

Tuesday March 27, 2012

Stock Markets Rap (as of Mar 26)

	Close	Chg	(%)
Dow	13,242	+161	+1.2
Nasdaq	3,123	+55	+1.8
S&P 500	1,417	+19	+1.4
VIX	14.26	-0.56	-3.8
MSCI World	1,323	+15	+1.2

	Close	Chg	(%)
FTSE 100	5,903	+48	+0.8
DAX	7,079	+84	+1.2
CAC	3,502	+26	+0.7
Euro Stoxx	2,471	+12	+0.5

	Close	Chg	(%)
ASX 200	4,263	-8	-0.2
Nikkei	10,018	+7	+0.1
Shanghai	2,351	+1	+0.0
HSI	20,669	+0	+0.0
H Shares	10,592	-67	-0.6

	Close	Chg	(%)
STI	2,975	-16	-0.5
Malaysia	1,583	-3	-0.2
PSEi	5,030	-13	-0.3
SET	1,188	-6	-0.5
LSX	971	0	0.0
Vietnam	459	+5	+1.1
Indonesia	4,032	-10	-0.2
FTSE ASEAN	570	-3	-0.5

Currencies Rap (as of Mar 26)

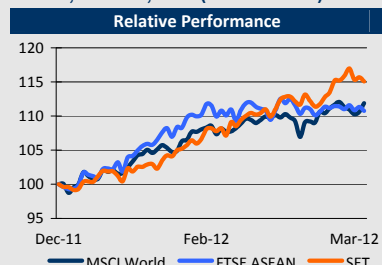
	Last	Chg	(%)
DX	78.92	-0.43	-0.54
THB/USD	30.69	-0.04	-0.13
LAK/THB	260.39	-0.04	-0.01
LAK/USD	7,989.00	-5.00	-0.06
USD/EUR	1.3328	+0.01	+0.44
JPY/USD	82.81	+0.46	+0.56

Commodities Rap (as of Mar 26)

	Close	Chg	(%)
Gold	1,688.20	+23.30	+1.40
Silver	32.75	+0.48	+1.48
Copper	388.75	+7.90	+2.07
WTI	107.03	+0.16	+0.15
Brent	125.65	+0.52	+0.42
BDI	912	+4	+0.44

Source: Bloomberg

World, ASEAN, SET (as of Mar 26)



Source: Bloomberg

INDOCHINA NEWS

- Vietnam - Vietnam Q1 Economic Growth Slows to 3-Year Low
- Vietnam - Vietnam Q1 FDI Dips 0.8% y/y to \$2.52 Bln
- Vietnam - Telecom Merger Can Be Allowed Despite Contravention of Competition Law: Official
- Vietnam - Vietnam Banks Plan More Branches as Interest Rate War Ceases: Report
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- Myanmar - Swift System to Start Late April: CB Bank
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Thanawat Patchimkul
Global Strategist
Email: thanawatp@ktzmico.com
Tel: + 66 2 695 5451
Assisted by
Denruthai Krishnamra

INDOCHINA NEWS

Vietnam - Vietnam Q1 Economic Growth Slows to 3-Year Low

Vietnam's economic growth in the first quarter of 2012 slowed to a three-year low as domestic demand weakened and as local industries grappled with high inventories. First-quarter growth slowed to 4% from a year ago, the lowest rate since January-March 2009, according to government data. The southeast Asian economy grew 6.1% in the last quarter of 2011. Even though inflation is slowing, Vietnam's economic growth has been hurt partly by stockpiles of products in the industrial sector. Industrial production in the first quarter slowed to 4.1% from a year ago, from 9.3% in the same period in 2011. In 2011 the industrial sector contributed about a third to Vietnam's gross domestic product value. [\[Reuters\]](#)

Vietnam - Vietnam Q1 FDI Dips 0.8% y/y to \$2.52 Bln

Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows into Vietnam in the first three months of 2012 fell 0.8% from a year ago to \$2.52 billion, a government report said on Monday. New FDI pledges in the period between Jan. 1 and March 20 totalled \$2.26 billion, down 22.8% from the same period last year, the Planning and Investment Ministry said in its monthly report. Pledges are measured by the grant of licences for future investments. [\[Reuters\]](#)

Vietnam - Telecom Merger Can Be Allowed Despite Contravention of Competition Law: Official

