

TRANSASIA BUSINESS NEWSWIRE

Vol: 2 / Week 1/ April / 2006



World Markets

- ❑ Indexes - World
- ❑ Indexes - US
- ❑ Currency updates & comparisons

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Articles

- ❑ Future of the global business: Vol. 2
- ❑ 4 Steps for a Successful media Relations Campaign

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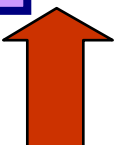
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World Market Indices (Between March 25,06 & March 27,06)

	Index	Change	% Change	Level
Europe				
Belgium	Bel 20	-25.3	-0.64%	3,951
Europe	DJ Stoxx	-24	-0.67%	3,525
	Euronext 100	-5.7	-0.63%	890
	Euronext 150	-2.23	-0.14%	1,647
	CAC	-44	-0.85%	5,175
France	SBF 120	-28.9	-0.76%	3,759
Germany	DAX	-44.5	-0.75%	5,929
	MDAX	-30.3	-0.35%	8,672
	AEX	-1.25	-0.26%	463
Norway	BRIX	2.16	0.06%	3,733
Sweden	OSE Industry	-0.98	-0.06%	312
	OMX	-5.7	-0.53%	1,058
UK	OMSX All Share	2.43	0.72%	339
	FTSE 100	-46.8	-0.78%	5,989
	FTSE All Shares	-23.2	-0.75%	3,058
	FTSE Eurotop	-17.72	-0.60%	2,920
Pacific				
Australia	ASX 100	37	0.91%	4,122
	ASX All Ords	43.5	0.87%	5,045
	ASX Mid-cap 50	56.7	1.12%	5,099
Far East				
Hong Kong	Hang Seng	99.4	0.63%	15,816
	HSCC Red Chip	-2.82	-0.13%	2,137
Japan	Nikkei 225	89.23	0.54%	16,650

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US Market Indices (As on Morning of March 27, 06)

Index	Change	% Change	Level
Dow	-29.3	-0.26%	11,250
S & P	-2.2	-0.17%	1,301
NASDAQ	1.12	0.05%	2,315
Russell 2000	-2.43	-0.32%	751
NYSE Comp	-24.6	-0.30%	8,228
AMEX Composite	-2.12	-0.11%	1,913
10 Yr. Note	0.18	0.04%	
Gold	5.5	0.98%	566
NYMEX Crude	0.35	0.54%	64



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Local Currency	Units per USD March 27,06	Units per USD March 27,05	% Change	Local Currency	Units per USD March 27,06	Units per USD March 27,05	% Change
Albania Leke	1021	97.0	5	Indonesia Rupiahs	9034.1	9418.1	-4
Algeria Dinars	73.4	72.4	1	Iran Rials	9129.9	8867.0	3
Argentina Pesos	3.1	2.9	6	Iraq Dinars	1469.7	1458.7	1
Australia Dollars	1.4	1.3	9	Israel New Shekels	4.7	4.4	7
Bangladesh Taka	67.8	63.1	7	Japan Yen	116.5	106.4	10
Brazil Reals	2.2	2.7	-21	Mexico Pesos	10.9	11.3	-3
Canada Dollars	1.2	1.2	-4	New Zealand Dollars	1.6	1.4	18
Chile Pesos	531.1	589.3	-10	Norway Krone	6.6	6.3	4
China Yuan Renminbi	8.0	8.3	-3	Poland Zlotych	3.3	3.2	2
Comptoirs Français du Pacifique Francs	99.2	92.1	8	Qatar Riyals	3.6	3.6	0
Costa Rica Colones	505.1	468.0	8	Romania New Lei	2.9	27.7	-89
Croatia Kuna	6.1	5.7	6	Russia Rubles	27.8	3.8	641
Denmark Krone	6.2	5.7	8	Saudi Arabia Riyals	3.8	0.1	2491
Dominican Republic Pesos	32.4	26.8	21	Silver Ounces	0.1	1.6	-94
East Caribbean Dollars	2.7	2.7	-1	Singapore Dollars	1.6	30.1	-95
Egypt Pounds	5.8	5.8	-1	South Africa Rand	6.3	1014.5	-99
Estonia Krooni	13.0	12.1	8	South Korea Won	977.0	99.0	887
Euro	0.8	0.8	8	Switzerland Francs	1.3	31.5	-96
Fiji Dollars	1.8	1.6	9	Taiwan New Dollars	32.6	39.0	-16
Gold Ounces	0.0	0.0	-25	Thailand Baht	38.9	6.2	529
Hong Kong Dollars	7.8	7.8	-1	Trinidad and Tobago Dollars	6.3	1.3	402
India Rupees	44.6	43.8	2	Turkey New Lira	1.3	1.4	0
United States Dollars	1.0	1.0	-4	United Arab Emirates Dirhams	3.7	3.7	0
Venezuela Bolivares	2146.0	2147.3	3	United Kingdom Pounds	0.6	0.5	7
Vietnam Dong	15932.0	15827.5	1				



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Asia Pacific

INDIA

Indian Stocks are marching ahead, unstoppable. The sensex surge on Monday and partly Tuesday (March 20 & 21) hitting an all time high of 11017.3. On Saturday (18th March) Indian PM Dr. Man Mohan Singh had hinted at moving toward a free float of the Indian Rupee and on Tuesday the BSE responded by crossing the 11000 mark to touch a lifetime intra day high.

