

Asian stocks close mostly down

AFP, Hong Kong

Asian stocks closed mostly down Tuesday, with China and India tumbling, as soaring oil prices and a huge rise in iron ore costs stoked fears about the economic damage from surging inflation.

The Indian market plunged over 3.7 percent, while Chinese stocks slid just over three percent, as this year's sell-off in Asian equities continued amid concerns the commodity boom threatens to choke economic growth.

Crude oil traded around 141 dollars per barrel on Tuesday, rising back towards record levels of just under 144 dollars struck at the start of the week.

Meanwhile, Anglo-Australian mining giant Rio Tinto said it had reached agreement with all its customers in Asia for huge iron ore price increases of up to 97 percent.

Both the oil price and news of Rio's deal intensified existing concerns that rising inflation threatens consumer spending, business profits and economic growth, particularly if interest rates go up to tame prices.

prices.

Among other markets, Japan closed little changed, while Taiwan and Singapore all tumbled around 1.5 percent.

The Japanese bourse held up despite a central bank survey showing top Japanese executives are at their most pessimistic in almost five years.

South Korea was also in the red, and most of Asia's smaller markets fell too. But resource-rich Indonesia managed to buck the trend, rising 1.3 percent, while the bourses in Hong Kong and Thailand were shut.

Apart from inflation, investors were also worried about the fallout from the credit crisis in the ailing US economy, the world's biggest.

TOKYO: Japanese share prices closed down 0.13 percent, declining for a ninth straight session following news of a sharp drop in business confidence in Asia's largest economy, dealers said.

The Tokyo Stock Exchange's benchmark Nikkei-225 index dropped 18.18 points or 0.13 percent to end at 13,463.20. The broader Topix index of all first-section shares slipped 0.03 points to 1,320.07.

Analysts said that soaring costs, slowing global economic growth and a stronger yen were all squeezing profits and hitting confidence.

SHANGHAI: Chinese share prices closed down 3.09 percent, dealers said. The benchmark Shanghai Composite Index, which covers A and B shares, closed down 84.33 points at 2,651.77 on turnover of 43.0 billion yuan (6.2 billion dollars).

"Though the valuation of the general market is at a low level, investors still stay on the sidelines as big shareholders continue to cut stakes in listed companies," Wu Feng at TX Investment told Dow Jones Newswires.

TAIPEI: Taiwan share prices closed down 1.5 percent, dealers said. The weighted index closed down 115.56 points at the day's low of 7,407.98 on thin trading volume of 86.06 billion Taiwan dollars (2.83 billion US).

SEOUL: South Korean share prices closed 0.5 percent lower, dealers said. The index ended down 8.46 points or 0.5 percent at 1,666.46. Volume was 271.79 million shares worth 4.22 trillion won (4.03 billion dollars).

SINGAPORE: Singapore share prices closed 1.38 percent lower, dealers said. The blue chip Straits Times Index (STI) fell 40.75 points to 2,906.79 on slim volume of 873 million shares worth 1.03 billion dollars (757 million US dollars).

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian share prices closed down 1.0 percent, dealers said. The Kuala Lumpur Composite Index dropped 11.74 points to 1,174.83.

JAKARTA: Indonesian shares closed 1.3 percent higher, dealers said. The Jakarta Composite Index rose 29.70 points to 2,378.80.

MANILA: Philippine share prices closed 1.8 percent lower, dealers said. The composite index closed 44.73 points down at 2,415.25 points, its lowest finish in almost two years. The all-shares index fell 1.69 percent to 1,545.04 points.

MUMBAI: Indian shares closed down 3.71 percent, dealers said.

The benchmark Mumbai 30-share Sensex index fell 499.92 points to 12,961.68, a 14-month low.



Md Yasir Ali, managing director of Dutch-Bangla Bank Ltd, formally opened the bank's relocated Hathazari branch at SS Tower on Sunday in Chittagong. SH Mukherjee, vice president and manager of the Agrabad branch, and other senior officials were present.



DHL Worldwide Express Bangladesh Pvt Ltd recently organised a 3-day training programme on 'Effective Sales Territory Management' for the new members of a sales team in Dhaka. The training focused on developing skills on an effective sales approach in the ever changing market scenario.

Euro on firm footing against dollar

AFP, London

The euro firmed against the dollar on Tuesday as the foreign exchange market awaited fresh economic data ahead of a likely eurozone interest rate hike later this week.

The euro edged up to 1.5746 dollars in morning London trading from 1.5745 dollars in New York late on Monday.

Against the yen, the dollar fell to 105.71 yen from 106.13.

Dealers said worries about the health of the US economy were weighing on the greenback ahead of an Institute for Supply Management (ISM) manufacturing survey due

later Tuesday, followed by key employment data due on Thursday.

The European Central Bank (ECB), meanwhile, was widely expected to lift its key lending rate by a quarter-point to 4.25 percent on Thursday.

"Ahead of decisive US tier one US data -- June ISM index today and non-farm payrolls on Thursday -- and against the backdrop of an ECB that may signal one rate hike could be enough for now, we suspect the foreign exchange market will not push for a range break just yet," said Commerzbank analyst Gavin Friend.



The 23rd annual general meeting (AGM) of Peoples Insurance Company Ltd was held on Thursday in Dhaka. Chairman of the company Md Abul Bashar presided over the AGM, which approved a 10 percent dividend. Directors and managing director, among others, were present at the meeting.

Thai inflation hits 10-yr high

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand's inflation rate surged to a 10-year high of 8.9 percent in June, driven by sharply rising oil prices, the commerce ministry said Tuesday.

Fuel prices in Thailand rose 44.5 percent year-on-year in June, while food costs were up 11.4 percent, the ministry said in a statement.

But the overall increase in food prices masked a steeper rise in prices for the staple grain rice, which jumped 35.8 percent, while pork costs jumped 31.6 percent.

STOCK MARKET 2007-08

Table with columns: Company, FV/M, Price, Y-Clos, P/Clos, Turnover, Y-Clos, P/Clos, Turnover. Rows include BANK, DSE, CSE, INVESTMENT, ENGINEERING, FOOD & ALLIED, and various sub-sectors.

Table with columns: Company, Declaration Date, Record Date, Year End, Div/Bonus. Rows include Arise Pharma, Square Pharma, Faradisi Life, Asia Pacific, and others.

TRADED ISSUES IN JUL 02, '07 - JUN 30, '08

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Turnover & Market Cap. ---

Table with columns: Year, Turnover, Market Cap. Rows include 2003-2004, 2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2006-2007, 2007-2008.

PE Ratio and EPS ---

Table with columns: Sector, PE Ratio, EPS. Rows include Bank, Investment, Engineering, Food & Allied, and others.

Turnover Leaders 2007-08 ---

Table with columns: Company, DSE, Turnover, Price Scale. Rows include Square Pharma, Faradisi Life, Asia Pacific, and others.

Capital Gainers 2007-08 ---

Table with columns: Company, DSE, Price Change, Price Scale. Rows include Arise Pharma, Square Pharma, Faradisi Life, Asia Pacific, and others.

Capital Losers 2007-08 ---

Table with columns: Company, DSE, Price Change, Price Scale. Rows include Arise Pharma, Square Pharma, Faradisi Life, Asia Pacific, and others.