

Star BUSINESS

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World economy holds up in the face of US slowdown

AFP, Paris

When they convene this weekend in Australia, G-20 finance ministers from the world's leading powers can take heart at a global economy that is proving resilient in the face of a US slowdown.

Global growth is projected to come to 5.0 percent this year, the head of the International Monetary Fund, Rodrigo Rato, said last week.

But he also warned that the growth cycle could be reaching its peak, with a number of short-term risks looming.

Those risks are expected to concentrate the minds of Group of 20 finance ministers and central bankers at their annual session Saturday and Sunday in Melbourne.

High oil prices, exchange rates, the foundering Doha Round multi-lateral trade talks and the rising cost of credit are prominent agenda items.

For months now, politicians and

analysts have been fretting over fears that a sharp downturn in the US housing market could trigger a far-reaching contraction in global activity.

At the moment, though, the IMF is predicting a "soft landing" in the United States, according to Rato, who nonetheless cautions that a sharp correction in US housing prices could still destabilize the national economy.

At the bank BNP Paribas, economist Eric Vergnaud noted that while the world's largest economy has been losing steam since last spring, the trend should have little impact on the US performance for the year as a whole because of an especially dynamic first quarter, when growth surged to 5.6 percent from the same period of 2005.

"With Japan not doing too badly, with the eurozone enjoying strong growth this year, the world economy in 2006 should be able to absorb the US slowdown rather well," he said.

The Japanese economy grew 0.5 percent in the third quarter,

twice as fast as had been expected. While momentum faded a bit in the eurozone, coming to 0.5 percent, the slide had been expected after a strong second quarter.

Bruno Cavalier of Credit Agricole has predicted that 2006 will be "a true year of economic recovery" in Europe.

In east Asia -- Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, China, Vietnam, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan -- economic growth is running close to 8.0 percent, powered by robust domestic demand, the World Bank said in a report Tuesday.

Global prospects for next year, however, are less certain, as the weight of the United States is such that other countries -- even those in fine health -- will have a hard time weathering a US downturn, analysts say.

SF Ahmed & Co leads int'l consultancy assignment

SF Ahmed & Co (SFACO), an affiliate of ICAB since 1958, is the leader of the consortium of international consultants formed for execution of ADB funded 3-year consultancy services to the government of India for the accounting reforms of the Indian Railways, says a press release.

On behalf of the consortium of SF Ahmed & Co, Bangladesh, Ernst & Young Pvt Ltd, India, SNCF International, France, SR Batliboi & Co, India, and WIPRO InfoTech, India, Syed Fazle Ali, senior partner of the lead firm, signed the contract with the government of India, Ministry of Railways, represented by the Railway Board in New Delhi in February.

In the consultants team Ali is also holding the position of foreign consultant for providing expertise in management accounting and costing in the execution of the assignment.

Md Enamul H Choudhury, partner of SF Ahmed & Co and the international expert in process designing for execution of the assignment, was also present at the contract signing ceremony.

Following the guidelines issued by the Association of Chartered Fraud Examiners, USA, SF Ahmed & Co, in association with the Global Investigation & Dispute Advisory Services Division of Ernst & Young, Singapore, conducted on behalf of the auditor general of ADB, an integrated project procurement related review of a selected project, aimed at identification of any red flags of fraud and corruption as well as determining the extent of risks, covered major purchase deals financed from the project fund.

SF Ahmed & Co has also been providing assurance services for the BRAC International programmes in Afghanistan supported by World Bank, UNICEF, WFP, USAID (REACH), DFID, OXFAM, SIDA, NOVIB and BRAC.



PHOTO: THE CITY BANK LTD

'The Business Meeting 2006' of the The City Bank Ltd was held in Dhaka on Sunday. Chairman Deen Mohammad, Vice Chairman Aziz Al-Kaiser, Directors Hossain Khaled Saifullah, Mohammad Shoeb, Rafiqul Islam Khan and Mobarak Ali, and Managing Director DH Choudhury were present.

CURRENCY

Following is yesterday's (November 16, 2006) forex rate statement by Standard Chartered Bank

Major currency exchange rates			Exchange rate of some currencies		
	BC Sell	TT Buy		Per USD	BDT per Currency
US dollar	73.95	72.95			
Euro	96.39	92.14	Indian rupee	45.20	1.63
Pound	141.44	136.13	Pak rupee	60.68	1.21
Australian dollar	58.10	54.36	Lankan rupee	108.33	0.68
Japanese yen	0.64	0.62	Thai baht	36.52	2.01
Swiss franc	60.84	57.90	Malaysian ringgit	3.66	20.09
Swedish kroner	10.94	9.91			
Canadian dollar	66.12	63.45	USD forward rate against BDT		
Hong Kong dollar	9.52	9.35		Buy	Sell
Singapore dollar	48.51	46.66	1 M	73.05	74.06
UAE dirham	20.30	19.70	2 M	73.18	74.28
Saudi riyal	19.88	19.30	3 M	73.34	74.52
Danish kroner	13.29	12.04	6 M	73.81	75.27
Kuwaiti dinar	252.50	250.06			

* All currencies are quoted against BDT
* Rates may vary based on nature of transaction

Local Market

FX: Local inter-bank FX market was active on Thursday as the banks prepared to close for the weekend. The demand for USD remained stable and the volume of cross currency transactions remained steady. The USD rose marginally against the Bangladeshi taka.

