



Share Market		Daily Exchange Rates			Policy Rates
		Currency	Buying	Selling	
ASPI	▼ 10,371.69	USD	315.5076	325.3792	SDFR - 09.00
S&P	▼ 2,922.48	GBP	399.7551	415.1281	
Turnover -	978,973,425.10	EURO	342.2973	356.3426	SLFR - 10.00
Share Volume -	54,561,574	Yen	2.1257	2.2094	

01. US bond market in record \$150bn debt splurge.

US corporate bond markets are “on fire” as companies have sold a record \$150bn of debt since the start of this month, the busiest opening to the year for more than three decades.

Investment-grade groups have issued \$153bn worth of bonds this month, according to data from London Stock Exchange Group, the highest year-to-date figure for dollar-denominated debt in records going back to 1990.

Borrowers are rushing to lock in lower interest costs, while investors are keen to buy new bonds before policymakers start cutting US interest rates later this year.

Investors “want to lock in longer-term yields now”, Zogheb said.

Corporate borrowing costs have fallen sharply since financial markets rallied strongly late last year, after the US Federal Reserve signalled that it had completed its campaign of interest rate rises.

03. Stocks Extend Advance After Wall Street's Record

European stocks and US futures rose, extending the rally in global equities that pushed the S&P 500 Index to a record-high Friday.

Europe's Stoxx 600 index climbed 0.8% in early trading Monday, with banking, real estate and tech stocks among those leading the advance. Tech shares led gains in US futures contracts after the S&P 500 rose beyond 4,800 last week amid optimism over expected Federal Reserve interest-rate cuts and the artificial-intelligence boom. Chinese stocks bucked the trend as pessimism over the nation's faltering recovery fueled further losses.

After hitting a low in October 2022, the S&P 500 has surged about 35% and topped its previous closing high of 4,796.56 on Friday. The gauge became the last of the three major US equity benchmarks to close at a record.

The dollar and US Treasuries were steady. Benchmark notes had gained Friday as a “Fed-friendly” survey from the University of Michigan showed a mix of high consumer confidence and lower inflation expectations.

Investor attention later this week shifts to the Bank of Japan, which is overwhelmingly forecast to leave its settings unchanged on Tuesday when it announces the results of its gathering. Thursday sees a first estimate of US fourth-quarter GDP and a rates decision from the European Central Bank.

02. Macquarie stacks up record \$13b for European war chest.

Macquarie has pulled off its asset management arm's largest ever fundraising, topping €8 billion (\$13.3 billion) for its latest European infrastructure investment vehicle.

Macquarie European Infrastructure Fund 7 has closed above its target of €7 billion to €8 billion, even as rising interest rates and a slowing regional economy have elsewhere sapped both demand from investors and the supply of big deals in the sector

Adam Lygoe, Macquarie Asset Management's London-based head of institutional and international wealth distribution, admitted that bagging investors for this fund had been tougher than for its previous European infrastructure funds.

Despite the prevailing investor caution and the scarcity of well-priced assets to invest in, Macquarie European Infrastructure Fund 7 (MEIF 7) is not only Macquarie Asset Management's own largest ever fundraising but also, according to Macquarie, the industry's largest European-focused infrastructure fund.

04. Finance industry attacks Rome's late additions to markets reform plan.

Banks and asset managers have attacked a series of last-minute changes being proposed by Italy's government to a long-awaited overhaul of the country's capital markets, warning that they could put off foreign investors.

Giorgia Meloni's government is about to approve a set of measures designed to improve the appeal of its capital markets, including simpler listing requirements and the option to issue shares with expanded multiple voting rights.

The proposals come after a number of big-name companies moved their listings or legal headquarters outside Italy, and follow the OECD's 2020 warnings about improving the country's capital markets to boost economic growth and a report compiled by the Italian treasury.

But late amendments to the long-awaited measures, which have been incorporated into the government's plans for the sector and which would override company bylaws on how board of directors are appointed, have come under fire during a conference at the Milan bourse.

05. SEBI to use in-house developed generative AI tool to clear IPO applications.

Markets regulator Sebi will be using a generative AI tool, which has been developed in-house, to clear IPO applications on time, as it has been found to be effective in cutting the time lag massively.

"One of our junior officers in the tech team has just developed a generative AI tool that can check the various compliances in the LODR (listing obligations and disclosure requirements) in no time.

She noted that the regulator, over the past few years, has massively improved on its application clearing, as it feels that any regulatory delay is very detrimental to the issuer and the regulator has no reason to delay public issue/market action by a company as timing is the most critical factor in any market activity.

Reeling out numbers, Buch said between March 31, 2022, and December 31, 2023, the ageing of public issues has been greatly resolved, with the number of public issues pending Sebi approval for less than one month falling from 14 in March 2022 to 10 in December 2023.

The number of applications pending for one to three months was 16 and 17, respectively.

The number of issues delayed by 3-6 months stood at 11 in March 2022 but steeply declined to 5 in December 2023, and during this same period, those delayed by over six months were 8 and 4, respectively.

None of the delays of six months was our making, but due to court issues, where we had no role except to wait for the judicial resolution, she added.

Meanwhile, addressing the same event, Sebi whole-time member Anath Narayan said the regulator is worried about the many issues in the valuation methods adopted by alternative investment funds for private capital and sought investment bankers' help for resolving the same.

07. China moves to support yuan as stock markets tumble.

China's major state-owned banks moved to support the yuan on Monday, tightening liquidity in the offshore foreign exchange market while actively selling U.S. dollars onshore as equities slid, four sources with knowledge of the matter said.

The goal was to prevent the yuan from falling too fast as China's A shares plunged, said one of the people, with the benchmark Shanghai Composite index posting its biggest one-day drop since April 2022 on Monday, down 2.7 per cent.

It is a clear policy signal to stabilise the yuan and counter the negative market sentiment on equities," said Gary Ng, senior economist for Asia Pacific at Natixis.

Overseas funds have sold roughly \$1.6 billion in Chinese equities so far this year, with investor confidence bruised by signs of slowdown in the world's second largest economy.

Offshore yuan tomorrow-next forwards jumped to a more than two-month high of 4.25 points late on Monday, reflecting signs of tighter liquidity conditions.

06. CSX introduces USD settlement, increases market accessibility.

Investors can now trade their stock on the Cambodia Securities Exchange (CSX) in the local currency, the Khmer riel (KHR), and settle in US dollars (USD). The new initiative is expected to enhance trading activities, according to an industry representative.

CSX announced that the new framework simplifies trading and settlement for investors.

"CSX is pleased to inform investors that we have launched a new trading mechanism that allows trading in KHR and settlement in USD, starting from January 15, 2024," the CSX stated.

Seng Chan Thoeun, CEO of Royal Group Securities Plc (RGS), expressed optimism about the positive impact of the new plan on the development of the local bourse, offering investors more options for convenient trading and settlement.

The CSX explained that USD settlement is a process where investors can place buy or sell orders in KHR but settle the trades in USD, based on the exchange rate offered by the bourse.

According to the exchange, the rate is determined by the National Bank of Cambodia's (NBC) rate from the previous working day.

"Investors who are buyers should have a USD cash balance in their trading account and can place orders through brokers or the CSX trade mobile application," it added.

Sou Socheat, director-general of the Securities and Exchange Regulator of Cambodia (SERC), stated at an event last year that as of December 19, the regulator had licensed and accredited 120 securities companies.