

SUITABLE CHINESE PROJECTS HARD TO FIND -- ADB HEAD.By **Chaitanya Kalbag**

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MANILA, April 27, Reuter - The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has found it difficult to identify suitable projects to assist in China because of Peking's centrally planned economy, bank president Masao Fujioka told Reuters in an interview.

China became the 47-member bank's newest member in 1986 and received two loans totalling 133.3 million dollars last year. A Chinese official said last week Peking was negotiating with the bank for six new loans this year.

Fujioka said lending to China was rather light last year considering the size of the country.

"They (the Chinese) are very cooperative and quite efficient, but one problem is that the country has a centrally planned economy. If the project is not included in the five-year plan then there's no way to finance it. It's not quite easy to come up with suitable projects," Fujioka said.

On Vietnam's appeals for aid to shore up its crumbling economy, Fujioka said, "We are still watching the situation in that country."

"We are a bank so we are concerned about banking operations. If there is fighting we can't send a mission."

Vietnam received its last loan from the ADB in 1974, and the bank cut off all aid after Hanoi invaded Kampuchea in 1979.

Referring to cash-strapped Burma, where the bank carried out a strategy study last year, Fujioka said similar rescue operations had been launched in the past, "some caused by natural disasters, some by policy mismanagement."

In January the ADB announced it would finance a seven-month study to help Burma develop and rehabilitate its dwindling oil and natural gas resources.

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