

Daily Market Report

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17 March 2020

Key Global Indices

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	Last	1D%	5D%	1M%	1Y%
	Close	Chg	Chg	Chg	Chg
FTSE 100	5,151.1 😃	-4.0%	-13.7%	-30.5%	-28.7%
FTSE 250	14,349.8 😃	-7.8%	-18.2%	-34.1%	-26.4%
DJSTOXX 50	2,406.8 😃	-3.6%	-13.7%	-31.4%	-22.7%
FTSEurofirst 300	1,114.6 👃	-4.6%	-15.8%	-33.6%	-25.6%
German DAX 30	8,742.3 👃	-5.3%	-17.7%	-36.4%	-25.2%
France CAC 40	3,881.5 👵	-5.8%	-17.6%	-36.0%	-28.2%

	Last	1D%	5D%	1M%	1Y%
	Close	Chg	Chg	Chg	Chg
S&P 500	2,386.1 😃	-12.0%	-13.1%	-29.4%	-15.5%
DJIA	20,188.5 😃	-12.9%	-15.4%	-31.3%	-21.9%
Nasdaq	6,904.6 😃	-12.3%	-13.2%	-29.0%	-10.2%
Nikkei 225*	17,123.2 ☆	0.7%	-13.7%	-28.2%	-20.7%
Shanghai Composite*	2,790.0 分	0.03%	-4.8%	-4.4%	-7.7%
DJIA at London close	21,386.9		*Tir	ne - GMT	4:30

FTSE 100



DJIA



DJ Euro STOXX50



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UK Market Snapshot

UK markets finished in negative territory yesterday, led by losses in travel sector stocks, after the US President Donald Trump extended the coronavirus-related travel restriction to the UK and Ireland. easyJet tanked 19.3%, after announcing that it has undertaken further significant flight cancellations that will continue on a rolling basis for the foreseeable future. Flutter Entertainment plunged 11.8%, after the company warned that its annual earnings could take a hit of up to £110 million, on the back of restrictions on sporting events due to coronavirus pandemic. Standard Life Aberdeen declined 5.9%, after a leading broker lowered its target price on the stock to 220.0p from 343.0p. On the contrary, J Sainsbury rose 0.5%, following a rating upgrade on the stock to 'Buy' from 'Hold'. The FTSE 100 declined 4.0%, to close at 5,151.1, while the FTSE 250 dropped 7.8%, to end at 14,349.8.

US Market Snapshot

US markets closed sharply lower yesterday, as a massive monetary stimulus announced by the US Federal Reserve (Fed) to combat the economic impact of coronavirus pandemic failed to restore the investor confidence. Gap sank 22.9%, after the retailer temporarily reduced store hours across the US and Canada, due to coronavirus concerns. Harley-Davidson plunged 13.1%, after a leading broker lowered its target price on the stock to \$17.0 from \$36.0 and downgraded its rating to 'Underperform' from 'Sector Perform'. Apple plummeted 12.9%, after the French competition watchdog imposed a fine of €1.1 billion on the company over the anti-competitive practices within its distribution network. On the flipside, Clorox advanced 4.1%, after a top broker upgraded its rating on the stock to 'Overweight' from 'Underweight'. The S&P 500 slipped 12.0%, to settle at 2,386.1. The DJIA fell 12.9%, to settle at 20,188.5, while the NASDAQ shed 12.3%, to close at 6,904.6.

Europe Market Snapshot

European markets finished lower yesterday, after the Spanish government decided to put the entire country on lockdown for 15 days to stop the rising coronavirus cases. Air France-KLM plummeted 10.1%, after the company announced its plan to reduce capacity significantly over the next few days, amid weak sales and demand due to COVID-19 pandemic. Electrolux plunged 9.7%, after the Swedish home appliance manufacturer warned that its financial performance will be impacted in the first half of 2020 due to coronavirus outbreak. Wacker Neuson tumbled 9.2%, after the company reported a drop in its profit for 2019. LVMH Moet Hennessy Louis Vuitton declined 5.5%. The luxury goods giant revealed that it is planning to start manufacturing hand sanitizer for French hospitals for free. The FTSEurofirst 300 index slipped 4.6%, to settle at 1,114.6. The German DAX Xetra fell 5.3%, to settle at 8,742.3, while the French CAC-40 shed 5.8%, to close at 3,881.5.

