



Monday, 11th March 2024

Eurozone GDP remains stable as estimated

The euro area economy stagnated at the end of 2023, as initially estimated, and avoided a technical recession. Gross domestic product (GDP) flat-lined sequentially, following a 0.1% fall in the third quarter, revised data from Eurostat shows. The fourth quarter's rate matched the estimate published on Feb. 14. Confirming the annual growth, the statistical office said the currency bloc grew 0.1%.

(www.rttnews.com 08/03/24)

Slow US inflation retreat is set to bolster Fed patience on rate cuts

Inflation in the US probably abated only gradually last month and retail sales rebounded, illustrating why the Fed is in no rush to lower interest rates. The core consumer price index, a measure that excludes food and fuel for a better picture of underlying inflation, is seen rising 0.3% in Feb from a month earlier after a 0.4% advance to start the year.

(www.bloomberg.com 10/03/24)

Fed officials to signal interest rate cuts are getting closer

Eight months after raising interest rates to a 2-decade high, Fed Chair Jerome Powell and his colleagues are moving closer to dialing back their inflation fight. In congressional testimony, Powell emphasized the central bank needs “just a bit more evidence” inflation is headed toward its 2% target before lowering borrowing costs.

(www.bloomberg.com 10/03/24)

China’s deflation reprieve likely temporary due to weak demand

The increase in China’s consumer prices is expected to be short-lived, economists say, as the boost from a long holiday is overshadowed by signs of sluggish domestic demand. The consumer price index’s 0.7% rise in February beat expectations and was the first advance since August.

(www.bloomberg.com 11/03/24)

BoE forecasts in the dock as Bernanke verdict looms

When the Bank of England's chief economist was asked to explain why its forecasting models had failed to anticipate runaway inflation, he sought to manage expectations. "All economic models are wrong, but some are useful," Huw Pill concluded in a letter to lawmakers last June that laid out the limitations of prediction methods.

(www.reuters.com 11/03/24)

Japan’s escape from recession nudges BOJ closer to hiking rate

Japan’s economy avoided falling into a recession at the end of last year, helped by robust spending by businesses, an outcome that improves the optics for the central bank as it mulls the timing of its first interest rate hike since 2007. Gross domestic product expanded at an annualized pace of 0.4% in the final three months of last year, the Cabinet Office said.

(www.bloomberg.com 11/03/24)

BoC holds interest rate targets

The Bank of Canada held its targets for the overnight interest rate and deposit rates at 5% on March 6, and its target for the bank rate at 5.25%. It is the fifth time in a row that the central bank has maintained the target rates. Governor Tiff Macklem told a press conference that with no big economic surprises since January, the bank needed to give rates time to work.

(www.centralbanking.com 08/03/24)

India signs \$100bn free trade deal with four European nations

India has signed a free trade agreement (FTA) with a group of four European countries that are not members of the European Union. The deal with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) will see investments in India of \$100bn (£77.8bn), the country's trade minister says.

(www.bbc.com 11/03/24)

EXCHANGE RATES OF SELECTED CURRENCIES

CURRENCIES	BUYING		SELLING	
+USD/GBP	1.2849	(1.2786)	1.2851	(1.2787)
+USD/EUR	1.0940	(1.0925)	1.0941	(1.0926)
*GHS/USD	12.5412	(12.5285)	12.5538	(12.5411)
*GHS/GBP	16.1142	(16.0190)	16.1329	(16.0363)
*GHS/EUR	13.7201	(13.6891)	13.7348	(13.7015)

+SOURCE: BOG INTERNAL TRANSACTION RATES: 11/03/24 (Rates for 08/03/24 in brackets)

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Taiwan trade surplus grows in February

Taiwan's foreign trade surplus increased notably in February from a year ago as exports rose amid a sharp fall in imports, preliminary figures from the Ministry of Finance reveal. The trade surplus climbed to \$7.88bn in Feb. from \$2.39bn in the corresponding month last year. The surplus also grew from \$2.49bn in Dec. (www.rttnews.com 08/03/24)

Turkey Jobless Rate Rises To 9.1%

Turkey's unemployment rate increased somewhat in January, the Turkish Statistical Institute reported Monday. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose 9.1 % in January from 8.9 % in the previous month. The number of people out of work increased by 85,000 over the month to 3.21 million in January. The jobless rate among young people aged between 15 and 24 climbed to 16.6%. (www.xinhuanet.com 11/03/24)

Vietnam's public debt-to-GDP ratio declines

Vietnam's public debt-to-GDP ratio decreased from 43.1% in 2021 to 37% by early 2024 while the ratio approved by National Assembly or the parliament stands at 60 %, Vietnam News reported Monday, citing Minister of Finance Ho Duc Phoc. (www.xinhuanet.com 11/03/24)

Norway inflation eases to 4-month low; producer prices fall further

Norway's consumer price inflation eased for the second straight month in February to the lowest level in four months, while producer prices continued to decline sharply, separate reports from Statistics Norway show. The CPI rose 4.5% year-over-year in Feb, slower than the 4.7% gain in the previous month. (www.rttnews.com 11/03/24)

Philippines' FDI net inflows decline 6.6% in 2023

Foreign direct investment (FDI) that flowed into the Philippines declined year-on-year by 6.6% in 2023, the country's central bank said Monday. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) said the FDI net inflows reached \$826m last Dec. (www.xinhuanet.com 11/03/24)

Asia shares subdued, yen firm as BOJ ponders positive rates

Asian share markets sputtered on Monday while the dollar looked vulnerable ahead of a reading on US inflation that could hasten, or delay, the start of global rate cuts. The yen edged higher as Reuters reported a growing number of Bank of Japan policymakers are warming to the idea of ending negative rates this month. (www.reuters.com 11/03/24)

Oil prices fall on China demand worries

Oil prices extended last week's losses on Monday on concern about slow demand in China, although lingering geopolitical risk surrounding the Middle East and Russia limited the decline. Brent futures fell 55 cents, to \$81.53 a barrel at 0405 GMT, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) dropped 57 cents to \$77.44. (www.reuters.com 11/03/24)

Egypt's annual urban inflation jumps to 35.7% in February

Egypt's annual urban consumer price inflation jumped to 35.7% in Feb. from 29.8% in Jan. driven mainly by a rise in food and beverage prices, data from statistics agency CAPMAS show. The increase in inflation comes before a surge expected to result from last week's currency devaluation. (www.reuters.com 10/03/24)

Egypt expects IMF deal to activate \$3bn additional WB funding: minister

Egypt expected to receive a \$3bn loan from the World Bank after the country reached an initial agreement with the International Monetary Fund to expand the latter's loan arrangement, Egyptian Minister of Finance Mohamed Maait told a press conference on Sunday. (www.xinhuanet.com 11/03/24)

Ghana: Banks wrote-off GH¢4.33bn as bad debt in 2023

Banks in Ghana wrote off GH¢4.33bn as bad debt in 2023, a 79.2% reduction over that of 2022. In 2022, the total bad debt was estimated at GH¢20.8 billion. The bad debt was classified as loan losses, depreciation and others. According to the Bank of Ghana, banks reported lower impairments on financial assets in the year 2023. (www.myjoyonline.com 11/03/24)

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