The other members of the elite club of 10000 + are Japan's Nikkei, Hong Kong's Hang Sen. & US's Dow Jones. Full convertibility is expected to attract foreign money and will allow local enterprises to access foreign debt markets more easily. Overall this raise will boost the confidence level in the market.

Other than sensex breaking records by soaring to new high several other parameters are also breaking new records. One such parameter is the Dividend yield ratio of the sensex. The ratio was observed to be one of the lowest in the world. A low figure suggests that it may be difficult to find high dividend yielding stocks and the investors will have to plan accordingly.

CAMBODIA

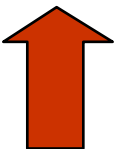
The UN and Cambodia on March 14 signed agreements putting in place the legal foundations for the administrative set-up and operations of the Extraordinary Chambers to try Khmer Rouge leaders, accused of horrific crimes, including mass killings, during the 1970s. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has submitted a list of international judges and other legal experts to Cambodia's Prime Minister who could serve in the process. (UN News service)

JAPAN

Tokyo has again called for a revamp of UN funding. Japan pays 19.47 percent of the UN budget, second only to the US; its two proposals would see permanent members paying a minimum of three percent or five percent to "fairly represent members' status." The plans would mainly affect China (2.05 percent) and Russia (1.1 percent), though the UK and France could see slight rises. The US currently foots 22 percent of the bill, Britain 6.12 percent and France 6.03 percent. (BBC News)

PAKISTAN

Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said on March 14 that Pakistan is now spending more on development than ever before, thanks to the additional fiscal space made available by efficient revenue collection and better debt management. The overall poverty in the country has declined by 6.7 percent, and the unemployment rate for the current year has fallen to 6.8 percent, he said, adding that GDP should reach 6.5-7 percent in 2005-06. (Business Recorder)



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BANGLADESH

■ Bangladesh Bank is closely monitoring the Profit repatriation mechanism of various multinational companies, institutions and individuals who remit foreign currency from the country to detect irregularities, if any.

In one of the meetings of Banking and Government stalwarts it was pointed out that some multinational companies, particularly cell phone operators were repatriating large volumes of earnings from Bangladesh while borrowing from the local banks. Some importers were also siphoning dollar from the country causing a crisis here.

■ In another report The European Commission has called for proposals on non-formal primary education in Bangladesh from the NGOs and international organizations active in the country. The purpose of this call for proposals is to bring qualitative improvement and quantitative expansion of non-formal primary education services of NGOs, thereby creating, maintaining, and strengthening links with the formal primary education system in Bangladesh.

European Commission is to grant 29 million euros in total with 3.5 to 9.6 million euros for each individual project and it will finance 60 to 95 percent of total project costs

Europe

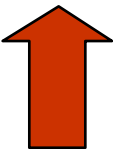
EUROPEAN UNION

■ Immigrants to the EU from the Middle East and North Africa send home at least EUR7.1 billion (\$8.46 billion) a year; the remittances are a major source of revenue for countries on the Mediterranean's southern and eastern rims and exceed foreign direct investments and development aid. The EU said in a report that 90 percent went to Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Turkey -- the main providers of immigrants from the EU's Southern neighbors. (AP)

■ The fifth conference of Euromed trade ministers opened late last week Friday in Marrakech with talk of establishing a free trade zone by 2010 in the Euro-Mediterranean region high on the agenda. An accord of establishing a free trade zone between Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan was under discussion during the conference

TURKEY

The World Bank's IFC said last week it was looking to focus more on infrastructure, health and technology projects in Turkey as the country moves toward EU membership. The IFC's new Executive Vice President, told a news conference it would lend up to \$400 million to Turkish companies this year to foster development in strategic sectors. (Reuters)



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UNITED KINGDOM

A year after PM Tony Blair challenged the rich world to end trade protectionism and increase aid, many of the promised reforms have yet to materialize, Oxfam said on March 11, marking the anniversary of the report of the Commission for Africa. Progress had been made on aid and debt but opportunities outlined in a report by the Blair's Africa Commission to make trade fair and limit the sale of small arms were not being exploited, and rich countries are backtracking from their commitment on ending poverty. (Reuters/AP/Dow Jones)

Middle East & North Africa

Israel

Acting Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has vowed that Israel will never give up the major Jewish settlement of Ariel in the West Bank. He said the settlement, north of Jerusalem, would be "an integral part of Israel, whatever happens." Last week, Olmert said he would unilaterally set permanent borders for Israel within four years if his Kadima party won the election in two weeks. (BBC News)

Congo

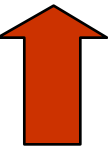
The IMF said last week that the Congo, one of the world's most indebted countries, had qualified for debt relief worth some \$2.9 billion in nominal terms over time. Congo has \$9.2 billion of foreign debt as per the Reuters estimate.

