

# Economists see US avoiding recession

AP, Los Angeles

The US economy will suffer as the slumping housing market eats away at job creation and consumer spending, but the nation should avoid slipping into a recession this year, according to a new economic report.

A recession could still happen though, if the credit crisis that has stifled the housing market deepens, preventing consumers from buying big-ticket items like cars and businesses from spending on equipment, according to the quarterly Anderson Forecast by the University of California at Los Angeles.

"We don't see that happening," said Edward Leamer, director and co-author of the forecast released Tuesday. "This is a tough call, but I will be very surprised if this thing actually precipitates into recession."

The forecast anticipates job growth remaining sluggish in 2008, with the U.S. unemployment rate rising to 5.5 percent by the end of the year. The

February rate was 4.8 percent.

The forecast expects the economy to post gross domestic product growth of about 1.5 percent this year, rising to about 3 percent growth in 2009. GDP grew 2.2 percent in 2007, the weakest showing in five years.

The no-recession forecast runs counter to the outlook among many economists and financial pundits, who contend the economy has already started to shrink amid rising unemployment, job losses, record oil prices, and the lingering effects of the housing and credit crises.

The U.S. lost 63,000 payroll jobs last month, the second consecutive month of job losses. The last time the U.S. posted a two-month drop in payroll jobs was in 2003, when employers were still struggling through the aftermath of the 2001 recession.

Leamer said the nation may be experiencing negative economic growth in the current quarter. Economists generally look for at least two consecutive quarters of negative

growth before they make a recession determination.

The biggest risk of recession comes from the credit crisis that emerged last year as home values began to tumble and the number of mortgage defaults and foreclosures soared, the economist said.

Major financial institutions were racked by credit losses as the value of securities backed by mortgages sank, causing the traditional outlet through which banks borrow money to seize up.

The credit woes have deepened the housing slump, making it harder for would-be homeowners to borrow money and for homeowners to refinance. But consumer spending, while weakened, hasn't declined severely due to credit problems, Leamer notes.

"Americans are not as wealthy as they thought they were, and that's going to factor into consumer spending going forward, but it doesn't cause a recession because consumers all realize their lack of wealth at different points in time," he said.

# China exports fall, trade surplus drops

AP, Beijing

China's trade surplus shrank in February as sales of goods to the United States fell, the government said Monday, but analysts said exports should bounce back now that winter storms that disrupted the economy have passed.

The 63 percent drop in the trade gap from a year earlier was due partly to a long-term slowdown in export demand, but February was an unusually weak month, analysts said.

"We expect the export figures to rebound in March, but continue to anticipate a more moderate slowdown in export growth over the course of the year," Jing Ulrich, JP Morgan's chairwoman of China equities, said in a report to clients.

February's trade surplus was \$8.6 billion, down from \$23.7 billion in the year-earlier period, according to China's customs bureau.

The data reflected slowing growth in exports to the United States and Europe while China's still-robust economy is driving demand for imported energy, consumer goods and industrial equipment.

China's imports in February surged 35 percent to \$78.8 billion from the year-earlier period, according to the customs agency. The rate of export growth, meanwhile, plunged to 6.5 percent from January's 26 percent.

Exports to the United States fell 5 percent in February to \$16.4 billion, while imports of American goods jumped 33 percent to \$6.1 billion.

Beijing is under pressure from the United States and the European Union to ease trade barriers and currency controls that they say are adding to its swollen trade surplus. Some American lawmakers are calling for punitive action if Beijing fails to act.



Badrul Ahsan, managing director of Joint Venture Engineers Ltd and Ramakanta Bhattacharjee, director (Marketing, Sales, and IT) of HeidelbergCement Bangladesh Ltd, signed an agreement in Dhaka recently. As per the agreement, Joint Venture Engineers Ltd will exclusively use ScanCement for its construction work.



Arif Khan, general manager of IDLC, launches the financial institution's Personal Loan programme by handing over a cheque to the first personal loan customer in Dhaka recently. Yongbok Joe, deputy managing director, Shaikh Kamruzzaman, head of Personal Finance Division, and other senior officials of the company were present. The loan is to cater to the immediate financial needs of the company's retail customers.

## Currency

Following is Tuesday's (March 11, 2008) forex trading statement by Standard Chartered Bank

Major currency exchange rates	Exchange rate of some currencies			
US dollar	69.00	Indian rupee	40.23	1.70
Euro	102.38	Pak rupee	62.80	1.09
Pound	139.97	Lankan rupee	107.45	0.64
Australian dollar	64.85	Thai baht	31.57	2.17
Japanese yen	0.70	Malaysian ringgit	3.20	21.42
Swiss franc	69.03			
Swedish kronor	12.05			
Canadian dollar	70.73			
Hong Kong dollar	8.88			
Singapore dollar	50.91			
UAEDirham	18.94			
Saudi riyal	18.55			
Danish kroner	14.97			
Kuwaiti dirar	251.03			

Local Market FX  
Local inter-bank FX market was on Tuesday. There was ample liquidity in the market and the demand for dollar was steady. The BDT remained almost unchanged against the USD.

