MARKET UPDATE

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Crypto.com to cut 20% jobs as industry rout deepens after FTX collapse

Crypto.com said on Friday it would be reducing about 20% of its workforce, as cryptocurrency exchanges face industry-wide challenges brought on by the collapse of FTX last year.

The Singapore-based company's announcement comes amid concerns about reserves and solvency across the sector, and only a few days after rival exchanges Coinbase (NASDAQ:COIN) Global Inc and Huobi announced their plans to lay off about 20% of their staff. A source told Reuters last week that Genesis, too, had cut jobs, equating to 30% of its workforce.

The layoffs at Crypto.com would be its second in about six months, after it reduced jobs in July last year to weather the macro-economic downturn amid rising interest rates.

Th recent FTX collapse "significantly damaged trust in the industry," Crypto.com Chief Executive Officer Kris Marszalek said in a statement.

China demand optimism sets oil on track for strong weekly gain

Oil prices rose on Friday, set to gain more than 6% for the week, on solid signs of demand growth in top oil importer China and expectations of less aggressive interest rate rises in the United States.

Brent crude futures rose by 5 cents to $84.08 a barrel by 0746 GMT, off a session low of $83.50. U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures gained 13 cents to $78.52 a barrel after falling to $77.97 earlier in the session.

Brent has jumped 6.7% so far this week and WTI is up 6.2%, recouping most of last week's losses.

Analysts said recent Chinese crude purchases and a pick-up in road traffic fuelled confidence in a demand recovery in the world's second-largest economy following the reopening of its borders and easing of COVID-19 curbs after protests last year.

"Given the focus on energy security, we anticipate that Chinese imports will continue to pick up, particularly as refinery runs ramp and stockpiling crude remains a strategic priority," RBC commodity strategist Michael Tran told clients in a note.

Tesla extends price cuts to U.S., Europe in sales push

Tesla (NASDAQ:TSLA) has slashed prices on its electric vehicles in the United States and Europe, the automaker's website shows, extending a new strategy of aggressive discounting after missing Wall Street estimates for deliveries.

The U.S. price cuts, announced late Thursday in U.S. time on the Model 3 sedan and Model Y crossover SUV, ranged between 6% and 20% compared with prices before the discount, according to Reuters calculations.

That is before accounting for an up to $7,500 federal tax credit that took effect for many electric vehicle models at the start of January.

Tesla also cut prices for its Model X luxury crossover SUV and Model S sedan in the United States.

In Germany, it cut prices on the Model 3 and the Model Y - its global top-sellers - by between about 1% and almost 17% depending on the configuration. It also cut prices in Austria, Switzerland and France.

For a U.S. buyer of the long-range Model Y, the new Tesla price combined with the U.S. subsidy that took effect this month amounts to a discount of 31%. In addition, the Tesla move broadened the vehicles in its line-up eligible for the Biden administration tax credit.

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