A plan to merge Vinaphone and MobiFone, which together hold more than 55% of Vietnam's mobile phone market, may violate competition rules, but an official says an exception can be made in this case. Vu Ba Phu, deputy head of the Vietnam Competition Authority under the Ministry of Industry and Trade, was cited by VnExpress as saying that Vietnam's Competition Law bans any merger that creates a business with a market share of more than 50%. However, if the merger is deemed necessary, it can be approved by the government, he said. According to local media, the merger has been approved by the Ministry of Information and Communications. It still requires the approval of Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung. [\[Thanh Nien News\]](#)

Vietnam - Vietnam Banks Plan More Branches as Interest Rate War Ceases: Report

Many banks in Vietnam are opening new branches to strengthen their market presence as competition among the lenders is no longer focused on interest rates, news website VnExpress reported. Asia Commercial Bank, the country's largest non-state bank, plans to open 66 new branches this year. The lender has forecast pretax profit to rise to VND5.5 trillion (US\$264 million) this year from VND4.2 trillion last year. Viet A Bank also said it targets to have 100 branches by the end of the year, compared to 84 at present. Meanwhile, Dai A Bank has said it will add some 20 branches to expand its network to 100 branches as well. Vietnam Prosperity Bank, also known as VPBank, said it will use its newly increased capital to strengthen its market presence. The bank, with a registered of more than VND5 trillion, already has 200 branches. [\[Thanh Nien News\]](#)

Thailand - Betagro Gets Ready for AEC; More Projects Planned in Indochina

Betagro Group has planned a series of investments in feed and livestock production in neighbouring countries to cash in on an economic boom expected after the establishment of the Asean Economic Community in 2015. The company said its operations in Cambodia are taking shape as a 500-million-baht animal feed plant is now 95% complete. The annual production of the feed plant, about 20 kilometres from Phnom Penh, will double to 24,000 tonnes over the next few years. Betagro Cambodia Co also imports 3,500 tonnes of livestock feed a year from Thailand. Betagro Laos Co was formed to manage the company's livestock business in Laos. The plan is to build a breeding farm with the capacity to raise 1,000-1,200 swine breeders. Betagro is also considering the opening of a representative branch in Yangon to explore business opportunities in Myanmar. [\[Bangkok Post\]](#)

Lao PDR - Lao-Thai Border Trade Booms

Lao-Thai border trade at the Vientiane-Nong Khai Friendship Bridge has seen a major surge thanks to robust economic growth in Laos. According to a report from the Thai News Agency MCOT, Lao-Thai border trade at the Vientiane-Nong Khai Friendship Bridge reached US\$462.5 million in the first quarter of this fiscal year amid a rising demand for Thai goods in Vientiane. The value of Lao exports was around US\$19 million, which was dwarfed by imports worth more than US\$443 million, causing a trade deficit of about US\$423 million. The main high value commodities imported into Laos from Thailand were fuel, automobiles, and other consumer goods including processed foods. Lao exports to Thailand comprised mainly agricultural products, alongside handicrafts, sugar, and garment products. Laos is also exporting significant quantities of hydro-electric power and this is set to grow as dam building continues. [\[Vientiane Times\]](#)

Myanmar - Swift System to Start Late April: CB Bank

ELEVEN private banks will begin offering Swift money transfers from abroad starting in late April or early May. "We are preparing all the technical details and setting up machines with Singapore technicians, but we still need to train employees," said Co-operative Bank managing director U Phey Myint. The banks that will offer the service are: Ayeyawaddy, Asia Green Development, Co-operative, Innwa, Kanbawza, Myanma Apex, Myanmar Industrial Development, Myanmar Oriental, Myawaddy, Tun Foundation and United Amara, he said. Only three state-owned banks –Myanma Foreign Trade Bank (MFTB), Myanmar Investment and Commercial Bank (MICB) and Myanma Economic Bank (MEB) – operate the system. [\[Myanmar Times\]](#)

Myanmar - Thai-Myanmar Border Trade in Q1 Likely to Reach 277 Mln USD

Thai-Myanmar border trade at a checkpoint was expected to hit about 8.5 billion baht (277 mln US dollars) in the first quarter of this year, a Thai chief immigration officer unveiled Monday morning, local media Komchadluek reported. Among products that Myanmar imported the most include fuels and commodities as the country needs for economic development, he said. [\[Xinhua\]](#)