## Shipping

### Chittagong Port

Berthing position and performance of vessels on 11/2/2008								
Berth no.	Name of vessels	Cargo	L Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival	Leaving	Import	Export
J/2	Mingla	Rice(P)	Yang	MCA	6/3	12/3	1638	
J/4	Vivashin Sun	Rice(G)	Yang	ASCL	10/3	18/3	1022	
J/4	Fokus	Oil(S Ash)	P Band	HSA	4/3	11/3	1172	
J/5	Huang Son	Rice(P)	Col	Clia	3/3	12/3	3224	
J/7	Xiang Jingsi	Oil	Tian	Cosco	6/3	13/3	2350	
J/8	Caraka Jaya Niaga-II-4	Oil(SB)	Viza	Sunshine	7/3	12/3	509	
DD/J1	Express-58	Support Val	Yang	BSA	10/3	12/3	-	-
DD/J2	Banglar Shourabh	Repair	-	BSC	R/A	15/3	-	-
RM/9	Banglar Maya	Repair	-	BSC	R/A	15/3	-	-
Rm/10	Banga Bijo	Repair	Col	Bandhi	2/3	15/3	-	-

### Vessels at Kutubdia

Name of vessels	Cargo	Last Port call	Local agent	Date of arrival
Rig Deep Driller-5	-	-	IBSA	30/9
Net Sea	-	-	IBSA	R/A(7/3)
Wra Keris	-	-	IBSA	R/A(7/3)
Katko-18	-	-	IBSA	R/A(6/3)
Co Safe	-	-	IBSA	R/A(2/3)
Sea Service	-	-	IBSA	R/A(4/3)
Sun Rose	Crude Oil	Jebel	DSL	26/2
Banglar Jyoti	C. Oil	-	BSC	R/A(10/3)

### Vessels at outer anchorage

Vessels ready	Vessels under way			
Banga Borik	Col	Baridhi	10/3	
Kota Rakza	Col	PIL(BD)	11/3	
Ceren Urtnaz	Urea(Boic)	Mesal	10/3	
Tabim	CPO	Dumail	11/3	
Mcc Sunderland	Cont	Sing	MBDL	11/3

### Vessels awaiting employment / instruction

Name of vessels	Idle	Mumb	Raship <th>R/A(20/2)</th>	R/A(20/2)
Analolia	-	-	BHSL	16/2
Bulk Energy	-	-	FSA	R/A(6/3)
Borak	-	-	Saraf	R/A(8/3)
Theodor	-	-	Seacon	9/3
Achiever	-	-	Kal	-

### Vessels not entering

Name of vessels	TSP	China <th>UML <th>6/3</th> </th>	UML <th>6/3</th>	6/3
Altair Ss	Raw Sugar	Chenn	BRSL	7/3
F. Jahan	Raw Sugar	Kant	Uniglobal	7/3
Sea Beauty-1	C. Clink	Sing	Sunmoon	7/3
Captain George-II	C. Clink	Thai	BRSL	11/3
Brave Royal	C. Clink	Sing	Ahz	7/3
Ark	Scrapping	Sing	Ahz	7/3
Meridian	Scrapping	Fujai	Ahz	9/3

### Vessels due at outer anchorage

Name of vessels	Date of arrival	L Port call	Local agent	Type of cargo	Loading ports
Xin Tong Yu-108	12/3	Yangon	Cosco	Rice(P)	-
Ignt	12/3	Girdas	MHBL	Urea(Bag)	-
Banga Barta	13/3	Yangon	Edship	Rice(P)	-
Noble Coral (Liner)	12/3	Yangon	Everett	Oil(S/C)	-
Hpaan	13/3	Yang	MTA	Rice(P)	-
Banglar Robi	12/3	Yang	KSM	WT Rice(G)	-
Banga Borak	12/3	Pkal	Baridhi	Cont	P Kal
Zakher Admisal	12/3	Sing	IBSA	Support Tug	-
Geo Diamond	12/3	Sing	IBSA	Seas Research Ship	-
Oel Singapore	14/3	Sing	Seacon	Cont	Sing
Unity	12/3	Col	Seacon	Cont	Col

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



Iqbal U. Ahmed, managing director of Trust Bank, inaugurates the Goala Bazar branch of the bank in Sylhet. Ishtiaque Ahmed Chowdhury, deputy managing director, and other high officials were also present.

