

World stocks in meltdown over US economy fears

AFP, London

European and Asian stock markets plummeted Wednesday, mirroring heavy losses the previous day in New York, on mounting fears that weakness in the US housing sector could infect the world economy.

In London, Frankfurt and Paris the main share indices were down almost 2.0 percent nearing the half-way stage.

The yen meanwhile hit a four-month high against the dollar and oil traded close to an all-time peak in New York as investors exited risky investments and turned to safe-havens, dealers said.

Wall Street took a pounding Tuesday, with its three main markets closing down more than 1.0 percent as news of spreading troubles in the US mortgage sector prompted investors to bank profits.

Japanese stocks slumped by more than two percent on Wednesday, with the Nikkei-225 index ending below 17,000 points for the first time in more than four months.

Economists said there were growing jitters about the potential fallout from problems in US subprime lending sector, where mortgages are provided to people with questionable credit histories.

Analysts are concerned that grow-

ing mortgage defaults will hurt banks and finance companies enough to curb the availability of credit on which the economy feeds.

That, in turn, could affect private equity groups because their takeover bids are often financed by large amounts of bank debt.

"The central issue that concerns the equity market is really the extent to which this whole subprime fallout will affect a general credit squeeze and reverse the expansion we have seen in the global economy," said Mike Lenhoff, chief strategist at Brewin Dolphin Securities in London.

"There is this worry now that the ease with which lending has taken place and the ease with which there has been access to borrowing to finance the global economy is being unwound."

No market was immune to plunging equities on Wednesday, as Hong Kong's key Hang Seng Index closed down 3.15 percent, China share prices shed 3.81 percent and Indian's main equity market plunged 3.96 percent.

Sydney's main stock market meanwhile dived 3.3 percent after market favourite Macquarie Bank said two high-yielding funds faced losses of up to 300 million dollars (258 million US).

Shares in Macquarie Bank, known

for its deal making and massive executive pay-checks, shed 10.7 percent as a result, enough to prompt Australian Treasurer Peter Costello to offer assurances that all was well.

US stocks had powered ahead on Monday as investors shrugged off unease about a widening economic crisis that led to last week's bruising for the equity market.

"We're likely to see the volatility persist for a while," Lenhoff said.

"We'll have some good days, we'll have some bad days and eventually we'll see a slightly clearer picture of what this subprime fallout really means for the banks as well as for the credit markets.

"In turn that will hopefully help the credit markets to settle down and move ahead," he added.

Elsewhere on Wednesday, financial markets were keeping a close eye on oil prices, as New York crude remained close to an historic high.

Analysts say the New York oil price could strike a new all-time peak, above its current record of 78.40 dollars a barrel, should the US Department of Energy reveal on Wednesday a further drop in US energy inventories.

Ahead of the DoE's inventory report, New York crude stood at 77.72 dollars a barrel, down 49 cents.

Eurozone manufacturing growth hits 17-month low

AFP, Brussels

Manufacturing activity in the 13 nations that share the euro fell to a 17-month low in July, a survey released Wednesday found, a decline analysts attributed to a strong euro and high oil prices.

The eurozone's seasonally adjusted purchasing managers' index (PMI), compiled by NTC Research, was revised up to 54.9 from a provisional estimate of 54.8 but still well down from 55.6 in June and the weakest reading since February 2006.

The latest data are consistent with annual industrial production growth of three percent, almost half the pace seen a year ago.

The July figures nonetheless showed that the eurozone manufacturing sector expanded for the twenty-fifth successive month, as a reading above 50 indicates growth.

Nokia opens cellphone design studio in India

AFP, Bangalore

Finnish mobile-phone maker Nokia on Wednesday opened a global design studio in India to stay ahead of rivals such as Motorola in the world's fastest-growing wireless market.

The studio will be located in Bangalore, known as India's Silicon Valley, and will be the first of a series of "satellite" design centres being established by Nokia, which plans to open the next in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The world's second-most populous nation is adding six million mobile-phone users every month, and the location of the studio testifies to the impact that India is having on the development of handsets, Nokia officials said.

"Design is not just about the look and feel of the handset but equally important is what it can do for people and how it fits into their lives," said Hannu Nieminen, head of innovations at Nokia Design.



PHOTO: PHOENIX FINANCE & INVESTMENTS

Managing Director of Phoenix Finance & Investments Ltd A Quadir Choudhury speaks at the lottery draw function for allotment of shares against the subscription applications for initial public offering (IPO) of the company on Tuesday in Dhaka. Directors of the company MA Majid and Abdur Rahman, among others, were present.



PHOTO: APOLLO HOSPITALS DHAKA

Apollo Hospitals Dhaka and TNT Express, Bangladesh that provides express delivery and mail services, have recently entered into a corporate agreement under which staff members of TNT Express will get medical services at special rates and other corporate benefits from the hospital. Praful B Pawar, director (Medical Services) and interim CEO of the hospital, and Turab Ur Rahman, country manager of TNT Express, Bangladesh, signed the deal, while other senior officials from both the sides were present.