Asia Market Snapshot

Markets in Asia are trading mostly higher this morning. In Japan, Aeon, Unitika and Osaka Gas have surged 8.3%, 8.5% and 9.6%, respectively. Meanwhile, Hino Motors, Nissan Chemical and SCREEN Holdings have declined 4.9%, 5.5% and 6.7%, respectively. In Hong Kong, MTR, Sino Land and Tencent Holdings have advanced 2.8%, 3.2% and 3.3%, respectively. Meanwhile, PetroChina, Galaxy Entertainment Group and China Unicom Hong Kong have dropped 1.6%, 1.7% and 1.9%, respectively. In South Korea, KB Financial Group, Hyundai Glovis and Hana Financial Group have plunged 6.1%, 6.3% and 9.0%, respectively. Meanwhile, Celltrion, Netmarble and Amorepacific have gained 1.2%, 1.4% and 4.1%, respectively. The Nikkei 225 index is trading 0.7% higher at 17,123.2. The Hang Seng index is trading 1.1% up at 23,306.5, whereas the Kospi index is trading 2.0% lower at 1,680.0.



Key Corporate Releases Today

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UK

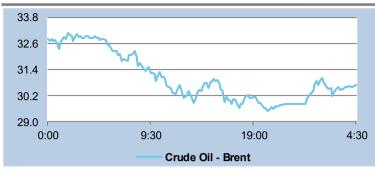
			Full Year Consensus		
Company Name	Results	Currency	Estimated EPS	Estimated Revenue (Mn)	
Ferguson Plc	Interim	GBP	5.21	22,535.05	
TI Fluid Systems Plc	Final	GBP	0.29	3,394.00	
ContourGlobal Plc	Final	GBP	0.18	1,429.33	
Softcat Plc	Interim	GBP	0.37	1,106.80	
Gamesys Group Plc	Final	GBP	0.95	520.33	
Polypipe Group Plc	Final	GBP	0.29	451.13	
Genel Energy Plc	Final	GBP	0.46	361.63	
Gamma Communications Plc	Final	GBP	0.41	326.67	
ScS Group Plc	Interim	GBP	0.24	317.67	
Vectura Group Plc	Final	GBP	0.05	167.33	
Tritax Big Box REIT Plc	Final	GBP	0.07	148.80	
Smart Metering Systems Plc	Final	GBP	0.11	111.20	
Kape Technologies Plc	Final	GBP	0.07	68.30	
Harworth Group Plc	Final	GBP	0.06	63.85	
Target Healthcare REIT Plc	Interim	GBP	0.07	46.35	
PRS REIT Plc/The	Interim	GBP	0.01	15.25	
Bango Plc	Final	GBP	(0.03)	9.30	
e-Therapeutics Plc	Final	GBP	(0.01)	0.50	
Good Energy Group Plc	Final	GBP			

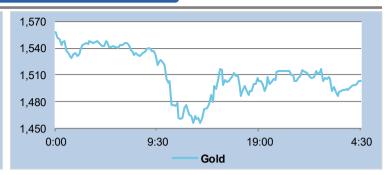
Note: All Estimates are for Full Year



Commodity, Currency and Bitcoin

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Commodity

- At 0430GMT today, Brent crude oil one-month futures contract is trading 2.1% or \$0.63 higher at \$30.68 per barrel, ahead of the American Petroleum Institute's weekly oil inventory data, scheduled to be released later today. Yesterday, the contract declined 11.23% or \$3.80, to settle at \$30.05 per barrel, on rising concerns that the government lockdowns to combat the impact of coronavirus would spark a global recession.
- □ At 0430GMT today, Gold futures contract is trading 1.08% or \$16.10 higher at \$1502.60 per ounce. Yesterday, the contract declined 1.99% or \$30.20, to settle at \$1486.50 per ounce.





