

The Daily Brief



Capricorn Asset Management

Market Update

Wednesday, 19 March 2025

Global Markets



Asian stocks were subdued on Wednesday and gold hovered near record highs as economic worries and a shifting geopolitical landscape kept risk appetite in check, while the yen steadied after the Bank of Japan held rates as expected. The yen was last at 149.33 per dollar, little changed on the day after a choppy initial reaction as policymakers sought to spend more time gauging how mounting economic risks from higher U.S. tariffs could affect Japan's fragile recovery.

The focus will now be on Governor Kazuo Ueda's post-meeting press conference at 0630 GMT for clues on how soon the bank could next raise rates, a decision complicated by the contrast between benign domestic data and uncertainty caused by U.S. President Donald Trump's trade policies. Charu Chanana, Saxo's chief investment strategist, said without stronger signals from Ueda, expectations for a May move by the BOJ could weaken, reinforcing near-term yen softness. Japan's Nikkei was 0.69% higher, staying near the levels it traded at before the decision.

The euro remained close to the five-month high it reached on Tuesday after Germany's parliament approved plans for a significant increase in spending, handing conservative leader and the chancellor-in-waiting Friedrich Merz a huge boost. Geopolitical tensions escalated as Israeli airstrikes pounded Gaza and killed more than 400 people on Tuesday, shattering nearly two months of relative

calm since a ceasefire began, unnerving investors. Adding to the unease, Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed to temporarily stop attacking Ukrainian energy facilities but refrained from endorsing a full 30-day ceasefire.

That left investor sentiment fragile and market moves muted, with MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan down 0.11%. Indonesian shares swung between gains and losses in choppy trading on Wednesday, a day after the stock market there clocked its sharpest fall in nearly three years on Tuesday, on concerns over the government's fiscal strategy. U.S. stocks fell sharply on Tuesday as investors exercised caution ahead of a monetary policy decision from the Federal Reserve, while gauging the potential impact of Trump's tariff policies.

The BOJ's decision came hours before the policy decision from the Fed, where the U.S. central bank is expected to hold interest rates steady. The focus will be on new economic projections from policymakers as well as comments from Fed Chair Jerome Powell. The dollar index, which measures the U.S. currency against six rivals, was steady at 103.34, hovering near the five-month low it touched in the previous session. Traders are pricing in 58 basis points of easing this year from the Fed, with the first cut fully priced in for July, LSEG data showed.

In commodities, Brent crude futures eased 0.24% to \$70.39 a barrel, while U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude slipped 0.2% to \$66.75 in early trading.

Gold prices eased to \$3,029 per ounce, just below the record high touched on Tuesday as geopolitical jitters led to safe-haven flows.

Source: LSEG Thomson Reuters Refinitiv.



Domestic Markets

The South African rand took a breather on Tuesday, shedding some of its gains that have been fueled by the gold price extending its historic run to an all-time peak. At 1507 GMT, the rand traded at 18.15 against the dollar, more than 0.3% weaker than its previous close.

Gold hit a record \$3,038.26 per ounce, continuing its rally as investors seek cover from trade tensions sparked by U.S. President Donald Trump's tariff policies. South Africa is a major producer of precious metals, and analysts say a record gold price could encourage local miners to boost output. The rand has remained resilient despite an uncertain domestic and global backdrop.

The national budget is deadlocked for the first time in the post-apartheid era because of disagreements in the ruling coalition. Relations with the United States have rapidly soured since Trump's return to the White House in January, with the U.S. leader cutting aid to South Africa and analysts saying the African country's preferential trade status under the U.S. African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) could come under threat.

In terms of domestic data, the focus this week is on Wednesday's inflation figures and Thursday's monetary policy announcement. Economists polled by Reuters think the South African Reserve Bank could pause its rate-cutting cycle given abundant risks.

The Johannesburg Stock Exchange's Top 40 index closed about 0.5% higher. The benchmark 2030 government bond was stronger, with the yield down 3.5 basis points at 9.125%.

Source: LSEG Thomson Reuters Refinitiv.

The value of a man should be seen in what he gives and not in what he is able to receive.

