

## Tokyo futures dip on demand worries over shaky global economy

TOKYO, Jan 16 (Reuters) – Key TOCOM rubber futures fell as much as 2.1 percent early on Wednesday as a shaky global economic outlook and a pause in the yen's recent selloff prompted profit-taking after prices hit a nine-month high last week.

### FUNDAMENTALS

\* The key Tokyo Commodity Exchange rubber contract for June delivery was down 6 yen, or 1.9 percent, at 306.1 yen per kg as of 0050GMT.

The benchmark contract fell as low as 2.1 percent to 305.4 yen. It hit 321 yen last week, its highest since early April.

\* The German economy was hit hard by the euro zone crisis in the final quarter of last year, shrinking more than at any point in nearly three years, as traditionally strong exports and investment slowed, the Statistics Office said on Tuesday.

\* The World Bank sharply cut its 2013 outlook for world economic growth on Tuesday to 2.4 percent from its last forecast in June of 3.0 percent, blaming an unexpectedly sluggish recovery in developed countries for holding back the global economy.

\* India's natural rubber imports in December fell 35.63 percent on the year to 13,611 tonnes, the state-run Rubber Board said, as end users preferred cheaper domestic goods compared to material available in Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia.

\* Japan's economy contracted in the second half of 2012 and is on track for lackluster growth of 0.8 percent this year, hurt in part by its bitter territorial row with China, the World Bank said in a report on Tuesday.

### MARKETS NEWS

\* Japan's benchmark Nikkei stock average opened down 0.7 percent, after closing at a 32-month high on Tuesday, as investors took profits on exporters from a pause in the yen's weakness.

\* The yen rose to as much as 88.28 from a 2-1/2 year low of 89.67 set on Monday after Japan's Economics Minister warned that excessive yen weakness could boost import prices, hurting people's livelihood.

\* Oil prices dipped in heavy trading on Tuesday as German economic data and concerns about the brewing fight over the U.S. debt ceiling stoked concerns about fuel demand.

### DATA EVENTS

\* The following data is expected on Wednesday: 0500 Japan Consumer confidence Dec1000 Euro zone Inflation, final Dec1330 U.S. CPI Dec1415 U.S. Industrial output Dec1500 U.S. NAHB housing market Jan1530 U.S. EIA petroleum status report (Reporting by Yuko Inoue;

