

**BUSINESS & FINANCIAL OVERVIEW**

## European Stock Markets Fade By Session's End

The major European stock markets again were unable to hold early gains, shrugging off a firmly higher open on Wednesday to finish with mild losses.

Germany's DAX shed 36.81 points or 0.35 percent to 10,438.68, while London's FTSE tumbled 83.71 points or 1.40 percent to 5,876.52 and the CAC 40 in France fell 26.36 points or 0.57 percent to 4,619,25.

The markets opened higher after China declared that it has basically curbed the spread of the coronavirus disease in Wuhan, the central city at the heart of the global epidemic.

Hopes for stimulus in the face of the epidemic also boosted risk sentiment. The Bank of England today cut interest rates by half a percent to support businesses affected by the economic uncertainty amid the coronavirus outbreak.

But the uncertainty reappeared late in the day as investors grew cautious, sending the markets back into the red.

In Germany, Adidas plummeted 9.14 percent, while thyssenkrupp tumbled 3.14 percent, Deutsche Lufthansa skidded 2.25 percent, Covestro jumped 1.85 percent, Fresenius SE sank 1.61 percent, Deutsche Bank climbed 1.53 percent, Deutsche Telekom lost 0.96 percent and Siemens fell 0.34 percent.

In London, Coca-Cola plummeted 8.39 percent, while Carnival Corporation plunged 5.35 percent, Compass Group tumbled 5.18 percent, Tesco and Centrica both tumbled 4.13 percent, Vodafone skidded 3.56 percent, Rolls-Royce Holdings dropped 3.55 percent, Prudential sank 3.23 percent and Royal Dutch Shell fell 2.39 percent.

In France, Airbus plunged 4.37 percent, while TechnipFMC tumbled 4.16 percent, Societe Generale Societe surged 3.39 percent, BNP Paribas jumped 2.97 percent, Credit Agricole spiked 2.44 percent, Accor lost 1.97 percent, Sanofi gained 1.61 percent, Peugeot rose 1.44 percent and Vivendi fell 1.33 percent.

In economic news, the Bank of England unexpectedly cut its key interest rate and launched a new funding scheme for small businesses as it expects the UK economy to take a major hit due to the coronavirus, or Covid-19, outbreak. The Monetary Policy Committee unanimously voted to cut the bank rate by 50 basis points to a record low 0.25 percent.

Also, the UK economy stagnated in January as the expansion in the service sector was offset by falling industrial and construction output, the Office for National Statistics said. Gross domestic product remained flat on month in January after expanding 0.3 percent in December. Economists had forecast a monthly growth of 0.2 percent.

