

Greece plans 15-year bond issue

Greece says it plans to issue a 15-year bond, tapping international markets for financing after the country's sovereign credit rating was upgraded.

Late Friday, Fitch ratings agency raised Greece's credit rating by one notch to BB with a positive outlook, citing improved debt sustainability and a "stable political backdrop."

low interest rates to try and improve its long-term debt profile. The national debt is expected to gradually decline relative to gross domestic product after peaking at a little over 180% of GDP in 2018.

German exports to Britain down

German exports to Britain dropped by about 4% during the first 11 months of last year amid concerns about the UK's future relationship with the European Union, a German trade body said Monday.

period in 2018. This follows consecutive year-on-year declines since 2015, the year before Britons narrowly voted in a non-binding referendum to leave the EU.

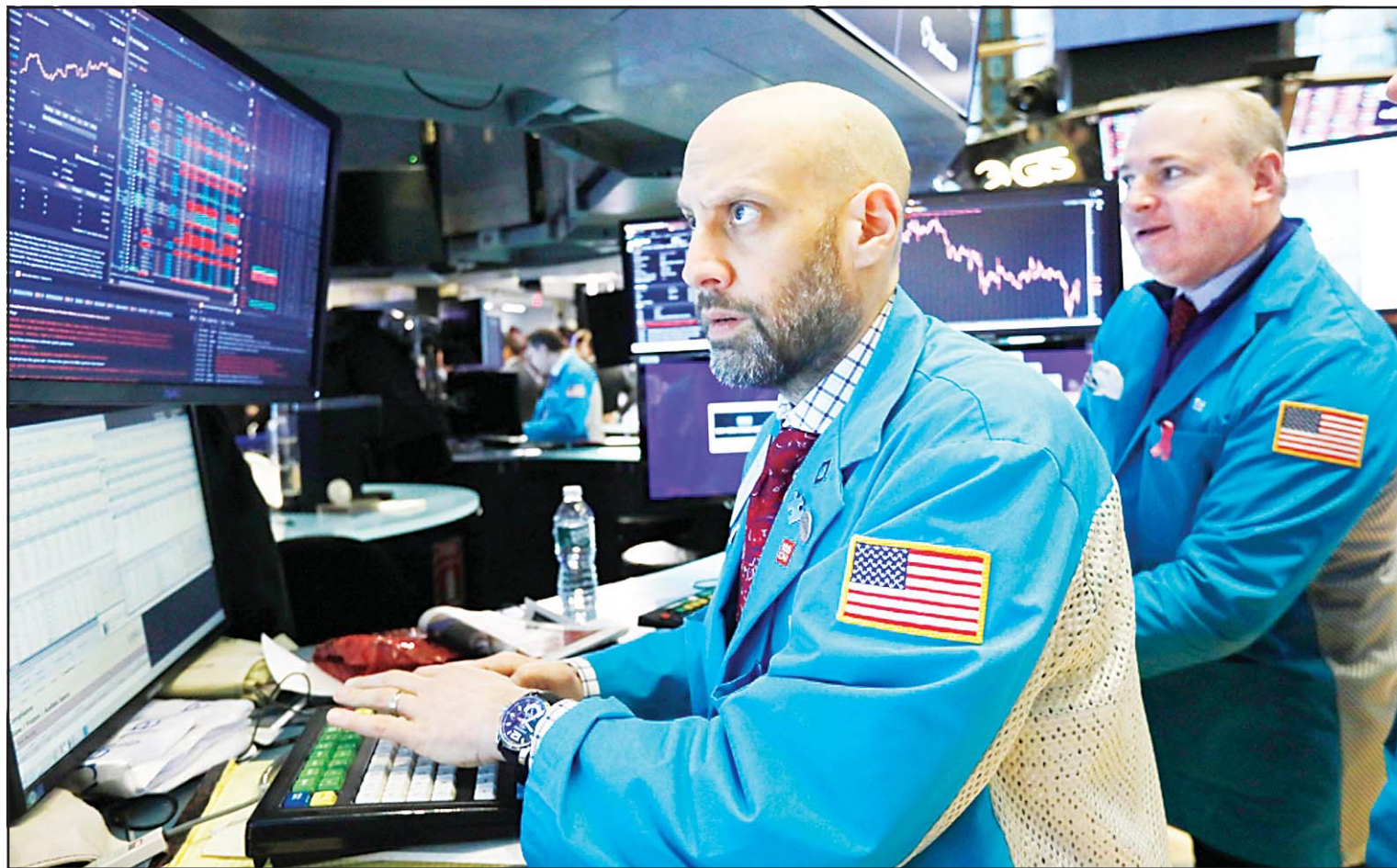
The Association of German Chambers of Industry and Commerce, called for the EU and Britain to engage in "intense discussions" to avert negative repercussions for businesses on either side of the English Channel.

