

... Oman's crude oil exports grew by 6.3% in the H1 2016 ...

... China industrial profit growth rose 6.2% in the first half of 2016 ...

South East Asia

Vietnam has lured some USD12.94 billion of FDI in the first 7 months of 2016, up 46.9% y-o-y, according to Foreign Investment Agency (FIA) under the Ministry of Planning and Investment. Specifically, as many as 1,408 FDI projects worth nearly USD8.7 billion were newly granted licenses in the period, up 31.8% in volume and 25.5% in value y-o-y.

Singapore's Sovereign wealth fund sees lower returns ahead as low interest rates and sluggish growth weighed on world's biggest state funds. The sovereign-wealth fund, said in its annual report that it earned a 3.7% annualized nominal rate of return over the past five years through the end of March. That compares with a 6.5% return for the five years through the end of March 2015. GIC is one of the world's biggest sovereign funds and has parked more than one-third of its investments in the U.S.

Philippine post a fiscal deficit of P120.3 billion in H1 2016, a reversal of the surplus recorded a year ago, as the growth in expenditures significantly outpaced that of revenue, the Department of Finance said. For the first 6 months of the year, the government spending totaled P1.22 trillion, 14% higher than last year's P1.07 trillion. The Duterte administration has promised aggressive spending on plans to raise spending on infrastructure to up to 7% of GDP.

North East Asia

China industrial profit growth rose 6.2% to almost USD450 billion in the first half of 2016 from a year earlier, recovering from a 0.7% contraction in the same period in 2015, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said. In June alone, industrial companies reported a 5.1% growth in revenue compared to last June, while the figure in May rose 3.7%.

South Korea's economy expanded 3.2% during the 2nd quarter, the fastest clip in seven quarters due to stronger private consumption and increased housing construction.

Australasia

Australia recorded its slowest headline inflation since 1999 while core inflation remained well outside the target 2% to 3% band. According to analysis, Australia needs demand-side reform to arrest falling inflation expectations or risks entering the dangerous negative feedback loop hindering other markets.

New Zealand business confidence dropped in July, and according to ANZ New Zealand economists, it was largely seasonal, as construction remained positive while residential investment intentions surged. A net 16% of firms surveyed in the ANZ Business Outlook expect better economic conditions in the coming year, down from a net 20% in June, while a net 31% thought their business would do better, compared to 35% a month earlier. Construction firms were the most upbeat with a net 52% expecting residential building to increase, a 19-month high and a surge from net 29% in June.

Middle East and North Africa

Nigeria's central bank raised its Monetary Policy Rate by 200 basis points from 12% to 14% to combat inflation and stimulate growth, an official said. Nigeria's inflation rate accelerated to 16.5% in June from 15.6% in May, resulting in negative real interest rates, which discouraging savings, and does not support the recent flexible foreign exchange market as foreign investors remain lukewarm and unwilling to bring in new capital.

Northern Europe

Iceland's Unemployment rate was at 2.3% in June, according to Statistics Iceland (SI). The number of persons in Iceland's labour force was 201,800 in June. Of those 197,100 persons were employed and 4,700 persons were unemployed. According to projections by The Central Bank of Iceland, economic growth in 2016 will be 4.2%, unemployment and inflation will remain below target and purchasing power will continue to growth at a record pace.

Western Europe

Britain's economy picked up during a second quarter that concluded with the vote to leave the European Union, helped by the biggest upturn in industrial production since 1999, according to official data. Second-quarter GDP grew by 0.6%, up from 0.4% in the first three months of the year. However, this robust pace of growth might not last into the second half of the year, given the shock to the economy resulting from the June 23 vote to leave the EU. The improvement in economic growth in the second quarter reflected strong industrial, services and construction output in April, which largely dissipated in May and June.

Italy's consumer confidence improved unexpectedly in June and business sentiment rebounded, figures from the statistical office ISTAT showed. The consumer confidence index rose to 111.3 in June from 110.2 in the previous month. Meanwhile, economists had expected the index to fall to 109.2.

South America

Brazil's economy shed a net 91,032 payroll jobs in June, the Labor Ministry said, as the country continues to reel from a second year of deep recession. Brazil's economy is expected to shrink more than 3% for a second straight year in 2016, with over 11 million workers officially considered unemployed.

Oil & Gas News

Crude prices fall to near USD41 a barrel on Thursday, reflecting concerns the world is still awash in crude, and are down nearly 20% since early June. An expanding gasoline glut world-wide and early signs of increasing production in the U.S. and from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries have dragged down oil prices from a 52-week high of USD51.23 reached June 8. The market is now down 19.7% since then, just short of a 20% drop from a recent high that defines a bear market.

Oman's crude oil exports grew by 6.3% to 164.57 million barrels in the H1 2016, due to an increase in production. However, the average price of Oman Crude fell by 40.9% to USD35 per barrel in overseas markets during the first half of 2016, from USD59.3 per barrel in the same period last year. The Sultanate's production of crude oil and condensates grew by 3.6% to 182.05 million barrels in the first half of 2016, from 175.67 million barrels during the same six month period in 2015. This was equivalent to a daily production of 1,000,300 barrels in the H1 of 2016

Date	Gold Spot	NYMEX Natural Gas (\$/MMBtu)	Brent Oil (\$/bbl)	oil/nat. gas ratio	EUR	GBP	USD	AUD	Indo RUP	YEN	MYS RM	Phil Peso	Thai Baht	SGX Index
27-Jul-16	1,318.18	2.68	44.77	16.68	1.49	1.78	1.36	0.98	9673.05	78.19	3.00	34.68	25.78	2,930.09
28-Jul-16	1,338.02	2.67	43.62	16.36	1.50	1.79	1.35	0.98	9695.94	77.56	3.01	34.84	25.83	2,920.82
% Change	1.51	-0.63	-2.57		0.14	0.20	-0.59	-0.05	0.24	-0.81	0.15	0.44	0.20	-0.32