

Business

Markets flag as traders turn focus to Fed's boss speech

Many central bankers are concerned about their economy overheating

LONDON: Europe's stock markets dipped yesterday, mirroring Asia on growing fears over an end to central bank largesse. "Tepid ... trading has seen investors choosing to react to further weakness in Asian markets, as opposed to the further strength of Wall Street," noted Interactive Investor analyst Richard Hunter.

London stocks shed 0.4 percent just after midday, while Frankfurt fell 0.6 percent and Paris dropped 0.4 percent in early afternoon eurozone deals. Asian markets fell after South Korea became one of the first major economies to start lifting interest rates since they were cut to record lows last year to battle the coronavirus impact.

Sentiment also remains blighted by the prospect of an end to Federal Reserve's emergency financial support. "South Korea are leading the way when it comes to removing emergency stimulus measures and tightening policy," said OANDA analyst Craig Erlam. "Others have considered similar moves and will likely follow in the coming months," he added.

Erlam said many central bankers now are concerned about their economy overheating, and are pointing to higher inflation or financial stability risks as reasons to tighten monetary policy. Equities and oil have by and large enjoyed a positive week, helped by full US approval of Pfizer-BioNTech's vaccine and speculation the Fed will take its time in removing its ultra-loose monetary policy whenever it begins to do so.

However, while Wall Street continued to chalk up new records, Asian and European investors shifted a little more cautiously as they assessed the outlook. Top of the agenda this week is Fed boss Jerome Powell's speech today to the Jackson Hole symposium of economists, which will be closely followed for any indication



Jerome Powell

about its policy plans in light of rising inflation and the economic rebound.

The bank is widely expected to begin easing back on its vast bond-buying programme by the end of the year, though the spread of the Delta variant and its impact on growth has some observers and even hawkish Fed members rethinking the wisdom of doing so. Analysts said the speed and timing of a pullback could be crucial. However, some warn that starting to taper too late could cause problems. Back in Asia, Hong Kong and Shanghai each fell more than one percent as tech firms were dragged down by weak earnings results that came as China embarked on its crackdown on the industry. — AFP

NBK supports 'Let's Be Aware' campaign

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait continues to support "Let's Be Aware" campaign launched by the Central Bank of Kuwait, as part of the bank's endeavors to spread financial culture and increase financial inclusion. NBK uses its social media platforms and communication channels to provide advice and guidelines through sharing premium content to support various topics.

The campaign promotes a variety of topics aimed at raising customers' awareness and assisting them to make the best financial decisions. One of the key topics covered by the campaign is raising awareness on personal finance issues by providing all the relevant information on loans and accessible personal finance options, informing customers of the required steps in a way that enables them to benefit from such facilities without being exposed to default risk.

NBK offers premium content suitable for all customer segments to clarify the difference between investments and saving, in order to assist customers in making financial decisions that suit their needs.

In its efforts to educate customers about appropriate personal finance methods and how to make financial decisions, the campaign focuses on raising awareness on how to protect banking information. On this occasion, Abdulla Al-Faras, Assistant General Manager - Direct Sales Department, National Bank of Kuwait said: "We strive to spread financial culture on financing and personal banking decisions, as part of our support of CBK's campaign and its various initiatives".

"Our campaign aims to educate customers about their rights when obtaining a loan and spread financial awareness on savings and investments, as well as other personal finance tools as part of our endeavor to provide various investment and saving channels that suit all customer segments." He added. He stressed that NBK harnesses all its capabilities and its digital channels to support CBK's efforts to protect customers and the economy.

It is worth mentioning that NBK is a key supporter and partner in all CKB's initiatives and campaigns aiming to raise financial awareness and spread banking culture among all segments of society. As a leading financial institution in Kuwait and across the region, NBK frequently organizes various activities that contribute to raising awareness about all topics related to the banking sector. It also organizes various activities and training courses on combating fraud and financial crimes.

CBK launched "Let's Be Aware" banking awareness campaign, in cooperation with Kuwaiti banks, as part of its efforts to spread financial culture and raise awareness among banks' customers of their rights and responsibilities and the best ways to benefit from banking services. The campaign also aims to promote the saving and investment culture, as well as other related topics, by publishing a variety of awareness material and information relevant to financial culture.



Abdulla Al-Faras



S African ambassador visits LuLu Hypermarket's Kuwait regional office

KUWAIT: LuLu Hypermarket, the leading retailer in the region, recently had the pleasure to welcome and host the Ambassador of South Africa to Kuwait, Manelisi Genge.

During the visit, Ambassador Genge met with top-level management of LuLu Hypermarket in Kuwait, and held discussions on various topics of mutual interest. The two sides also specifically discussed how Kuwait's leading retail hypermarket could help

promote South African products in Kuwait.

LuLu Hypermarket currently imports and stocks more than 60 well-known South African brands, including food and non-food items. The hypermarket also has a dedicated sourcing office for various products from the region, conveniently located in South Africa's port city of Cape Town. The retailer is reported to be planning on adding several more brands in the immediate future, as well as increasing the number of products imported from South Africa.

In a further bid to promote South African products in Kuwait, LuLu Hypermarket is also preparing to organize a South African Festival at the hypermarket sometime in October 2021. LuLu Hypermarket has been in the forefront among retailers in the country, as well as the region, in importing and stocking on its shelves the widest range of high-quality products from around the world, and making it available to customers at the most competitive prices.