Currency

- At 0430GMT today, the EUR is trading marginally higher against the USD at \$1.1184, ahead of the ZEW survey index data for March across the Euro-zone, along with the region's construction output data for January, slated to be released in a few hours. Additionally, investors await the US retail sales data for February and JOLTs job openings data for January, along with the NAHB housing market index for March, scheduled later today. Yesterday, the EUR strengthened 0.68% versus the USD, to close at \$1.1183. In economic news, the US NY Empire State manufacturing index unexpectedly dropped in March.
- □ At 0430GMT today, the GBP is trading marginally lower against the USD at \$1.2265, ahead of the UK ILO unemployment rate data for January, due in a few hours. Yesterday, the GBP weakened 0.06% versus the USD, to close at \$1.2271.



Bitcoin

At 0430GMT today, BTC is trading 7.45% higher against the USD at \$5270.09. Yesterday, BTC declined 9.75% against the USD to close at \$4904.48. In major news, cryptocurrency derivatives provider, Bakkt has raised an additional \$300.0 million to continue developing digital asset-focused services. In a key development, cryptocurrency exchange, Bitfinex announced that it has listed Bahamas-based cryptocurrency hedge fund, Fulgur Alpha.

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Corporate

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FTSE All Share Index- Performance

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UK Worst Sector Performers

Sector	Current Price	1D Change	1D (%) Change	1M (%) Change	1Y (%) Change
Automobiles & Parts	2284.94	-497.96	-17.9%	-52.5%	-65.0%
Travel & Leisure	5134.22	-776.05	-13.1%	-49.5%	-43.7%
Life Insurance	4606.97	-501.38	-9.8%	-44.4%	-41.6%
Real Estate Investment & Services	2152.22	-207.87	-8.8%	-30.6%	-18.9%
Financial Services	8483.79	-735.53	-8.0%	-35.9%	-17.2%

Key Economic News

US NY Empire State manufacturing index unexpectedly dropped in March

In the US, the NY Empire State manufacturing index unexpectedly dropped to a level of -21.50 in March, compared to a level of 12.90 in the previous month.

RBA minutes: Officials ready to ease monetary policy, if required

Minutes of the Reserve Bank of Australia's (RBA) latest meeting signalled that the policymakers are prepared to ease monetary policy further to support Australia's economy. Moreover, board members indicated that the coronavirus would have significantly affected the country's national finances and that a near term containment of the virus was considered "very unlikely". Meanwhile, the central bank expects first guarter growth to be noticeably weaker than previously anticipated.

BoJ keeps its key interest rate unchanged

The Bank of Japan (BoJ), in its latest monetary policy meeting, kept its key interest rate unchanged at -0.10%, as widely expected. However, the central bank announced that it would expand its stock purchases, bonds, other assets and provide zero interest one-year loans to companies running short of cash, to combat the impact of the coronavirus outbreak. Additionally, BoJ Governor, Haruhiko Kuroda, stated that the central bank would closely monitor the impact of COVID-19 and would not hesitate to take additional easing measures, if necessary.



Share Tips, Bids and Rumours

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- The Times (Tempus share tips): "Hold" Reckitt Benckiser; "Avoid" Aston Martin Lagonda.
- The Guardian: LSL Property Services has abandoned a proposed merger with its rival Countrywide.
- <u>The Times</u>: Asda is moving closer to a sale after attracting bids from private equity firms, Apollo Global Management, TDR Capital and Lone Star Funds, that could value the company at more than £7 billion, according to reports.
- The Times (Comment): Situation is critical but this aviation nation can pull through.

Newspaper Summary

The Times

Bailey pledges to protect economy:
Business leaders are urging the
government to dramatically increase the
levels of emergency support available to
companies coming under pressure from the
coronavirus pandemic.

