

# World equity markets tumble before US housing update

AFP, London

Global stock markets suffered losses on Tuesday ahead of a fresh reading on the frazzled US housing sector, with markets lower in Europe and most of Asia.

"Softer equities began in Asia (on Monday), progressed into the US and carried on today," said analysts at Dutch bank ABN Amro.

"Weakness in the US housing market came back to the fore," they added.

In recent weeks, investors have been gripped by the US subprime home loan market, where many high-risk borrowers have defaulted on mortgages, raising fears of a worldwide liquidity shortage as banks tighten lending practices.

Earlier Tuesday, Hong Kong and Japanese markets eased as investors took a breather from recent choppy trading. But Shanghai struck another record high on strong company earnings news.

Wall Street fell on Monday after news that US existing home sales had fallen in July to the lowest level

in nearly five years. While the data was within expectations, it was a letdown after surprisingly strong new home sale data last week, dealers said.

In Europe on Tuesday, investors will keep their eyes glued to the US housing sector ahead of the Standard and Poor's/Cas-Shiller home price index due for publication later in the day, dealers said.

"There are two things we are looking for really -- refinancing problems and whether or not house prices are actually falling -- which could tighten the situation," said one Frankfurt-based dealer.

In late morning deals, Frankfurt's DAX 30 index of leading shares shed 0.17 percent to 7,472.96 points and in Paris the CAC 40 sank 0.98 percent to 5,535.77.

London's FTSE 100 lost 0.62 percent to 6,181.30 points as investors played catch-up after a three-day holiday weekend.

European bourses were dragged lower by weakness in financial groups as worries over the impact

of the US subprime lending crisis continued to weigh on banks and insurers.

Share prices fell "on renewed concerns over European banks' exposure to subprime" losses, said CIBC economist Audrey Childre-Freeman.

Barclays, Britain's third-biggest bank, was a notable faller, down 1.47 percent at 602.92 after the Financial Times reported that the bank had exposure of several hundred million dollars to failed debt vehicles created by its investment banking arm amid growing scrutiny over its links to SachsenLB.

Germany's troubled state-run bank SachsenLB was bought out by the Landesbank Baden-Wuerttemberg (LBBW) on Sunday to save it from bankruptcy after it was badly hit by the US subprime crisis.

LBBW, the country's biggest regional state-run bank, has also injected 250 million euros (342 million dollars) into SachsenLB as "an immediate measure."

Frankfurt and Paris markets had

closed mixed on Monday in low trading volumes, with London shut for a public holiday.

Last week, major world stock markets had posted healthy gains after central banks stepped up their actions to keep credit flowing amid fears of a widening crisis involving subprime US mortgage loans.

Rising expectations that the US Federal Reserve would cut US interest rates next month to boost liquidity had also boosted markets. American borrowing costs have stood at 5.25 percent for the past year.

Also Tuesday the Federal Open Market Committee releases minutes from its latest rate-setting meeting. On Friday, Fed chairman Ben Bernanke delivers a key economic speech.

"Investors will be looking for fresh clues on the Fed's next monetary action through economic data, FOMC minutes and Fed chairman Bernanke's speech," said Kazuhiro Takahashi, equities general manager at Daiwa Securities SMBC.



PHOTO: BATA

Kym Bradley, managing director (deputed) of Bata Shoe Company (Bangladesh) Ltd, and Colonel Syedul Kabir, director (Administration) of Headquarters of Bangladesh Rifles, jointly inaugurate a 'Bata City Store' at Rifles Square in Dhanmondi, Dhaka on Tuesday. Senior officials of the company, among others, were present.



PHOTO: EXPRESSIONS

ACI Foods Ltd and Expressions Ltd, an advertising agency, have recently entered into a brand promotion agreement under which Expressions will conduct advertising and communication-related operations for a new brand of spices to be launched by ACI Foods soon. Syed Alamgir, executive director of ACI Foods, and Ramendu Majumdar, managing director of Expressions, signed the deal on behalf of their sides.

## Export trouble raises fears for Thai economy

AFP, Bangkok

Exports, a pillar of strength in Thailand's wobbly economy, have suddenly slowed due to cooling foreign demand and a strong currency, raising fears the kingdom will miss already modest growth targets.

Thailand counts on exports for 60 percent of its economy. It is the world's biggest exporter of rice and also a major producer of cars, textiles, electrical appliances, fruit and shrimp.

But exports in July grew a modest 5.9 percent year-on-year to 11.8 billion dollars, the lowest level in 29 months, amid a slump in demand

in the United States and Japan, the kingdom's top trading partners.

"Exports grew slower than our target of above eight percent in July because of the strong baht and a decline in demand abroad," said Tanyalak Surapong, a senior economist at the private Kasikorn Research Centre.

US-bound shipments in July dropped by 13.6 percent from a year earlier, while exports to Japan edged up just 1.7 percent in the month, the commerce ministry said.

The weak July data came as a particular shock as exports had been rising over 18 percent each month since January this year.



PHOTO: ONE BANK

ONE Bank Ltd in association with Southeast Bank Ltd has recently introduced Western Union inward remittance services. Managing Director of ONE Bank Farman R Chowdhury inaugurated the service at the bank's Gulshan branch, while Country Director of Western Union Ratheesh Kumar and other senior officials of the banks and the money transfer company were present.

## China to launch private equity fund with S'pore

AFP, Beijing

A Chinese-Singaporean private equity fund that would provide easy financing for hi-tech companies is close to winning approval from China's top economic planner, state media reported Tuesday.

The China-Singapore Suzhou Industrial Park (SIP) China Council, chaired by Vice Premier Wu Yi, will back the new China-Singapore Hi-tech Industrial Investment Fund, the China Daily said.

"The fund will focus on hi-tech and business process outsourcing industries," the report cited an unnamed source as saying. "Apart from SIP, it will also seek opportunities in the Yangtze River Delta."

## STOCK

| TRADED ISSUES August 28, 2007 |              |               |          |         |              |               |          |         |              |      |
|-------------------------------|--------------|---------------|----------|---------|--------------|---------------|----------|---------|--------------|------|
|                               | FMV (Tk.No.) | Price (Tk.)   | Turnover |         | FMV (Tk.No.) | Price (Tk.)   | Turnover |         | FMV (Tk.No.) |      |
|                               |              | Closing (Tk.) | Pre Day  |         |              | Closing (Tk.) | Pre Day  |         |              |      |
| DSE                           |              |               |          |         |              |               |          |         |              |      |
| AB Bank *                     | 1005         | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       |      |
| City Bank *                   | 1005         | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       |      |
| ICBC Bank *                   | 1005         | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       |      |
| Islami Bank BD*               | 10001        | 322.75        | 347      | 3586.25 | 1135         | 8356.50       | 546      | 3815.00 | 47           | 15.0 |
| National Bank *               | 1005         | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       |      |
| Publi Bank *                  | 1005         | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       |      |
| United Bank *                 | 1005         | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       |      |
| Uttara Bank *                 | 1005         | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       |      |
| UOL Finance *                 | 1005         | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       |      |
| United Leasing *              | 1005         | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       |      |
| Uttara Finance *              | 1005         | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       |      |
| Prime Bank Ltd. *             | 1005         | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       |      |
| Southeast Bank *              | 1005         | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       |      |
| N C Bank *                    | 1005         | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       |      |
| South Invest Bank *           | 1005         | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       | 100.00        | 100.00   | 1005    | 100.00       |      |
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