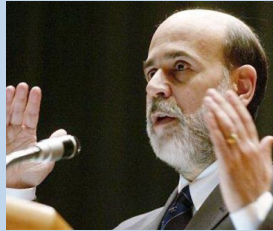


NEWS ALERT

CONTINUITY VOTE for Bernake

Federal Reserve Chairman Ben S Bernake, who led the biggest expansion of the central bank's power in its 95 year history to battle the worst economic slump since the Great Depression, will be nominated to a second term by President Barack Obama.

Obama, a Democrat, continues a recent tradition of bipartisanship in his decision to nominate Bernake, a Republican, to a second term



National Stock Exchange will launch trading in 'Interest rate Futures' (IRF) from August 31, according to a senior exchange official. An IRF contract is an agreement to buy or sell a debt instrument at a specified future date at a price that is fixed today. Minimum contract size for IRF will be Rs.2 lakh.

THE REFORM ROADMAP

- *The process of economic reforms will continue in the right earnest so that the economy gets back to a 9% growth path...Economic reform is a continuing process and not just a sudden flurry of announcements.*
 - *The industrial sector has shown signs of revival in recent months. But we cannot afford to lower our guard as uncertainties in the revival of the global economy continue.*
 - *The government and the Reserve bank of India are in constant touch so that the borrowing program can proceed in a non-disruptive manner.*
- Pranab Mukherjee, Finance Minister

CAN LUXURY SURVIVE THE ECONOMY?

Extravagance isn't what it used to be. These days, even the have-a-lots are feeling pangs of recession. Since the economy has soured, consumers of luxury items have scaled back on their spending, and those still shopping are being more discreet.

"It's a little bit gauche to be ostentatious with your purchasing," says Roxanne Paschall, senior merchandising director at luxury Italian brand Bottega Veneta. Customers are asking for plain white bags, no boxes, or requesting goods to be delivered later to their hotels. "They don't want everyone to know. They don't want to flaunt." sales of luxury goods worldwide could fall by as much as 10% this year, global management consulting firm Bain predicted earlier this month. Nearly everybody is wondering when — if ever — the heady days of free spending would return.