Apple fined a record €1.2 billion by France for price fixing: Apple has been hit with a €1.2 billion fine for breaking French competition law. France's anti-trust authority handed the tech giant the record penalty for abusing its power over resellers to prevent discounting of its gadgets.

Travel giant in lockdown as it applies for state aid: Europe's biggest travel group suspended the "vast majority" of its operations and announced it would be applying for state aid.

Restrictions ground budget carrier fleets: The busiest budget airlines at Britain's airports have signalled mass groundings of aircraft that will mean the vast majority of their scheduled services are not flown in April and May.

Transport groups' shares plunge as passengers stay at home: Shares in train and bus operators tumbled after figures showed that passenger numbers have plunged because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Car factories brought to a grinding halt in Ellesmere Port and Luton: Ellesmere Port, home of the Vauxhall Astra, and the Luton van factory have become the first British automotive plants to fall victim to the coronavirus.

The case for cash transfusions for business may soon be overwhelming: Rishi Sunak's budget bazooka is already looking more like a peashooter. The scale of the economic shock facing Britain seems

much larger than when the chancellor stood up in the Commons only five days ago.

Cineworld investors take fright at weekend horror show: Cineworld, Britain's largest listed cinema chain, lost as much as a third of its market value after a collapse at the North American box office over the weekend.

Bank shares slip over fears of bad loans and job losses: Increased fears that banks may be left with bad loans from struggling airlines and leisure companies while retail customers could be in financial trouble if they lose their jobs or have their hours cut sent shares in the sector down sharply.

Novacyt and Inspiration Healthcare win orders for coronavirus kit: British-listed healthcare companies have received million -pound orders from Public Health England and the NHS for a coronavirus test and ventilators.

Sport wipeout takes bookies to cleaners as Flutter, GVC Holdings and William Hill struggle: Sporting cancellations are taking their toll on Britain's leading bookmakers, with three big operators forecasting a fall in earnings of as much as £800 million over the next few months.

Cruise operator Carnival borrows \$3 billion amid worldwide halt: The world's biggest cruise operator said it was taking steps to bolster a cash shortage as it wrestles with the devastating impact of the coronavirus.

M&G has £1 billion wiped off its value in sell-off: Investors have wiped nearly £1 billion from the value of M&G on fears the insurance and fund management group could be hurt by falling interest rates and share markets and possibly by defaults on junk bonds.

Private equity firms line up bids for Asda: Asda is moving closer to a sale after

attracting bids from several private equity firms that could value the company at more than £7 billion, according to reports (James Dean writes).

Digital bank Monzo in move to win bigger slice of business market: A digital bank is extending its services to small and medium-sized companies as it tries to add competition to the notoriously concentrated business banking market.

Travelex owner 'at risk' as trading halts: The owner of Travelex has warned that it is at risk of going bust after discovering about \$100 million of cheques that may have benefited third parties.

Turmoil scuppers estate agents' deal between LSL and Countryside: The planned tie-up between the estate agents LSL Property Services and Countrywide has been abandoned amid the stock market turmoil and drop in house viewings.

Laura Ashley in search for more funds: Laura Ashley has warned that it will need additional funding, only a month after saying it has access to sufficient cash to meet immediate needs.

Gear change as Halfords calls time on cycling shops: More than 200 jobs are under threat as Halfords closes two of its cycling businesses.

Reckitt Benckiser waits for clean bill of health: There was a time during last week's selling frenzy when every share in the FTSE 100 was trading in the red. Dealers were taking the view that no blue-chip company was immune to coronavirus.

Booming digital firms lead the way across Britain: Britain's digital sector is growing at six times the pace of other industries, according to research.

BP over a barrel from oil price war and coronavirus shock: The majority of income investors look to London's two oil



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giants for stable returns, but BP's dividend faces the chop following the plunge in oil prices.

The Independent

1 million jobs at risk as government leaves pubs, bars and restaurants 'in limbo' over pandemic: Up to 1 million workers in pubs, bars and restaurants face losing their jobs after Boris Johnson urged Britons not to go out in a bid to halt coronavirus.

