481	71.1628
109.4935	109.5853	GBP	105.9467	105.6355	105.5091
43.3417	43.3780	AUD	41.0764	40.9557	40.9067
0.5521	0.5526	JPY	0.5304	0.5288	0.5282
48.4644	48.5050	CHF	46.5232	46.3956	46.3400
8.3113	8.3182	SEK	7.6258	7.6034	7.5943
46.1402	46.1788	CAD	44.4601	44.3295	44.2764
7.6552	7.6616	HKD	7.4938	7.4718	7.4629
34.9935	35.0229	SGD	34.0106	33.9107	33.8701
16.3725	16.3862	AED	15.7998	15.7534	15.7345
16.0328	16.0462	SAR	15.4771	15.4316	15.4132
10.3199	10.3285	DKK	9.3234	9.2960	9.2848
202.9533	203.1234	KWD	191.3742	190.8121	190.5837

Exchange rates of some currencies against US dollar

Indian rupee	Pak rupee	Lankan rupee	Thai bath	Nor kroner	NZ dollar	Malaysian ringgit
46.39	58.66	103.095	41.500	6.7390	0.7133	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 slightly higher than Wednesday and ranged between 3.75 and 4.00 percent compared with 3.50 and 3.75 percent previously.

International Market

The yen held close to the previous session's four-week high against the

dollar on Thursday while the dollar held steady on the euro as investors awaited US labour and manufacturing data due later. Steep fall in sterling against yen forced yen sellers to buy the Japanese currency back, pushing it higher against the dollar. But it was unable to sustain the rally on doubts about the strength of Japan's recovery following last week's surprisingly weak second quarter growth data. Among important economic data, US jobless claims and Philadelphia Federal Reserve Manufacturing survey are due on Thursday.

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SHIPPING

Chittagong port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 19/08/2004.

Berth	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import disch
J1	Khanak Jin Cheng	Gi	Tian	Bdship	17/8	24/8	909
J3	Sinhal	C.Clink	Indo	NWSL	1/8	20/8	1460
J4	Eastern Fortis	Gi	Sing	Prog	17/8	22/8	1075
J5	Defiant-T	Wheat(P)	Kiki	Pacific	3/8	22/8	1742
J6	Xiang Ruimen	Tsp(P)	Fang	Unique	14/8	22/8	1877
J7	Al Muztuba	Wheat(P)	Kaki	Cla	14/8	24/8	895
J9	Guo Shan	Tsp(P)	Zhan	Litmond	17/8	24/8	2498
J10	Kota Cahaya	Cont	Sing	Pili(Bd)	16/8	19/8	181
J11	Van Xuan	Cont	Sing	PSSL	16/8	19/8	30
J12	Kota Tampan	Cont	Sing	Pili(Bd)	16/8	19/8	67
J13	Banga Bodor	Cont	P.Kel	Bdship	16/8	19/8	--
CCT/1	Rio Negro	Cont	P.Kel	QSSL	17/8	22/8	339
CCT/2	Banga Bonik	Cont	Col	Baridhi	17/8	20/8	121
CCT/3	Bangler Moni	Cont	Sing	BSC	16/8	19/8	--
CCJ	Feng Shun Shan	Fer(Tsp)	Sing	Bdship	13/8	25/8	--
TSP	Spanaca	R. Phos	Chen	Beeline	12/8	21/8	--
RM/3	Salamat-1	Bitumen	Fuja	Olm	14/8	19/8	--
RM/4	Mmm Houston	Cpol	Bela	USL	17/8	19/8	--
DD	Bangler Robi	Repair	Mumb	Bsc	15/6	21/8	--

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. Port call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
Kota Berjaya	19/8	Sing	Pili(Bd)	Cont	Sing
Orient Excellence	19/8	P.Kel	PSSL	Cont	Sing
Pavonis	20/8	Visaka	Move	S.Bulk	ASLL
K.S.Glory	19/8	Krabi	ASLL	Clink	Aman/Unique
Bethesda-1	19/8	Batta	Pacific	Demolition	--
Banga Borti	20/8	Sing	Bdship	Cont	Sing
F.V. Srinakorn-23	22/8	Oil	Fishing Trawler	--	--
Xpress Manaslu	20/8	P.Kel	RSL	Cont	Sing
Maritime Changmai	20/8	Tarj	BSL	Clink	Hebl
Orient Wisdom	21/8	Col	PSSL	Cont	Col
Pearl	21/8	Bang	Jardain	Sugar(P)	--
Xpress Resolve	21/8	Col	Everbest	Cont	Col
Mardios	22/8	P.Kel	RSL	Cont	Sing
Dongtai Fortune	22/8	Sin	Nol	Cont	Sing
Kota Singa	22/8	Sing	Pili(Bd)	Cont	Sing
Cc Star	25/8	Kol	QSSL	Cont	Sing
Banga Lanka	24/8	--	Bdship	Cont	Sing
Banga Borak	23/8	--	Bdship	Cont	Pkt/Sing
Kota Naga	24/8	Sing	Pili(Bd)	Cont	Sing
Banga Bijoy	23/8	--	Baridhi	Cont	Col

Tanker due

Tank Oil	21/8	Lumut	Rainbow	Cpo (RM/3/4)

Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival

Outside Port Limit

Dea Captain	--	lrsa	R/A(17/8)

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