



Asia macro news

Chinese central bank governor Zhou Xiaochuan said the nation should be careful in exiting anti-crisis policies, suggesting that the government may not let the yuan appreciate soon against the dollar.

He said "We must be very cautious about the timing of normalizing the policies, and this includes the renminbi rate policy".

China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology said it will push for a restructuring of the nation's steel industry.

China's 2009 investments in the real estate industry rose +16.1% YoY to RMB3.6tr, the country's housing ministry said.

Sales increased +42.1% to RMB930m sqm.

The government will build 2.8 million housing units this year.

Royal Bank of Scotland Group said it's in talks with a Chinese company to form an investment banking joint venture in China.

Asia/ Europe company news

Maanshan Iron & Steel Co (323 HK) 0%

Chairman said "at present, the steel prices are around the breakeven levels." "We're having a small profit margin"

ICBC (1398 HK) +2.2%

It said it has no fund-raising plan at the moment. President said ICBC's capital adequacy ratio is "sound" and the highest among rivals.

ICBC's capital adequacy ratio fell to 12.60% at the end of 3Q, from 13.06% at the end of 2008.

ICBC said it will boost financing to projects already under construction and to small-and-medium sized firms and cut loans to new projects that are not government-backed and if they're energy-intensive or polluting.

Loans would also be reduced to sectors with overcapacity.

Loans by the bank this year will be less than in 2009,

BYD (1211 HK) +1.6%

BYD Co plans to start selling electric and hybrid cars in western Europe next year as the first Chinese company to market alternative energy-powered vehicles in the region.

Datang International (991 HK) +0.8%

China Datang Corp's President said its 2010 profit outlook is "not positive" as rising coal prices erode margins.

Jardine Strategic (JS SP) +6.7%

Underlying profit rose +26% to USD1,082m in 2009 (consensus USD975m).

It raised its dividend 5% to USD0.20.

It announced a tender offer to buy back 1.3% of issued for USD250m (range USD18-19).

If buy-back is successful Jardine Matheson's stake in JS could rise to c.82.5%, triggering privatization speculation.

Europe macro news

Portugal's government plans to sell EUR6bn of assets that may include stakes in utility EDP, Galp, power-grid operator REN-Redes Energeticas Nacionais SA, airline TAP SGPS SA, postal service CTT-Correios de Portugal and Caixa Geral de Depositos SA's insurance business.

The government will also raise civil servants' wages less than inflation through 2013, delay part of a high-speed rail project and increase taxes on those earning more than EUR150,000 a year.

In January, Portugal pledged to narrow its budget gap to 8.3% this year from 9.3% in 2009, targeting a deficit of less than the EU's 3% limit by 2013.

French business confidence

The Bank of France's Business Sentiment Indicator for manufacturing dropped to 102 in March from 104 in February (consensus 104).