Supermarkets plan to cut services to stay open during outbreak: Major supermarkets are working on plans to streamline their operations by cutting cafes, counters and other services to enable a depleted workforce to maintain basic provisions during the coronavirus outbreak, according to industry sources.

Financial Times

Apollo and Elliott abandon U.S. energy group rescue: An investor group led by Apollo Global Management and Elliott Management plans to abandon a transaction to refinance the U.S. oil and gas driller EP Energy in the wake of the commodity price rout in the past 10 days, according to two sources familiar with the matter.

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Chesapeake hires restructuring advisers to look at \$9 billion debt pile: Chesapeake Energy, a highly indebted pioneer of the U.S. shale energy industry, has hired restructuring advisers as the company has been crippled by persistently weak natural gas prices coupled with the recent collapse of oil prices and the repercussions of the coronavirus pandemic.

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Rio Tinto slows expansion of Oyu Tolgoi copper mine in Mongolia: Rio Tinto has slowed work on the underground expansion of its giant copper mine in Mongolia's Gobi desert, raising the prospect of further delays at its most important project.

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Saudi Aramco doubles down on output hike as price war intensifies: Saudi Aramco's Chief Executive doubled down on the kingdom's commitment to raise production in a price war with Russia and other oil nations, saying the state energy

giant can sustain maximum levels of output without any additional capital spending.

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Calpers battles former board member over real estate investment values: Calpers has refused to reveal details about valuations for real estate investments that have soured, according to a former board member who has questioned the worth of private assets held by the U.S. public pension.

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Saba Capital gains up to 175% with bets against junk bonds: Saba Capital, the New York-based hedge fund founded by Boaz Weinstein, has made big gains after its bets against junk-rated corporate credit came good in the sell-off triggered by the coronavirus outbreak.

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Revolut names Bill Rattray as interim Chief Financial Officer: Revolut has tapped a longtime ally of its chairman Martin Gilbert to serve as interim Chief Financial Officer, after incumbent David MacLean stepped down after only six months in the role.

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Sanofi urges Europe to add vaccine manufacturing capacity: Sanofi has warned that Europe lacks the vaccine manufacturing capacity to cope with pandemics like the coronavirus, and called for a government agency dedicated to response planning as in the U.S.

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Sanofi and Regeneron trial arthritis drug as coronavirus treatment: Scientists hunting for ways to adapt existing drugs for use by coronavirus patients are launching a clinical trial in New York to test whether an arthritis treatment could help sufferers and improve survival rates.

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Fosun and BioNTech launch \$135 million vaccine hunt for coronavirus: The race to produce a coronavirus vaccine accelerated when the German group BioNTech announced a \$135 million partnership with Fosun Pharma of China to develop a Covid-19 vaccine, which it said could begin clinical testing in late April.

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Johnson pushes manufacturers to make ventilators 'from scratch': The government is scrambling to piece together a design for a British-made medical ventilator "from scratch" to help treat severe coronavirus cases in the U.K., even as businesses warned it was unrealistic to ask companies to build an entirely new model.

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Universal Music Chief hospitalised after contracting coronavirus: The Head of the world's largest music company has been hospitalised after contracting coronavirus as the global pandemic continues to cause widespread disruption.

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Air Liquide seeks coronavirus premium for hand sanitiser unit sale: French industrials group Air Liquide is selling its Schülke unit, whose products range from the alcohol-based hand rubs that have become a hot commodity since the outbreak started, to hospital disinfectants and industrial cleaning products.

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Debenhams asks landlords for fivemonth rent holiday: Debenhams, the British department store group that went through two insolvency processes last year, has asked landlords for an immediate fivemonth rent holiday because of the likely impact of coronavirus on trading.

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AB InBev draws down entire \$9 billion loan facility: Anheuser-Busch InBev, the world's largest brewer by volume, has become the latest big company to bolster its cash position by drawing down the entirety of a \$9 billion loan facility from global banks, people with direct knowledge of the decision said.

