







Ukraine tensions lift dollar, yuan holds firm

The dollar inched higher on Monday, moving further off its recent two-month lows, lifted by the tension between Russia and the West over Ukraine and the possibility of a more hawkish stance from the Federal Reserve this week.

Markets were until recently not fretting about the massing of Russian troops on Ukraine's borders, but tensions have tightened several notches of late, with U.S. President Joe Biden considering boosting military assets in Eastern Europe and ordering diplomats' families to leave Kyiv.

ING Bank strategist Francesco Pesole said markets were pricing more of a risk premium into the euro, with fears worsening that Russia's standoff with the West could prompt it to curb energy supplies to Europe.

IMF cuts its global growth forecast as China, U.S. stumble

The International Monetary Fund has cuts its forecast for global economic growth this year due to weaker outlooks for China and the United States.

In an updated World Economic Outlook released Tuesday, the IMF now sees global growth of 4.4% this year – down five-tenths from its forecast in October — followed by a slowdown to 3.8% in 2023. The global economy grew an estimated 5.9% in 2021.

The IMF slashed its U.S. growth estimate by 1.2 percentage points to 4% this year. And the international financial organization cut its growth forecast for China by eight-tenths to 4.8%.

The U.S. growth estimate was cut because of less fiscal spending than expected as the Build Back Better program has stalled. In addition, the Federal Reserve is going to move away from its easy policy stance earlier than the IMF had expected. Continued supply shortages will also serve as a drag on growth.



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U.S. Commerce Dept says chips shortage to persist, will review some prices

The U.S. Commerce Department said Tuesday a global survey of semiconductor chip producers and users shows a shortage will persist, sparked primarily by wafer production capacity constraints.

The voluntary survey of 150 companies last fall in the supply chain confirmed "there is a significant, persistent mismatch in supply and demand for chips, and respondents did not see the problem going away in the next six months."

Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo told reporters that the department "in a few instances didn't really get what we needed and we're going to go company by company and do personal engagement and get what we need."

Major winter storm could develop into bomb cyclone, slamming Northeast with hurricane-force winds and major snow this weekend

A major winter storm with the potential for hurricane-force winds and heavy snow is threatening to slam the Northeast this weekend. The quickly-intensifying winter storm could develop into a nor'easter, and possibly a bomb cyclone, according to AccuWeather.

The heaviest snow is anticipated in New England, although snowfall is also possible in metro areas further south, including New York City and Washington, D.C., the weather agency said. Coastal northeastern cities could also be in for strong hurricane-force wind gusts, according to Accuweather.



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CDC director says 'milder doesn't mean mild' as Covid hospitalizations reach record high

CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky on Wednesday warned against easing up on Covid-19 safety protocols as the omicron variant drives cases and hospitalizations to record highs, even though it tends to produce milder infections that past strains.

"Milder does not mean mild and we cannot look past the strain on our health systems and substantial number of deaths," Walensky said during a press briefing with the White House Covid response team.

"It's important to remember we're still facing a high overall burden of disease," Walensky said, urging the public to get vaccinated, wear masks and "remain vigilant."