

MARKET UPDATE

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Asian Stocks Rise, Major Chinese Earnings Awaited

Asian stock markets rose on Thursday, tracking overnight gains in Wall Street as investors awaited more cues on U.S. monetary policy, while focus turned to interim earnings from some of the biggest firms in China.

Chinese stocks rose slightly, ahead of interim earnings from oil refiners CNOOC Ltd (SS:600938), PetroChina Co Ltd (SS:601857), and China Petroleum & Chemical Corp (SS:600028) - some of the largest companies in the country. Shares of the three rose between 1% and 3.5%. China Life Insurance (SS:601628), one of the country's largest insurers, rose 2.1% ahead of its interim earnings report.

Dollar eases from near two-decade peak as Jackson Hole looms

The U.S. dollar edged back from a near two-decade peak against a basket of major currencies on Thursday as investors awaited a speech by Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell the following day for fresh clues on the path for monetary policy.

Gains for Australia's dollar, a liquid proxy for trading China's economic outlook, outpaced developed-market peers as it tracked a stronger yuan.

The South Korean won rose after the central bank raised its inflation forecast, pointing to further policy tightening ahead.

The U.S. dollar index, which measures the greenback against six counterparts, eased 0.19% to 108.42, but remained not far from its highest since September 2002 at 109.29, touched in mid-July.

German economy beats expectations

The German economy grew in the second quarter, beating analyst expectations, supported by private and government spending despite the energy crisis, data showed on Thursday.

Europe's largest economy grew by 0.1% quarter on quarter and 1.7% on the year, adjusted for price and calendar effects, the federal statistics office said.



Asian markets gain, investors anxious for U.S. rate hike clues

Asian share markets were broadly positive while the dollar was slightly weaker on Thursday, with investors nervously awaiting the U.S. Federal Reserve's annual Jackson Hole conference for clues on how sharp future interest rate hikes might be.

In early European trading, the pan-region Euro Stoxx 50 futures were up 0.25%, German DAX futures were up 0.34%, and FTSE futures were up 0.29% at 7,494.5.

U.S. stock futures, the S&P 500 e-minis, were up 0.42%.

The Federal Reserve's annual monetary policy conference in Jackson Hole, Wyoming is due to start on Friday.

Investors have pared back expectations that the Fed could tilt to a slower pace of rate hikes as U.S. inflation remains at 8.5% on an annual basis, well above the Fed's 2% target. But Chair Jerome Powell's speech will be scrutinized for any indication that an economic slowdown might alter the Fed's strategy.

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