Money Market

Money market was active on Thursday. Call money rate remained unchanged and ranged between 8.50 and 7.00 percent. Bangladesh Bank accepted one to five day reverse repos worth Tk 21.38 billion (\$303 million) at an interest rate of 6.5 percent.

International Market

The yen inched towards a record low against the euro on Thursday after the Bank of Japan's Governor sounded a neutral note on interest rates, dampening any market expectations of a rate rise by the end of the year. The euro held broadly steady against the dollar, with investors looking to US inflation data for October and speeches from a number of Federal Reserve officials later in the day for more clarity on the likely future path of US rates. The dollar was up 0.1 percent on the day against the yen, while the euro rose just three ticks short of a record high hit last week according to Reuters data.

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 16/11/2006

Berth No.	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import disch
J/1	Rainbow Joy	GI (hr. Se)	Ciga	TMML	13/11	17/11	1202
J/2	Eid-a-mostafa	Salt (a. ash)	Purb	Intraport	10/10	18/11	--
J/3	Viendong-1	GI	Busa	Oil	15/11	18/11	--
J/4	Jin Cheng	GI	Tian	Cosco	5/11	18/11	2092
J/5	Yong Jiang	GI	Tian	Cosco	13/11	21/11	672
J/7	Vullumus	Tsp/s. ash	Chin	Unique	23/10	17/11	657
J/8	Sea Bridge	Urea (Bic)	Chin	PSAL	3/11	22/11	1444
J/10	Marisa Green	Cont	P. Kal	Everbest	1/11	17/11	--
J/11	Banglar Moni	Cont	Sing	BSC	3/11	19/11	80
J/12	QC Pintail	Cont	Col	QCSL	4/11	17/11	318

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. Port call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
Noor-e-Mostafa	18/11	Viza	Ssa	G. Slag	--
JKM Multihedline	16/11	Novo	Angelic	Wheat (p)	--
Red River	16/11	Busa	Oil	GI (St. C)	--
Xpress Manaslu	16/11	Col	Seacon	Cont	Col
Yongxing	17/11	Col	Pssl	Cont	Col
Mare Hibernum	17/11	P.kel	Seacon	Cont	Sing
Banglar Robi	17/11	Sing	BSC	Cont	Sing
Kota Rancak	17/11	Sing	Pil (Bd)	Cont	Sing
Cape Bonavista	18/11	P.kel	Bdship	Cont	P.kel
Deng Yun	18/11	--	Cosco	Fert (bag)	--
Orionis	18/11	--	PSAL	Urea (BCIC)	--
Bounty-VII	19/11	Yang	PML	GI (log)	--

Tanker due

Smooth Sea-3	17/11	Sing	WTH	CPO (RM/4)
Endurance	19/11	Kuwa	MSTPL	HSD/JP-1
Jag Pradip	19/11	Kuwa	MSTPL	HSD
Tablim	19/11	Belaw	RYSL	CPO (RM/4)
Al Badiyah	20/11	Kuwa	MSTPL	HSD
Al Sabiyah	25/11	Kuwa	MSTPL	HSD/SKO

Vessels at Kutubdia

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

Ocean Melody	--	--	IBSA	R/a (6/11)
Wira Keris	--	--	IBSA	R/a (9/11)
Hawaiian Star	Crude Oil	Jebel	DSLL	4/11
Banglar Jyoti	C. Oil	--	BSC	R/a (16/11)

Vessels at outer Anchorage

Vessels ready

Dall	Cont	Col	Seacon	5/11
Cape Henry	Cont	Sing	APL	5/11
Phu Tan	Cont	Sing	PSSL	7/11
Oel Freedom	Cont	Col	PSSL	7/11
Eagle Progress	Cont	P. Kal	Everbest	8/11
Precious River	Cont	Sing	Vega	10/11

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



PHOTO: SF AHMED & CO

Syed Fazle Ali (L), senior partner of SF Ahmed & Co, and Sabita Gopal (R) adviser to the Ministry of Railways of India, sign a contract on consultancy services in New Delhi. Under the deal, the consortium will help reform the accounting of Indian Railways. Md Enamul H Choudhury, partner of SF Ahmed & Co, was also present.

STOCK