



Wednesday, 27th March 2024

ECB's Cipollone sees scope to cut swiftly despite wage gains

The European Central Bank may be able to lower interest rates “swiftly” even as workers receive large wage increases to catch up with two years of elevated inflation, according to Executive Board member Piero Cipollone. A recovery in salaries is needed for Europe’s struggling economy to regain some momentum. (www.bloomberg.com 27/03/24)

US consumer confidence shows slight deterioration in March

Consumer confidence in the US edged slightly lower in the month of March, according to a report released by the Conference Board on Tuesday. The Conference Board said its consumer confidence index slipped to 104.7 in March from a downwardly revised 104.8 in Feb. Economists had expected the consumer confidence index to come in unchanged compared to the 106.7 originally reported for the previous month. (www.rttnews.com 26/03/24)

China's industrial profits up 10.2% in first 2 months

Profits of China's major industrial firms increased 10.2% year on year in the first two months of the year, data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) showed Wednesday. The figure reversed a 2.3% decline registered in 2023, the NBS said. (www.xinhuanet.com 27/03/24)

German consumer confidence to rise slowly: GfK

The improvement in consumer sentiment in Germany is set to continue slowly as the economic recovery is expected only in the second half of the year, survey conducted by the market research group GfK and the Nuremberg Institute for Market Decisions (NIM) shows. (www.rttnews.com 26/03/24)

Forex Japan's yen hits 34-year low, sparking intervention warnings

The yen dropped to its lowest level since 1990 on Wednesday before rebounding slightly after Japan's top monetary officials met to discuss the rapidly weakening currency and suggested they were ready to intervene. The dollar briefly rose to 151.97 yen in the Asia session, its strongest against the yen since mid-1990, but was last down 0.25% at 151.19. (www.reuters.com 27/03/24)

BoJ's core inflation measure eases to 2.3% in February

The Bank of Japan's underlying inflation measure slowed more than expected in Feb. data from the central bank showed Tuesday. The core inflation rate, which is a trimmed mean in BoJ calculations, eased to 2.3% from 2.6% in Jan. and Dec. Economists had expected the rate to slow to 2.5%. The latest rate is the lowest since Sept. 2022, when it was 2.0%. (www.rttnews.com 26/03/24)

Australian inflation unchanged at 3.4%

Australia's rate of inflation remained steady for the third consecutive month in Feb. official data has revealed. According to figures published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the consumer price index (CPI), the headline measure of inflation in Australia, rose by 3.4% in the 12 months to Feb. (www.xinhuanet.com 27/03/24)

BoC sounds alarm on low productivity, cites inflation risks

The Bank of Canada said businesses urgently needed to boost investment to increase productivity, saying this would help insulate the economy against the threat of inflation. BoC has raised rates to a 22-year high and says it is still too early to discuss when they might start coming down. (www.reuters.com 26/03/24)

EXCHANGE RATES OF SELECTED CURRENCIES

CURRENCIES	BUYING		SELLING	
+USD/GBP	1.2628	(1.2639)	1.2629	(1.2640)
+USD/EUR	1.0837	(1.0834)	1.0838	(1.0835)
*GHS/USD	12.8558	(12.8393)	12.8686	(12.8521)
*GHS/GBP	16.2343	(16.2276)	16.2518	(16.2451)
*GHS/EUR	13.9326	(13.9113)	13.9452	(13.9240)

+SOURCE: BOG INTERNAL TRANSACTION RATES: 27/03/24 (Rates for 26/03/24 in brackets)

* BOG INTERNAL TRANSACTION RATES: 27/03/24 (Rates for 26/03/24 in brackets)

Spain economic growth accelerates as estimated

Spain's economic growth improved at the end of the year, as initially estimated, final data from the statistical office INE showed on Tuesday. Gross domestic product grew 0.6% from the third quarter, when output was up 0.4%. The rate came in line with the estimate published on Jan. 30. (www.rttnews.com 26/03/24)

Malaysia producer prices rise 0.3%

Malaysia's producer prices increased for the first time in five months in Feb. largely due to a sharp rise in mining costs, the Department of Statistics reveals. Producer prices rose 0.3% year-on-year in Feb. reversing a 0.6% decrease in Jan. Among sectors, manufacturing prices fell 0.7% annually in Feb. while mining prices rebounded 5.3%. (www.rttnews.com 27/03/24)

HK trade gap narrows in February

Hong Kong's trade deficit decreased in February from a year ago as imports fell faster than exports, data from the Census and Statistics Department shows. The trade deficit dropped to HK\$41.7bn in Feb from HK\$45.3bn in the same month last year. In Jan. the trade balance was a surplus of HK\$3.6bn. (www.rttnews.com 26/03/24)

NZ to press ahead with tax cuts even as budget worsens

New Zealand Finance Minister Nicola Willis will press ahead with tax cuts this year even as the stagnant economy curbs government revenue. Tax relief will be announced in the May budget and delivered from July 1, Willis said Wednesday in Wellington when she released the Budget Policy Statement. (www.bloomberg.com 27/03/24)

Sweden economic confidence at 18-month high

Sweden's economic confidence improved in March to the highest level in one-and-a-half years, survey results published by the National Institute of Economic Research shows, indicating that the economic tendency index also climbed to 93.1 in March from 90.7 in the previous month. (www.rttnews.com 26/03/24)

Oil falls 1% as US crude inventories surge

Oil prices fell for a second day, dropping more than 1% on surging U.S. stockpiles and signs that the OPEC+ producer group is unlikely to change its output policy at a technical meeting next week. Brent crude futures for May dropped 97 cents, or 1.12%, to \$85.28 a barrel by 0929 GMT while the more actively traded June contract fell by 92 cents. (www.reuters.com 27/03/24)

SA set to hold key rate at 15-year high, delay cuts: Day Guide

South Africa's central bank is set to keep interest rates unchanged for a fifth time in a row and signal a delayed start to an anticipated cutting cycle, with inflation risks still skewed to the upside. Economists expect Lesetja Kganyago to leave the rate at a 15-year-high of 8.25%. (www.bloomberg.com 27/03/24)

Nigeria's central bank hikes benchmark rate to 24.75% to tame inflation

Nigeria's central bank raised its monetary policy rate by 200 basis points to 24.75% from 22.75% (NGCBIR=ECI), opens new tab, governor Olayemi Cardoso said on Tuesday, as the bank continued a tightening to head off soaring inflation. (www.reuters.com 26/03/24)

Zambia's Debt Workout Shifts Back to China After Bondholder Pact

Zambia's three-plus-year slog to escape default is shifting to \$3.5bn in commercial debt mainly owed to Chinese lenders, after it finally struck a deal with holders of its Eurobonds. Among the loans Zambia still needs to revamp are \$1.9bn borrowed from state-owned creditors in China. (www.bloomberg.com 27/03/24)

Ghana seeks to speed up debt restructuring negotiations

Ghana wants to speed up remaining debt restructuring negotiations, its finance minister said on Tuesday, as the government pushes for a deal to rework over \$13bn of international bonds. The country has been overhauling its debts as it tries to emerge from its worst economic crisis with the help of a \$3bn IMF programme. (www.reuters.com 26/03/24)

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