Ethiopia

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan March 13 encouraged Ethiopia and Eritrea to settle their volatile border dispute and cooperate fully with the commission charged with determining the boundary,

Nigeria

Some 16,000 protesters have marched through Nger's capital demanding more funding for the education system. They also want Parliament to change a 1998 law that they blame for lowering teaching standards, as experienced teachers now have to retire at age 50. Last year, the government withdrew food taxes after weeks of violent demonstrations. (BBC News)



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Sudan

Donor states meeting at the World Bank's Paris office confirmed last week that they would go ahead with the \$4.5 billion aid package to Sudan over the next 3 years. (AFP/UN News service)

Zimbabwe

The government says sanitary towels donated during an international appeal must be quality tested before any duty exemption will be considered. The economic crisis has led to a desperate shortage of tampons and pads. With 80 percent unemployment rate and a minimum monthly wage of \$21, a packet of 10 sanitary towels costing \$5 is beyond the reach of most women. (BBC News)

United States

Ecuador

Ecuador's indigenous leaders have vowed to keep up protests over the prospect of a free trade agreement with the US. Thousands of Indians have blocked major roads since mid March, calling for a referendum on Ecuador's entry into a free trade pact with the US. The deal puts them at a disadvantage, they say, and will harm their culture. Colombia and Peru, have both already signed the agreement. (BBC News)

United States

Washington - As the United States gears up for its first major immigration law reform in 20 years and major demonstrations were expected on Saturday, US President George W Bush was pushing for his proposal that would allow temporary workers to enter the country legally. Bush, in his weekly radio address Saturday, emphasized the important role now played by the country's 11 million illegal workers.

Bush also wants to tighten the border controls :In his radio address, Bush emphasized that secure borders were a major priority for the administration, which he said had caught and sent home nearly 6 million illegal immigrants during his five years in office. He called for the hiring of thousands more border patrol agents.

But frustrated by the lack of patrols, vigilantes, calling themselves the Minutemen, have taken things into their own hands, regularly patrolling Arizona's long border with Mexico, waiting for anyone crossing into the US illegally. The idea that terrorists bent on attacking the United States and drug dealers could be slipping into the country along the illegal byways is uppermost in many of their minds.

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Future of the Global Business: Vol.2

Ireland, Switzerland, Norway happen to be the best place to live in if one traces the Quality of life index (QI) leaving countries like Britain & US far behind. It has long been established that material well being alone does not adequately measure quality of life. Studies show that an increase in income does not have a direct correlation with the rise in satisfaction. Although rising incomes are highly valued.

If one looks at why Ireland is the front runner is not only because its GDP per person is amongst the top 5 globally but also because it ranks high on factors like low unemployment, political liberties, its caring for the finer elements of the old culture such as stable family and community life. On the contrary Britain has high income per head but also has high levels of social and family break down; Russia remains at the bottom most level in terms of QI index though family ties, old cultural flavors etc are very much prevalent in this country probably because of the sluggishness and lethargy in the bureaucracy. If one were to rank the above countries worldwide on quality of life (QI) for 2006 on a scale of 1 to 10 Ireland would be 8+, US would be around 7.5, Britain would be around 7, Russia & China around 6 (base figures taken from The Economist)

It's interesting to note that in Europe more than half of the spending on luxury & leisure is by people over 50s. Also more than 70 % of the wealth in UK and the US is with over 65s – mostly women. In India the median age is 24 years or for that matter in China the median age is 32 years so one can really see that future demand in various countries is going to come from all together different consumer segments.

Affluent population is growing in India and China. Another million or two who are helped up by economic growth refreshes every year market. In India alone 400 million children will soon be adults looking for aspiration-type products. The country today has over 1 Million engineering diploma holders, more than 15 Million Software professionals and a growing IT industry. India typically is a country with more than 450 Million entrepreneurs with huge entrepreneurial energy and strong community links and social networking. India's trade with China & vice versa is growing at an ever-increasing pace.

India & China apart, let us also talk about the U.S. economy that is not growing, it is shrinking, forget stagflation what is talked about the US economy is "over inflationary depression". The dollar has barely moved for a long time in terms of Euro but in terms of gold, it is worth only half what it was in 2000.

