

MARKET UPDATE

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Dow Futures Down 175 Pts; Jobless Claims, Corporate Earnings in Focus

U.S. stocks are seen opening lower Thursday, as investors monitor developments on the Ukraine border as well as the Federal Reserve minutes ahead of the release of weekly jobless claims and more corporate earnings.

The freight situation in Eastern Europe continues to weigh on market sentiment, with the optimism of earlier in the week - when Russia claimed it was returning some troops to barracks - having largely dissipated.

Futures slip on heightening Ukraine tensions

U.S. stock index futures slid on Thursday after reports of clashes in eastern Ukraine kept investors on edge, while weekly jobless claims data was awaited for clues on a labour market recovery.

Some earnings-related declines also weighed, with chipmaker Nvidia (NASDAQ:NVDA) sliding 3.4% in premarket trading as flat gross margins and concern about its exposure to the crypto market overshadowed upbeat current-quarter revenue forecast.

Rouble weakens as Ukraine, Russia-backed rebels trade shelling accusations

The Russian rouble and stocks slipped in volatile trade on Thursday after Russian-backed rebels and Ukrainian forces traded accusations of firing shells across the ceasefire line in eastern Ukraine, sending market players running for cover.

Kyiv said the incidents in eastern Ukraine looked like a "provocation" at a time when Russia has troops massed on the frontier.



NatWest faces \$2.7 million-plus damages claim after dismissing banker with cancer

NatWest Group is facing a 2 million pound-plus (\$2.7 million) compensation claim after a London tribunal ruled it had discriminated against an employee and unfairly dismissed her two days after cancer surgery, her lawyer said on Thursday.

Adeline Willis, a 44-year-old risk and compliance officer who had worked at the state-backed bank for more than six years, said she was physically and emotionally in turmoil after being made redundant eight months after a bowel cancer diagnosis.

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