

BUSINESS & FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Swiss Markets Retreats After Scaling New High, Ends Just Marginally Up

The Switzerland stock market ended just marginally up on Thursday, despite recording a new all-time high around noon.

The market witnessed some profit taking after it reached a new peak.

Activity was largely stock specific with investors reacting to corporate news.

Investors also digested an economic report that said Swiss exports fell for the third month in May, while imports rose.

The benchmark SMI, which rose to a high of 10,062.65, moving past a high of 10,011.39 recorded on Tuesday, ended the session at 9,978.52, netting a gain of 16.87 points, or 0.17%.

On Wednesday, the index ended down 26.90 points, or 0.27%, at 9,961.65.

Swatch Group shares moved up by about 2.2% and Sika gained 1.25%. Nestle, ABB, Adecco, Roche Holding and Givaudan ended higher by 0.5 to 1%.

UBS Group and Credit Suisse lost 2.5% and 2.1%, respectively.

Geberit, Lonza Group and Swiss Re closed with modest losses.

LafargeHolcim said that Lafarge Africa has signed an agreement with Caricement to divest its entire holding in South Africa for \$317 million. LafargeHolcim shares edged down marginally in today's session.

Stadler Rail AG shared gained about 0.85%. The company said it has bagged a tender for 55 FLIRT battery-powered multiple units for local transport in the German state of Schleswig-Holstein.

On the economic front, data from the Federal Customs Administration showed Switzerland's exports declined a real 1.2% month-on-month in May, following a 0.3% fall in April, which was revised from 0.6%.

On a monthly basis, imports rose a real 0.7% in May, after a 1.5% rise in the previous month. Imports rose for the second straight month.

The trade surplus fell to CHF 1.65 billion in May from CHF 1.91 billion in April, decreasing for a second straight month.

Separate data from the Federation of Watch Exporters, or FHS, showed that watch exports grew 11.4% annually in May.