The London Times: Merrill Lynch predicted that gold would hit \$600 an ounce in the long term after its recent rise above \$500. Last month the precious metal hit a 25-year high of \$579.50 an ounce amid concern among investors that America's huge trade gap would force a weakening of the dollar.

America strategically has been selling off its industrial assets, or allowing them to rust away, to say nothing at the loss of real manufacturing skill that's accompanied the loss of three million jobs to China and India. Part of this is the auto industry's inability to adapt to



Articles

a world where labor is cheap and oil is expensive. It is common to see news of a lot of high profile professionals returning back and joining Auto companies in India after their successful stints (5 – 20 years) with American automotive majors in Detroit with much healthier salaries they used to get while in US.

To meet its borrowing needs, the American government has re-introduced the 30-year bond. There's a market for the longer-term bonds. And they help the government finance its projects. But the gap between what the American government spends and what it receives in revenue keeps growing. If the budget gap continues to grow as a percentage of the total GDP, it may hit badly on the image of the US as a long term investment destination. Ballooning deficits could also create trouble for consumers down the line if foreign investors lose their affinity for U.S. assets, forcing an upward revision in interest rates.

e – bay has already proved that everyone can be a global seller using couriers. With Europe scoring high on the Quality of life, India & China on the growth trajectory, US selling its industrial assets where does the future of the global business lies? To know **more check out Vol.3 in our next edition**

4 Steps for a Successful media Relations Campaign

If you think PR is all about sending out press releases and hoping for coverage, think again. In fact, successful PR is rarely a one time, one-shot or a random activity. It is an important business process. To propel your business forward, you need a well-charted media relations program.

At its core, a media relations campaign centers on creating relationships with exactly the journalists, producers or editors who can tell your story to the right audiences. It can get a new product or service to a great start or even revive an established business that's floundering. PR coverage often has greater credibility with target audiences than advertising, so when used consistently, media relations can be an invaluable component of your company's marketing communications strategy.

Just follow these four steps to set up a media relations program for your growing business.

Step 1: Don't overlook the Macro Picture

Shape your campaign based on your long-range goals. With media relations, you can foster ongoing relationships that raise awareness of a product, elevate your company's visibility, communicate key messages, and help in positioning your business. Your PR themes should be tied to your central marketing messages. In other words, focus your media relations campaign on getting coverage that hammers home the same benefits and key selling points communicated by your advertising and marketing support materials.



Articles

Step 2. Find the Right Media Partner

No matter who is your target audience, there's a form of media to reach it. Television offers everything from big budget news and talk shows to local access, plus the entire specialty programming on cable TV. Radio shows, specialty newspapers and major dailies that provide excellent public relations opportunities. Best of all, the enormous proliferation of magazines targeting every niche market imaginable are a bonanza for small-business owners seeking coverage. Many media outlets also have highly trafficked websites with separate editorial staffs actively looking for content.

Where do your best prospects look for information on the type of product or service you market? Identify the best traditional and online media, and then put together your own list of targeted journalists, editors or producers. Your list doesn't have to be long. Just include the best media and journalists to help you achieve your PR goals.

Step 3. Tailor Your Story

Media outlets are primarily interested in stories that'll have special appeal to their unique viewers, readers or listeners, so it's critical to tailor your story to meet their specific needs. Become familiar with each of the media you target and note the types of stories or story angles they look for prior to contacting them.

The bottom line is the journalists and editors you pitch genuinely care about presenting the right information to their audiences. If you can get inside their heads and learn what they need most, you've done it.

Step 4. Create Lasting Relationships

A press release--even a great one--is merely a knock at the door. It's the first step in a chain of events that, with consistent effort, will gain you the coverage you need. You can begin with a press release if you're announcing something that's new or newsworthy. Send a pitch letter instead if you're "pitching" a story idea. In some cases a "media alert" is called for to announce a specific event, such as your availability for interviews on a specific date as part of a radio media tour. Send whichever of these is appropriate for your particular message either by e-mail, postal mail or fax, depending on the preference of the media outlet. Then, follow up shortly by telephone. Don't be surprised if the journalists you contact don't recall having received your initial communication and ask you to resend it. Remember: they get inundated every single day.

Your follow-up calls are as much about listening as they are about explaining your story. Your goal should be to try to discover the long-term needs of the journalists and how you can work with and support them. Be prepared to send full press kits that include background information, any photos, copies of other coverage you've received, and information on your company to journalists who express interest in your story. But don't overload the kit--send only what's relevant. Once you've opened the door to these new relationships, it's important to make periodic contact with fresh ideas and information. Develop your relationships over time and soon you'll find that media relations have become indispensable to building your business.



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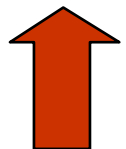
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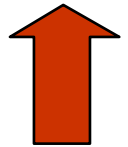
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