

BUSINESS & FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

European Markets Close Higher On Trade Deal Optimism

European markets ended higher on Thursday, with several stocks hitting four-year highs, on reports the U.S. and China have agreed to remove existing tariffs on each other's goods in phases.

Comments from China's Commerce Ministry spokesman Gao Fend about the two countries agreeing to cancel additional tariffs in phases helped offset the negative sentiment generated by recent report from Reuters that said a meeting between the U.S. President Donald Trump and Chinese Premier Xi Jinping could be delayed until December.

The pan European Stock 600 ended up 0.37%. Among the major markets in Europe, the U.K. ended marginally up with its benchmark FTSE 100 edged up 0.13%. Germany's DAX ended stronger by 0.83% and France's CAC 40 advanced 0.41%, while Switzerland's SMI edged up 0.08%.

Among other markets in Europe, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain and Turkey ended with sharp to moderate gains.

Iceland ended weak, while Sweden and Ukraine edged up marginally. In the U.K. market, Informa, Admiral Group, Burberry Group, Bunzi and Flutter Entertainment gained 1.7 to 2.3%. Hiscox plunged nearly 10% as worries grew about the scale of claims the company is facing in the US.

In Germany, Lufthansa rallied more than 6%. The airline confirmed its FY19 view after posting a 4 percent rise in third-quarter net result.

Siemens gained about 5%. Infineon advanced 4.1%, Adidas gained about 3%, Covestro, Volkswagen and Daimler ended higher by 2.2 to 2.7%, while Continental, Deutsche Bank, Fresenius, Deutsche Post and BMW gained 1.2 to 1.8%.

On the other hand, HeidelbergCement declined 4.4% on weak results, RWE ended down 3.7% and Deutsche Telekom shed about 2%.

In the French market, ArcelorMittal gained more than 6.5% and Sodexo advanced 5.8%. Credit Agricole, BNP Paribas, Societe Generale, AXA, Renault, ATOS, STMicroElectronics, Accor, Technip and Publicis Groupe also ended sharply higher.

In economic news, The European Commission downgraded its growth projections for the euro area as the economy faces a period of very high uncertainty.

In the Autumn forecast, the EC said that the European economy has entered a protracted period of subdued growth amid weak global growth, trade tensions and uncertainties over Brexit.