CURRENCY

Following is Wednesday's (August 1, 2007) forex trading 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	68.70	67.70	Indian rupee	40.17 1.70
Euro	95.31	91.06	Pak rupee	60.50 1.13
Pound	140.89	135.90	Lankan rupee	111.77 0.61
Australian dollar	60.00	56.40	Thai baht	33.81 2.02
Japanese yen	0.59	0.57	Malaysian ringgit	3.47 19.67
Swiss franc	58.12	55.00		
Swedish kroner	10.84	9.63	USD forward rate against BDT	
Canadian dollar	65.60	62.75	Buy	Sell
Hong Kong dollar	8.80	8.63		
Singapore dollar	46.33	44.48	1M	67.79 68.80
UAE dirham	18.86	18.29	2M	67.92 69.01
Saudi riyal	18.46	17.91	3M	68.07 69.24
Danish kroner	13.22	11.90	6M	68.52 69.97
Kuwaiti dinar	240.27	238.06		

Local Market FX and there was ample liquidity in the market. The USD remained unchanged against the Bangladeshi Taka. The volume of cross currency transactions was steady.

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels as on 1/8/2007

Berth No.	Name of vessels	Cargo	L. Port call	Local agent	Dt of arrival	Leaving	Import Disch.
J/2	Tian Ling	C. Clink	Nant	MBL	20/7	3/8	3273
J/3	Banglar Robi	Wheat(g)	--	Uniglobal	R/a	3/8	1928
J/13	Banga Biraj	Cont	Col	Baridhi	30/7	2/8	91
CCT/1	Yongxing	Cont	Col	PSSL	28/7	1/8	--
CCT/3+2	Eagle Prestige	Cont	Sing	QCSL	31/7	2/8	--
NCT/2	Banglar Shikha	Idle	P. Kel	BSC	28/7	3/8	--
CCJ:	Maritime Chiangmai	C. Clink	Tarj	BSL	28/7	1/8	--
RM/3	Borak	Bitumen	Hald	FSA	31/7	2/8	--
DOJ/5	Sarim	Bunker	Krabi	Litmond	17/7	1/8	--
DOJ/6	Al Badiyah	HSD/JP-1	Kuwa	MSTPL	28/7	1/8	--

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L. port call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
Xpress Makalu	1/8	Viza	Seacon	Cont	Col
Yong Yue-8	1/8	Col	QCSL	Cont	Col
Aegean Trader	1/8	Sura	BRSL	Scraping	--
Eagle Pioneer	1/8	P.kel	CT	Cont	Sing
Phu My	2/8	Sing	Jardine	Cont	Sing
Mir Damad	2/8	Para	BSC	Cont	L/para
Bango Bijoy	2/8	Sing	Bdship	Cont	Sing
An Tao Jiang (liner)	3/8	Para	Cosco	GI	6 Pkags
Banglar Urmi	2/8	Yang	PML	GI(log)	--

Tanker due

Concord-1	3/8	Braz	USL	CDSO(RM/3)	13000 W/it
Ska Whegan	6/8	Sing	Rainbow	CDSO	--

Vessels at Kutubdia

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

Wira Kenis	--	--	IBSA	R/A (20/7)
Afroditi	Crude Oil	Rast	Uniglobal	19/7

Vessels at outer anchorage

Vessels ready:

Mol Karina	Cont	Col	Seacon	31/7
Phu Tan	Cont	Col	BSC	31/7
Maritime Songkhla	C. Clink	Tarj	BSL	31/7

Vessels not ready:

Asraar-e-mostafa	C. Clink	Kohsi	Sunmoon	31/7
Santa Suria-ii	Gypsum	Krabi	Sunmoon	1/8

Vessels awaiting employment / instruction:

Dali	--	--	Seacon	R/A (19/7)
Banglar Mookh	--	--	BSC	R/A (30/7)

Vessels not entering:

Discovery-ii	R.phos	Kasa	Litmond	21/7
Maris	C. Clink	Krabi	Litmond	21/7
Santa Barbara	C. Clink	Krabi	Uniship	26/7
Theodor	C. Clink	Kohsi	Saraf	30/7
Danu M	Scraping	Jaka	Intraport	19/7
Lampetia	Scraping	--	Rsship	R/A (26/7)
Allegiance	Scraping	Sing	Intraport	9/7
United Endurance	Scraping	Sing	ASCL	31/7

Movement of vessels for: 2/8/2007

OUT GOING		IN COMING		SHIFTING
J/13	B. Biraj	CCT/3	Xp. Makalu	
CCT/3	E. Prestige	CCT/1	F. Pioneer	
D/7	B. Jyoti	J/9	Phu My	
		J/8	B. Bijoy	
		J/4	B. Urmi	

The above are the shipping position and performance of vessels at Chittagong port as per berthing sheet of CPA Supplied By Family, Dhaka.



PHOTO: CITYCELL

Mahbubur Rahman, chief finance officer of Leads Corporation Ltd, and Arif Khan, general manager (Sales and Distribution) of mobile phone operator CityCell, exchange documents after signing a partnership agreement recently. Under the deal, the IT company will sell CityCell's high-speed wireless internet connection mycitycell Zoom. Senior officials from both the sides are also seen.

STOCK