

Canadian stock market slides amid grim economic outlook

TORONTO, Jan. 16 (Xinhua) -- The Canadian stock market closed lower on Wednesday as investors became more concerned about the global economic conditions after the World Bank cut global growth forecast for 2013 and weak economic data from Europe.

The S&P/TSX Composite Index closed down 33.15 points, or 0.26 percent, to 12,608.82, while the S&P/TSX Venture Composite Index dropped 1.59 points, or 0.13 percent, to 1,230.20.

The World Bank cut global economic outlook on Wednesday, predicting the global economy to expand by 2.4 percent in 2013, down from the June forecast of three percent as a result of slow economic recovery in developed countries.

Meanwhile, demand for new cars in recession-bound Europe fell to a 17-year low in 2012, highlighting a crisis for automakers in the region.

Six of the eight main sectors on the index went down. However, the information technology sector was up 0.21 percent, helped by a nearly 2 percent rise in BlackBerry maker Research In Motion Ltd to 14.55 Canadian dollars per share.

Research In Motion said the Visa credit card system has approved the smartphone company's method for handling secure mobile payments. Investors think a smartphone that can be used like a credit card could help the company win back market share from rivals such as Apple.

Energy sector, which makes up about 25 percent of the main index, dropped 0.35 percent, as Canadian Natural Resources shares lost 1.20 percent to 28.74 Canadian dollars apiece. Suncor Energy decreased by 0.27 percent to 33.83 Canadian dollars.

Metals and mining sector dropped 1.62 percent as the World Bank report raised demand concerns. Teck Resources dropped 1.87 percent to 36.28 Canadian dollars per share. First Quantum Minerals lost 2.74 percent to 20.91 Canadian dollars apiece.

In financial sector, Royal Bank of Canada gained 0.24 percent to 61.09 Canadian dollars per share. The country's second largest bank, TD Bank, rose 0.16 percent to 81.88 Canadian dollars a share.

As for gold, Barrick Gold Corp. dropped 0.18 percent to 33.69 Canadian dollars a share. Its main competitor Goldcorp shed 0.65 percent to 36.62 Canadian dollars. Miner Kinross Gold Corp. fell by 0.73 percent to 9.49 Canadian dollars.

At closing, the Canadian dollar weakened to 1.0143 U.S. dollars at 5 p.m. local time (2200 GMT) from 1.0160 U.S. dollars on Tuesday.