

23 December 2025

Global Markets Research

Daily Market Highlights

23 Dec: All eyes on US 3Q GDP & RBA minutes today

Risk-on appetite fuel hopes of a Santa Claus rally; USTs and DXY lost ground

Crude oil prices climbed, gold at record high amid geopolitical tension

PBoC left lending rates steady; Malaysia's CPI resumed its upward trend

- It was risk-on at the start of a holiday shortened trading week. The S&P 500 posted its third winning day, fuelling hopes for a year-end finish that could reach a new record. Tech stocks showed strength and the broad market index closed the day 0.6% d/d higher. The Dow and Nasdaq also closed up, albeit at a slightly narrower pace of 0.5% d/d.
- In Fed speak meanwhile, Governor Stephen Miran said that the central bank risks sparking a recession unless the central bank continues lowering its rates next year.
- In Europe, Stoxx 600 closed 0.1% d/d lower with wind-related stocks taking a hit after US suspended its offshore wind projects. Asian markets closed in green, with Hang Seng and CSI 300 gaining 0.4% d/d and 1.0% d/d after the PBoC kept its lending rates unchanged.
- Treasuries lost ground on the risk-on sentiment and yields closed the day 1-3bps higher across the curve. The 2Y yield finished at 3.51% and the 10Y at 4.16%. Similarly, 10Y European bond yields were up 0-2bps (prior: +2 to +6bps).
- In the forex space, DXY retreated 0.3% d/d to 98.29 after 3 days of advance, while JPY strengthened 0.4% d/d to 157.05 amid verbal intervention warning from Japan's Finance Minister. GBP appreciated 0.6% d/d to 1.3461 after the UK left its final 3Q GDP unchanged at 0.1% q/q (2Q: 0.2% q/q). THB (0.9% d/d) outperformed all Asian peers on the regional front, while SGD appreciated 0.3% d/d to 1.2888. MYR weakened 0.1% d/d to 4.0782 after Malaysia's CPI miss.
- In the commodity space, crude oil prices (WTI: +2.4% d/d to \$58.01/barrel and Brent: +2.7% d/d to \$62.07/barrel) climbed, while gold (+1.9% d/d to \$4,444.60/oz) closed at record after the US pursued the third oil tanker in Venezuela blockade, escalating geopolitical tension.

Key Market Metrics

	Level	d/d (%)
Equities		
Dow Jones	48,362.68	0.47
S&P 500	6,878.49	0.64
NASDAQ	23,428.83	0.52
Stoxx Eur 600	586.75	-0.13
FTSE 100	9,865.97	-0.32
Nikkei 225	50,402.39	1.81
CSI 300	4,611.62	0.95
Hang Seng	25,801.77	0.43
Straits Times	4,610.29	0.89
KLCI 30	1,671.29	0.32
FX		
Dollar Index	98.29	-0.32
EUR/USD	1.1762	0.44
GBP/USD	1.3461	0.61
USD/JPY	157.05	-0.44
AUD/USD	0.6657	0.68
USD/CNH	7.0311	-0.04
USD/MYR	4.0782	0.05
USD/SGD	1.2888	-0.32
USD/KHR	4,010.00	-0.01
USD/THB	31.18	-0.90
Commodities		
WTI (\$/bbl)	58.01	2.38
Brent (\$/bbl)	62.07	2.65
Gold (\$/oz)	4,444.60	1.91
Copper (\$/MT)	11,925.00	0.37
Aluminum(\$/MT)	2,941.50	-0.12
CPO (RM/tonne)	3,902.50	-1.35

Source: Bloomberg, HLBB Global Markets Research

* Closing as of 19 Dec for CPO

PBoC left lending rates steady

- The People's Bank of China left the 1Y and 5Y loan prime rates steady at 3.00% and 3.50%. The decision was within

expectation but with growth momentum clearly weakening and domestic demand still sluggish, expectations are that the central bank will resume loosening its monetary policy stance in 2026.

CFNAI signals continued economic growth for the Chicago region

- The Chicago Fed National Activity Index (CFNAI) increased to -0.21 in September from -0.31 in August. Although it was a shade worse than expected, the index at this level suggests that the economic growth increased during the month. Two of the four broad categories worsened m/m and three made negative contributions.