Wall Street tumbles amid global sell-off

Asian stocks fall as virus fears spook markets, hit tourism

NEW YORK, Jan 27, (AP): US stocks tumbled following a sell-off in markets in Europe and Japan Monday after China announced a sharp rise in cases of a deadly new virus that threatens to crimp global economic growth.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average and S&P 500 each fell more than 1%, giving up a significant portion of their gains for January. Airlines, resorts and other companies that rely on travel and tourism suffered steep losses.



Specialist Meric Greenbaum (left), works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange on Jan 27. Stocks tumbled at the open on Wall Street following a sell-off in markets in Europe and Japan as investors grow more concerned about the potential economic impact of an outbreak of a deadly coronavirus. (AP)

Investors are in a "sell first, ask questions later situation," said Alec Young, managing director of global markets research at FTSE Russell.

Most markets in Asia were closed for the Lunar New Year holiday, but Japan's Nikkei fell 2.03%, its biggest decline in five months. European markets also slumped. Germany's DAX dove 2.6%.

Chinese health authorities have confirmed 2,744 cases of the coronavirus along with 81 related deaths as authorities extended a week-long public holiday by an extra three days as a precaution against having the virus spread still further.

Global health authorities are increasingly on alert for any new cases. Besides the threat to people's lives and health, investors are worried about how much damage the virus will do to profits for companies around the world.

The S&P 500 index slumped 1.5% as of 10:50 a.m. Eastern time. The Dow Jones Industrial Average dove 429 points, or 1.5%, to 28,560. The Nasdaq fell 1.9%. The Russell 2000 index of smaller company stocks fell

1.1%. Even if they're thousands of miles away from Wuhan, the interconnected global economy means US companies have plenty of customers and suppliers in China. It's the world's second-largest economy, and it accounts for 6% of all revenue for S&P 500 companies over the last 12 months.

their businesses. Wynn Resorts fell 6.3% and Las Vegas Sands shed 6.6%. Those companies get the majority of their revenue from the Chinese gambling haven of Macao. MGM Resorts fell 3.8%.

Energy stocks fell broadly as oil prices slipped 1.6%. Schlumberger fell 3.7%. Utilities and real estate companies held up better than most of the market. Both sectors are viewed as less-risky

and are little-affected by international issues and developments. Investors are also dealing with a heavy week of corporate earnings. Apple will report financial results on Tuesday. Pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and Starbucks will also report.

few Asian markets open as China announced sharp increases in the number of people affected in an outbreak of a potentially deadly virus.

Many regional markets, including China's, were closed in Asia for Lunar New Year holidays. Australia was closed for Australia Day. Tokyo's Nikkei 225 index sank 2% to 23,343.51.

China announced it was extending its week-long public holiday by an extra three days as a precaution against having the virus spread still further. By midnight Sunday, the National Health Commission said 80 people had died out of 2,744 cases that were confirmed.

Various governments have announced plans to evacuate people from Wuhan, the central Chinese city at the center of the pandemic.

China halted outbound tours and Wuhan and some other cities stopped public transport, obliging tens of millions of people to stay where they are at the time of the country's peak travel season.

The virus can cause pneumonia and other severe respiratory symptoms. The World Health Organization has so far held off on declaring the situation a global emergency, which would bring more money and resources to fight it, but could trigger economically damaging restrictions on trade and travel.

"Traders who would be typically discussing the weekend football results are now sadly focusing on mortality scores this morning," Stephen Innes of AxiCorp said in a commentary.

Apart from the direct impact on tourism and travel, "any economic shock to China's colossal industrial and consumption engines will spread rapidly to other countries through the increased trade and financial linkages associated with globalization," he said.

In other developments in Asia, the Indian government said it plans to sell its entire stake in the national carrier Air India to shore up falling revenues and privatize the airline.