## STOCK

TRADED ISSUES March 11, 2008									
Company	FV/ML (Tk.No.)	Price	Turnover	Price	Turnover	Price	Turnover	Price	Turnover
		Closing	Chg(%)	Pre Day	Share	Closing	Chg(%)	Pre Day	Share
<b>BANK</b>									
AB Bank	1000	3581.25	4.38	3302.75	207632	3571.25	-5.15	3396.25	52520
City Bank	1000	339.25	0.04	338.75	1984	339.25	0.15	338.75	1984
ICBC Bank	1000	2434.50	-0.61	2435.10	11001	2434.50	-0.25	2435.10	11001
Prime Bank	1000	102.50	0.00	102.50	115	102.50	0.00	102.50	115
Trust Bank	1000	102.50	0.00	102.50	115	102.50	0.00	102.50	115
<b>INVESTMENT</b>									
ICBC M F	1000	1654.25	12.27	1473.50	1800	1654.25	12.27	1473.50	1800
ICBC M F	1000	1654.25	12.27	1473.50	1800	1654.25	12.27	1473.50	1800
ICBC M F	1000	1654.25	12.27	1473.50	1800	1654.25	12.27	1473.50	1800
<b>ENGINEERING</b>									
Alfa Automobiles	1000	302.75	-4.12	315.25	16235	302.75	-4.12	315.25	16235
Alfa Automobiles	1000	302.75	-4.12	315.25	16235	302.75	-4.12	315.25	16235
Alfa Automobiles	1000	302.75	-4.12	315.25	16235	302.75	-4.12	315.25	16235
<b>FOOD &amp; ALLIED</b>									
Alpha Tobacco	1000	9.00	2.22	8.80	60	9.00	2.22	8.80	60
Alpha Tobacco	1000	9.00	2.22	8.80	60	9.00	2.22	8.80	60
Alpha Tobacco	1000	9.00	2.22	8.80	60	9.00	2.22	8.80	60
<b>TEXTILE</b>									
Alfa Textile	1000	6.30	5.00	6.00	22100	6.30	5.00	6.00	22100
Alfa Textile	1000	6.30	5.00	6.00	22100	6.30	5.00	6.00	22100
Alfa Textile	1000	6.30	5.00	6.00	22100	6.30	5.00	6.00	22100

## Turnover Leaders

Company	Turnover (Vol)	(M.Tk)	(%)	BigLot
AB Bank	207632	758.52	18.53	955
ICBC M F	1800	244.12	5.96	13000
ICBC M F	1800	244.12	5.96	13000
ICBC M F	1800	244.12	5.96	13000

## Market Highlights

Company	Price Chn. (%)	Close	Turnover
DSE All Share Index	2.56176902	(-) 0.60%	
DSE General Index	3034.61468	(-) 0.67%	
DSE-20 Index	2364.62587	(-) 1.74%	
CSE All Share Index	7743.93040	(-) 0.63%	
CSE-30 Index	6878.66130	(-) 0.70%	
CSE Selected Index	4962.80780	(-) 0.66%	

## Capital Gainers

Company	Price Chn. (%)	Close	Turnover
Pharmaco-Z	16.03	7.56	99.50
ICBAMCL Islamic M F	15.42	11.29	490.25
ICBAMCL Islamic M F	14.97	12.41	972.00
ICBAMCL Islamic M F	14.56	15.66	568.53
ICBAMCL Islamic M F	14.50	11.32	136.25

## Capital Losers

Company	Price Chn. (%)	Close	Turnover
First Lease-A	-2.70	2.80	321.00
Quamam Cotton Mills-B	-2.43	9.45	48.00
Quamam Textile-Z	-0.09	0.00	3.00
Sandhan Life Insur-A	-7.91	0.82	2.847.25
Pragati Life Insur-A	-7.12	0.12	2.002.75

## Non Traded Issues

Company	FV/ML (Tk.No.)	DSE	LTD	LCP	LTD	Last AGM	EPS	DPS	DPS
<b>BANK</b>									
National Bank	1000	1519.25	10/03/08	510.00	10/03/08	10/04/07	42.00	-	Paper Synthetic-Z
Rupali Bank	1000	2904.25	01/11/07	2826.75	31/10/07	05/12/07	11.58	-	PAPER AND PACKAGING
The Oriental Bank	1000	928.00	21/06/06	-	-	15/09/05	481.2	-	Padma Printers-Z
Mercantile Bank	1000	411.00	10/03/08	431.00	10/03/08	31/05/07	32.97	-	Sonali Paper-Z
<b>ENGINEERING</b>									
Metalex Corporation	1000	205.50	10/03/08	-	-	24/04/96	562.5	-	ADDA Printers-A
BDM Thai Alum	1000	95.00	10/03/08	90.00	09/03/08	25/10/07	62.28	-	BD Hotels
BEPC Ltd-Z	1000	38.00	21/01/08	-	-	27/12/01	10.99	-	BD Service-A
<b>FOOD &amp; ALLIED</b>									
Fahad Industries Ltd.	1000	-	Not Listed	-	-	29/12/07	-1.26	-	JAGO Mosaic Tiles
Amam Sea Food	1000	179.50							