Hong Kong's inflation remains tame and subdued

- CPI remained subdued in November, unexpectedly holding steady at 1.2% y/y. Price pressures on most major components were contained, and should remain modest in the near term with cost pressures on the domestic and external front still broadly in check.

Malaysia's CPI resumed its upward trend in November; core CPI steady and mild at 2.2%

- Although a tad softer than expected, Malaysia Consumer Price Index (CPI) resumed its upward trend and increased at a faster pace of 1.4% y/y in November (prior: 1.3% y/y). Driving the uptick amongst its three biggest categories was the rebound in transport costs (0.2% y/y vs -0.1% y/y). Food inflation held steady at 1.5% y/y, while prices for housing & utilities eased slightly to 0.7% y/y from 1.1% y/y previously (Refer to Research Alert "CPI rebounded after October's blip" dated 22 December).
- Foreign reserves inched up by \$0.2bn in 1H of the month to \$124.3bn as at 15 December (unchanged in 2H of Nov). The reserves position is sufficient to finance 4.8 months of imports of goods and services and is 0.9 times the total short-term external debt.

House View and Forecasts

FX	This Week	1Q-26	2Q-26	3Q-26	4Q-26
DX	97-100	97.33	95.92	94.52	93.15
EUR/USD	1.16-1.19	1.17	1.19	1.21	1.23
GBP/USD	1.32-1.36	1.32	1.34	1.35	1.37
USD/CHF	0.78-0.82	0.80	0.79	0.78	0.77
USD/JPY	152-158	151	148	145	142
AUD/USD	0.64-0.68	0.66	0.67	0.68	0.68
NZD/USD	0.56-0.59	0.57	0.57	0.58	0.59
USD/CNY	7.02-7.07	7.03	6.94	6.86	6.77
USD/MYR	4.06-4.12	4.12	4.08	4.05	4.05

USD/SGD	1.27-1.30	1.28	1.26	1.25	1.24
USD/THB	31.04-32.03	32.30	32.20	32.10	32.00

FX	Last close	1Q-26	2Q-26	3Q-26	4Q-26
EUR/MYR	4.7840	4.83	4.86	4.89	4.97
GBP/MYR	5.4748	5.44	5.45	5.48	5.55
AUD/MYR	2.7077	2.72	2.73	2.74	2.77
CNY/MYR	0.5796	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.60
SGD/MYR	3.1603	3.21	3.23	3.24	3.27

Rates, %	Current	1Q26	2Q26	3Q26	4Q26
Fed	3.50-3.75	3.25-3.50	3.00-3.25	3.00-3.25	3.00-3.25
ECB	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
BOE	3.75	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50
SNB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
BOJ	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
RBA	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.60	3.60
RBNZ	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25
BNM	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75

Source: HLBB Global Markets Research

Up Next

Date	Events	Prior
23-Dec	AU RBA Minutes of Dec. Policy Meeting	
	SI CPI Core YoY (Nov)	1.20%
	US ADP Weekly Employment Change	16.250k
	US GDP Annualized QoQ (3Q S)	3.80%
	US Philadelphia Fed Non-Manufacturing Activity (Dec)	-16.3
	US Durable Goods Orders (Oct P)	0.50%
	US Cap Goods Orders Nondef Ex Air (Oct P)	0.90%
	US Industrial Production MoM (Nov)	0.10%
	US Richmond Fed Manufact. Index (Dec)	-15
	US Richmond Fed Business Conditions (Dec)	-15
	US Conf. Board Consumer Confidence (Dec)	88.7
24-Dec	US MBA Mortgage Applications	-3.80%
	US Initial Jobless Claims	224k

Source: Bloomberg

Note: Due to lapse in government services, US release dates are subject to change

Hong Leong Bank Berhad

Fixed Income & Economic Research,
Global Markets
Level 8, Hong Leong Tower
6, Jalan Damanlela
Bukit Damansara
50490 Kuala Lumpur
Tel: 603-2081 1221
Fax: 603-2081 8936

HLMarkets@hlbb.hongleong.com.my

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