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European betting groups issue flurry of profit warnings: Gambling groups Flutter Entertainment, GVC and William Hill all issued profit warnings, as the widespread cancellation of sporting events ground betting to a halt.

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Businesses demand billions in help to avoid failures: The British government is racing to piece together an economic rescue package after dire warnings from



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the leisure, transport and retails sectors that the coronavirus pandemic would lead to widespread business failures.

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European distillers turn to making sanitisers to tackle shortage: Spirits makers from France's Pernod Ricard to small craft gin distilleries in the U.K. are joining efforts to boost production of hand sanitisers to help fight the spread of the coronavirus.

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Amazon says it will hire 100,000 extra staff: Amazon says it will hire 100,000 extra full and part-time staff to handle the surge in demand caused by the coronavirus crisis.

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Google accused by rival of fundamental GDPR breaches: Google is sharing users' personal data between its services without acquiring specific consent to do so, thus flagrantly breaching fundamental principles of European data protection law, one of its smaller rivals has claimed.

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Broadband can cope with surge in home work, says BT: BT has said that its residential network would be able to cope with the increased strain of huge swaths of people working from home because of coronavirus, despite a warning from Spanish telecoms companies for citizens to ease off on internet use.

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Vodafone's India venture boosted after government plea for payment extension: Vodafone's Indian joint venture was thrown a potential lifeline after the government proposed that telecoms groups should be given a period of 20 years to pay about \$13 billion in retrospective levies and penalties.

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Sadiq Khan seeks to borrow extra £650 million to fund Crossrail overruns: Sadiq Khan is seeking to renegotiate £2 billion of existing loans with the government in order to borrow an extra £650 million to deal with fresh cost overruns on London's delayed Crossrail line.

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U.K. to discuss help for aviation industry hit by coronavirus: The British

government will hold talks in the coming days with the aviation industry as calls grow for state intervention to bail out airlines hit by a drop in passengers due to the coronavirus pandemic.

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Most airlines face bankruptcy by end of May, industry body warns: The airline industry is warning that it must shed jobs and obtain state support to survive the coronavirus crisis, as carriers around the globe grounded the majority of their fleets and took steps to conserve cash.

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U.S. airlines call for \$50 billion in emergency support to survive crisis: The U.S. airline industry is calling for \$50 billion in emergency support as governments around the world step in to help domestic airlines survive a shutdown of international travel amid the widening coronavirus crisis.

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Lex:

ABF/Primark: popular beet combo: Shares hit after group announces temporary closure of outlets in Europe, but it will survive.

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European carmakers: sales slump poses punishing road test: Political support will lift sector but investors are set for a bumpy ride.

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Business/society: ESG reports are not enough: In the face of coronavirus, companies must now adapt and show they can walk the talk.

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Airlines/Tui: world's biggest bridge loan needed: Surest stimulus must come via government underwriting of viable businesses' debts.

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Short bans/market closures: they amplify panic: Trading restrictions did not work in the past; there is less reason for them to work this time.

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U.S. bailouts: the state should take stakes: The onus is on Uncle Sam to jump in again.

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Lombard:

BoE's guv Andrew Bailey has to prove he knows what's what: New governor needs to quickly instil confidence that he knows how to fix problems.

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The Daily Telegraph

Branson and Walsh reignite feud over £7.5 billion coronavirus bailout: A row has erupted between Virgin Atlantic and British Airways over calls for a £7.5 billion state bailout to protect airlines from collapse as the industry is ravaged by the coronavirus pandemic.

U.K. pub sector could be 'lost in days' without Government action, leaders warn: The U.K.'s pub industry will be "lost in days" without immediate and decisive Government action, its leaders warned.

Europe's car industry stalls as coronavirus shuts plants: Car makers across Europe are shutting factories as coronavirus causes disruption to supplies, staff shortages and collapsing demand as consumers shun dealers.

Factories may be ordered to make ventilators under wartime laws: Manufacturers may be ordered to abandon normal operations and build parts for ventilators to fight the coronavirus pandemic under wartime laws normally used to supply kit for soldiers on the battlefield.