Albert Einstein

Market Overview

MARKET INDICATORS (Bloomberg)				19 March 2025	
Money Market TB's		Last Close	Change	Prev Close	Current Spot
3 months	↑	7.50	0.003	7.49	7.50
6 months	↓	7.61	-0.019	7.63	7.61
9 months	↓	7.67	-0.033	7.70	7.67
12 months	↓	7.71	-0.016	7.72	7.71
Nominal Bonds		Last Close	Change	Prev Close	Current Spot
GC25 (Coupon 8.50%, BMK: R186)	↓	7.46	-0.022	7.48	7.41
GC26 (Coupon 8.50%, BMK: R186)	↓	8.44	-0.029	8.47	8.44
GC27 (Coupon 8.00%, BMK: R186)	↓	8.60	-0.004	8.61	8.60
GC30 (Coupon 8.00%, BMK: R2030)	↓	9.03	0.000	9.03	9.03
GC32 (Coupon 9.00%, BMK: R213)	↓	9.75	-0.002	9.75	9.75
GC35 (Coupon 9.50%, BMK: R209)	↑	11.02	0.005	11.02	11.02
GC37 (Coupon 9.50%, BMK: R2037)	↑	11.14	0.003	11.14	11.14
GC40 (Coupon 9.80%, BMK: R214)	↓	11.53	-0.016	11.55	11.53
GC43 (Coupon 10.00%, BMK: R2044)	↑	11.54	0.002	11.54	11.54
GC45 (Coupon 9.85%, BMK: R2044)	↑	11.70	0.003	11.70	11.70
GC48 (Coupon 10.00%, BMK: R2048)	↑	11.67	0.001	11.66	11.67
GC50 (Coupon 10.25%, BMK: R2048)	↑	11.56	0.001	11.56	11.56
Inflation-Linked Bonds		Last Close	Change	Prev Close	Current Spot
GI25 (Coupon 3.80%, BMK: NCPI)	↑	3.46	0.008	3.45	3.46
GI27 (Coupon 4.00%, BMK: NCPI)	↑	4.43	0.004	4.43	4.43
GI29 (Coupon 4.50%, BMK: NCPI)	↑	4.65	0.003	4.65	4.65
GI33 (Coupon 4.50%, BMK: NCPI)	↑	5.31	0.000	5.31	5.31
GI36 (Coupon 4.80%, BMK: NCPI)	↓	5.64	-0.002	5.64	5.64
Commodities		Last Close	Change	Prev Close	Current Spot
Gold	↑	3,035	1.14%	3,001	3,040
Platinum	↓	1004	-0.11%	1005	996
Brent Crude	↓	70.6	-0.72%	71.07	70.21
Main Indices		Last Close	Change	Prev Close	Current Spot
NSX Local Index	↑	1038	0.19%	1036	1038
JSE All Share	↑	88,893	0.42%	88,525	88,893
S&P 500	↓	5,615	-1.06%	5,675	5,615
FTSE 100	↑	8,705	0.29%	8,680	8,705
Hangseng	↓	24,685	-0.23%	24,741	24,685
DAX	↑	23,381	0.98%	23,155	23,381
JSE Sectors		Last Close	Change	Prev Close	Current Spot
Financials	→	20,426	0.00%	20,426	20,396
Resources	→	64,387	0.00%	64,387	65,975
Industrials	→	125,343	0.00%	125,343	125,405
Forex		Last Close	Change	Prev Close	Current Spot
N\$/US Dollar	↑	18.14	0.28%	18.09	18.17
N\$/Pound	↑	23.59	0.34%	23.51	23.58
N\$/Euro	↑	19.86	0.51%	19.76	19.85
US Dollar/ Euro	↑	1.095	0.46%	1.09	1.09
		Namibia		RSA	
Interest Rates & Inflation		Feb-25	Jan-25	Feb-25	Jan-25
Central Bank Rate	↓	6.75	7.00	7.50	7.75
Prime Rate	↓	10.50	10.75	11.00	11.00
		Feb-25	Jan-25	Jan-25	Dec-24
Inflation	↑	3.6	3.2	3.2	3.0

Notes to the table:

- The money market rates are TB rates
- “BMK” = Benchmark
- “NCPI” = Namibian inflation rate
- “Difference” = change in basis points
- Current spot = value at the time of writing
- NSX is the Overall Index, including dual listed

Source: Thomson Reuters Refinitiv

Important note: This is not a solicitation to trade and CAM will not necessarily trade at the yields and/or prices quoted above. The information is sourced from the data vendor as indicated. The levels of and changes in the yields need to be interpreted with caution due to the illiquid nature of the domestic bond market.



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