Nomura Holdings Inc. Chief Executive Officer Koji Nagai said the Nikkei 225 Stock Average touching 20,000 for the first time in 15 years is “just a passing point” and the equity market will keep rising.

The milestone this morning reflects improving fundamentals as Japanese companies’ earnings grow and tourism from abroad increases because of the weakening yen, Nagai said in an e-mailed statement to Bloomberg News on Friday. “I don’t get the sense that it’s overheating,” he said.

Japanese stocks are gaining for a fourth straight year, helped by monetary easing that’s weakened the currency and led investors including pension funds to shift from bonds to equities. Even so, households who have grown
accustomed to more than a decade of deflation still have more than half of their 1,694 trillion yen ($14 trillion) of financial assets in cash.

“It wouldn’t be a surprise if overseas investors start thinking that it’s a risk not to hold Japanese stocks,” Nagai said. “Individuals will shift savings to investments on a large scale from here.”

The Nikkei 225 briefly climbed to 20,006 on Friday, the highest intraday level since April 2000. It fell 0.1 percent to 19,920.86 at the midday trading break.