Hilton delivers record-breaking growth in its centennial year

MCLEAN, Va, Jan 27, (Agencies): Hilton announced that its centennial year featured record-breaking growth, awards for its inclusive workplace culture, and continued recognition of positive community impact.

"Throughout the last 100 years, Hilton has had a tremendous positive impact on billions of lives across the globe," said Christopher J. Nassetta, president & chief executive officer, Hilton. "As we look toward the future, we will continue to prioritize sustainable and inclusive growth, enabling us to further strengthen the collective impact we have on the people and communities we serve."

In 2019, Hilton achieved 6.6 percent net unit growth by adding nearly 470 hotels and reaching 6,110 properties globally with more than 971,000 rooms in 119 countries and territories. The

company also grew its development pipeline to more than 387,000 rooms across 15 of its brands, supported by more than 116,000 rooms approved in 72 countries and territories.

In addition, Hilton achieved a new construction start record of nearly 87,000 rooms.

"Hilton's growth and performance are a testament to our resilient business model," said Kevin Jacobs, chief financial officer, Hilton. "In addition to our record-breaking growth across approvals, construction starts and net units, we are delivering on our commitment to serve any guest, anywhere in the world, for any travel need."

Record Growth: Effect on Economic

Opened more luxury properties than in any previous year in its 100-year history, adding 11 hotels across Hilton's

luxury brands Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts, LXR Hotels & Resorts and Conrad Hotels & Resorts. Unveiled Signia by Hilton, a dynamic meetings-and-events-focused brand that will transform the industry for meeting professionals and sophisticated business travelers, located in top urban and resort destinations including Orlando, Atlanta and Indianapolis. Expanded presence in Africa to more than 100 hotels trading or under development, including bringing two new brands to Africa with the Hampton by Hilton Sandton Grayson and the Canopy by Hilton Cape Town Longkloof. Opened the 2,500 ft Hampton by Hilton and grew the brand pipeline to the largest ever; Tru by Hilton also continued its rapid growth, reaching more than 115 open hotels since its 2016 launch. LXR Hotels & Resorts debuted in Europe

and the Americas with The Biltmore Mayfair, LXR Hotels & Resorts and Zemi Beach House Hotel & Spa - LXR Hotels & Resorts respectively; Motto by Hilton reached 10 hotels under development. Homewood Suites by Hilton celebrated its 500 th property opening, first hotel in the Caribbean and 30 th anniversary of the brand; Home2 Suites by Hilton opened its 300 th property; Embassy Suites by Hilton marked its 35 th anniversary. Travel with Purpose: Effect on Communities

Launched The Hilton Effect Foundation, dedicated to creating a better world to travel Named the global industry leader in sustainability on the Dow Jones Sustainability Indices (DJSI), the most prestigious ranking for corporate responsibility Recognized as the only hospitality company on Fortune's Change the World list for the second

year in a row Named to climate change "A-List" by the environmental impact nonprofit CDP Expanded decade-long soap recycling program, already the largest in the hospitality industry, to more than 5,300 properties in 70 countries and territories Exceeded Open Doors pledge to connect, prepare or employ one million young people by 2019 Invested in local communities by contributing nearly 550,000 volunteering hours at nearly 10,500 events and expanding food donation initiative to all Hilton managed hotels in the US and Canada.

Welcome 178 million guests at its properties worldwide and the 100 millionth Hilton Honors member, growing the award-winning loyalty program by 21 percent to more than 103 million members at year-end Launched a first-of-its-kind travel and hospitality

partnership with Lyft, allowing Hilton Honors members to earn and redeem Hilton Honors Points when they ride with Lyft Achieved record numbers of package redemptions through the Hilton Honors Experiences Platform, and hosted intimate music events via an expanded partnership with Live Nation, the world's leading live entertainment company Partnered with iHeartRadio to allow guests to stream live radio stations, thousands of music playlists and podcasts directly from their TVs through Hilton's high-tech Connected Room guest technology platform Became the first hospitality company to participate in research aboard the International Space Station, when the DoubleTree chocolate chip cookie became the first food baked in space inside a prototype oven as part of a landmark microgravity experiment.

exchange rates - Jan 27

Table of exchange rates for various currencies including US dollar, Sterling pound, Euro, Japanese yen, Swiss franc, Canadian dollar, Saudi riyal, UAE dirham, Bahraini dinar, Omani riyal, etc. Includes sub-sections for travellers cheques and local gold.