Daily Mail

Travel giant Tui suspends vast majority of travel operations until further notice as British Airways axes 75% of its flights and EasyJet announces further cancellations: IAG, the owner of BA, said it would cut its flying capacity by at least three-quarters in April and May and its outgoing Head Willie Walsh would defer his retirement.

Shares in Travelex owner Finablr are suspended as it warns it may go bust after 'undisclosed cheques' are found:
As if the coronavirus outbreak wasn't already causing enough troubles for Travelex, its owner has now warned it may



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go bust after discovering \$100 million (£81million) of undisclosed cheques.

Halfords to close its loss-making Cycle Republic chain with 226 jobs at risk: Over 200 jobs are in danger after the publicly-listed firm said all 22 of its Cycle Republic outlets would close along with its performance centre site in Evesham, Worcestershire.

Flutter to take £80 million hit as abandoned sporting fixtures expected to cost the Paddy Power and Betfair owner dear: Flutter Entertainment, which also owns Betfair, says the growing restrictions on high-profile sporting competitions will cause a significant financial impact to them.

Primark temporarily closes a fifth of its European stores but keeps British shops open as shares in fast fashion chain's owner are suspended: Primark has temporarily shut a fifth of its European stores amid the coronavirus panic as shares in its owner Associated British Foods were suspended.

B&Q owner Kingfisher's sales rise is undone as it's forced to temporarily close all stores in France and Spain as countries go into lockdown: Kingfisher said it has closed all 221 of its Castorama and Brico Dépôt stores in France until 14

April as well as all 28 stores in Spain until 29 March

Bank of England teams up with central banks in Canada, Japan, Europe, the U.S. and Switzerland in extraordinary coordinated global response to coronavirus crisis: The move, accompanying a second surprise rate cut by the Federal Reserve in as many weeks, was designed to bring down the price banks and companies pay to access U.S. dollars.

The Scottish Herald

North Sea oil firm 'linked to deadly and toxic shipbreaking industry in India': A North Sea oil company has been accused of profiting from a deadly and toxic industry after two of its oil rigs ended up being scrapped on a beach in India.

easyJet facing 'significant cancellations': EasyJet has said it is introducing "further significant cancellations" as a result of travel restrictions caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The Scotsman

Businesses to open an hour early for vulnerable customers amid Coronavirus outbreak: Nationwide building society said it would open an hour early for older people and those with underlying health conditions to allow them to visit while avoiding crowds.

Heriot-Watt spin-out launches Al tech which understands and responds to human conversation: Alana, which officially launched this month, has pioneered technology able to manage long dialogues, learn about the user's interests and suggest new and relevant subject matter.

Family-run service station doubles staff after £1.2 million revamp: Abbiecraig Services in Fife has doubled headcount and reported a "successful" first six months of trading following a £1.2 million overhaul to enhance its offering.

Fife manufacturer to create jobs and supply global energy market after grant funding: Pict Offshore – which is partially owned by energy heavyweight Orsted – has scooped a £250,000 regional selective assistance grant to scale up capabilities at its site in Inverkeithing.

Glasgow recruitment start-up wins £3 million deal in second year of trading: Hyreus, which marked its first anniversary at the end of February, has been awarded the bumper contract by a key client working in the construction and civil engineering industry following a six-month trial.

Risk Warning & Disclaimer

CFD and Spread betting Risk Warning

All trading involves risk. Spread bets and CFDs are complex instruments and come with a high risk of losing money rapidly due to leverage. 68% of retail investor accounts lose money when trading spread bets and CFDs with this provider. You should consider whether you understand how spread bets and CFDs work, and whether you can afford to take the high risk of losing your money. Professional clients can lose more than they deposit.

Shares Risk Warning

The value of stocks and shares, and the income from them, can fall as well as rise and you may not get back the full amount you originally invested. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance.

If you are unsure about dealing in shares and other equity investments, you should contact your financial adviser as these types of investments may not be suitable for everyone.

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