

BUSINESS & FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Gold Futures Settle Near 1-week Low

Gold futures settled lower on Wednesday, extending losses from previous session, as the dollar displayed strength against some major currencies.

However, the yellow metal's loss was just modest due to concerns about global economic slowdown and continued uncertainty about Brexit and U.S.-China trade talks.

The Dollar Index rose to 96.98 before easing to 96.79.

Gold futures for April ended down \$4.60, or 0.4%, at \$1,310.40 an ounce.

On Tuesday, gold futures for April ended down \$7.60, or 0.6%, at \$1,315.00 an ounce.

Silver futures for May ended down \$0.131, at \$15.298 an ounce, while Copper futures for May settled at \$2.8630 per pound, up \$0.0090 for the session.

Data released on Tuesday that showed U.S. homebuilding to have fallen more than expected in February and consumer confidence to have dropped in March, have raised concerns about growth.

Meanwhile, according to data released today, China's industrial firms posted their worst slump in profits in more than seven years in the first two months of 2019.

Traders were also reacting to comments from European Central Bank President Mario Draghi, who said at a conference in Frankfurt that there could be another delay in hiking interest rates if required.

Draghi said that "adjusting our rate forward guidance" is an option to fulfill the bank's inflation target.

According to the data released by the Commerce Department today, the U.S. trade deficit narrowed by much more than anticipated in the month of January.

The data said the trade deficit narrowed to \$51.1 billion in January from a revised \$59.9 billion in December.

Economists had expected the deficit to shrink to \$57.0 billion from the \$59.8 billion originally reported for the previous month.

The narrower than expected deficit came as the value of imports tumbled by 2.6% to \$258.5 billion, while the value of exports rose by 0.9% to \$207.3 billion.

