

Tokyo rubber futures dip to 4-mth low after weak U.S. data (April 2)

TOKYO, April 2 (Reuters) – Key TOCOM rubber futures fell to a four-month low on Tuesday, extending losses into a fourth session after weak U.S. factory data lifted the yen and hurt stock prices.

FUNDAMENTALS* The key Tokyo Commodity Exchange rubber contract for September delivery was changing hands 1.8 percent lower at 262.2 yen as of 0022 GMT.* The benchmark contract earlier fell as far as 259.9 yen, the lowest since Dec. 5.* Monday's data showed U.S. factory activity grew at the slowest rate in three months in March, suggesting the world's biggest economy lost some momentum at the end of the first quarter.* Toyota Motor Corp and its joint ventures in China sold 75,900 vehicles in the country in March, down 11.7 percent from a year earlier, the Japanese automaker said on Monday.* Rubber inventories in warehouses monitored by the Shanghai Futures Exchange rose 1.5 percent to 117,696 tonnes last week (SNR-TOTAL-DW), their highest in three years as China cuts import taxes.* Japan's central bank will start a two-day policy meeting on April 3, its first under new Governor Haruhiko Kuroda, an advocate of aggressive monetary policy. The currency market has already priced in a lot of easing from the Bank of Japan, making it hard for policymakers to surprise.

MARKET NEWS* The yen rose to a one-month high against the dollar early in Asia on Tuesday after the U.S. manufacturing data prompted investors to sell the greenback.* The Nikkei share average dropped 2.2 percent to break below the key 12,000-mark for the first time in three weeks,* U.S. crude prices extended the previous day's fall on Tuesday as a pipeline leak in Arkansas threatened to increase the glut of oil in the U.S. Midwest.

DATA EVENTS* The following data is expected on Tuesday: (Time in GMT)

0743	Italy	Markit/ADACI	Manufacturing PMI
0748	France	Markit	Manufacturing PMI
0753	Germany	Markit/BME	Manufacturing PMI
0758	Euro zone	Markit	Manufacturing PMI
0800	Italy	Unemployment rate	
0900	Euro zone	Unemployment rate	
1145	U.S.	ICSC	weekly chain store sales
1200	Germany	CPI	
1345	U.S.	ISM New York	business activity
1400	U.S.	Factory	orders
1400	U.S.	IBD/TIPP	consumer confidence

(Reporting by Risa Maeda; Editing by Joseph Radford)