

## Economy

## ASIAN MARKETS MIXED AMID CAUTION ON EURO PLAN

(AFP) - Asian markets were mixed in edgy trade yesterday after Wall Street and Europe rallied on hopes that eurozone leaders are close to a solution to the region's debt crisis.

Early gains were pared as traders were cautious because of a lack of concrete evidence of a plan, while they also looked ahead to a key vote Thursday in Germany, where MPs will decide on expanding a rescue fund for debt-mired European countries.

Despite the gains there seemed no clear sign of a solution to the crisis, which has sent global markets spiralling downwards and raised fears of another crippling financial crisis.

Only France let slip signs of a new plan to end the crisis, with Prime Minister Francois Fillon saying any announcement would be made after Germany's parliament approves boosting the eurozone rescue



Merkel offers full support to Papandreu

fund Thursday.

European leaders' dithering over the long-running sovereign debt saga has stoked concerns in markets that they lack the will or unity to avert economic disaster.

However, US and European markets finished in positive territory for a

second day.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Tuesday again gave her backing to Greece and pledged every assistance to Athens, which is seeking the latest tranche of bailout cash to help it avoid a devastating default.

"We want a strong

Greece in the euro area... Germany is ready to give all the help required," Merkel said after talks in Berlin with Greek Prime Minister George Papandreu.

And the Greek leader said he was determined to implement reforms "not only to overcome the present crisis, but to make Greece more competitive".

Greece was making a "superhuman effort" to bring down its debt, he insisted. Deputies in Athens approved a controversial property tax Tuesday in a bid to plug its budget hole and help unlock the latest tranche of bailout funds needed to prevent a default that could come as early as next month.

The next instalment of debt aid due under its May 2010 bailout from the European Union and the International Monetary Fund is in the balance until EU and IMF officials have reviewed the country's finances to

## Brazil 2014



An aerial view shows the renovation work at Magalhaes Pinto soccer stadium, also known as Minerao stadium, that will be used in the 2014 FIFA World Cup in Brazil. (REUTERS)

## Occasional Column

## CHANGING TIMES STIR SAUDIA? UNICEF VS THE ELDERLY

Saudi Arabia's radical moves for the eventual elimination of gender discrimination indicate the thinking of the rulers of that country to respond positively to the demands of changing times. Serious students of history justifiably wish that as the leader of a regional power and custodian of two holy mosque of Islam, His Majesty King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud would be sagacious enough to make his country move on the road to meaningful modernization - while at the same time keeping intact its essential Islam-



ic identity in pragmatic terms and shunning extremism.

To change the topic, I have ever been disturbed by the unjust discrimination between the child and the elderly (I avoid the offensive phrase "that old man" used by some thoughtless people).

We know there exists a specialized agency of the world body, called Unicef, which is concerned with the health and education of children worldwide. But is there any agency to take care of the people of advanced age?

Persons above sixty or so are retired, especially from Government jobs; no bank will lend money to old people lest they may die, making the bank incur a bad debt, etc.

Those over seventy-five, like myself, must feel the pinch. The truth is that elderly people often have the ability which the younger ones generally cannot have. Intelligence is no substitute for experience.

Do not challenge the function of the Unicef. But what about the elderly?

In fact, in certain sectors like journalism

and scholarship the elderly have a definite utility. It is encouraging to note that there are employers who understand the worth of the elderly.

In some places the elderly are respectfully called "Senior Citizens" and certain privileges are provided to them. But that is for from being enough. In fact, the elderly deserve help from the prospective employers, the enlightened rulers, and even from the sensible people in general. Everybody will one day become elderly.

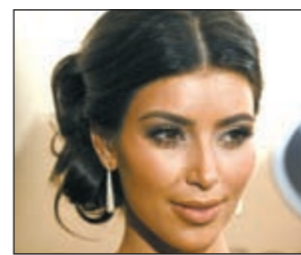
● Dr. Azimushan Haider  
azimushan@hotmail.com

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## Charlie Sheen

Two and a Half Men Keeps It Up; Which New Show Could Be Going Down? <http://eonli.net/q15Bih>



## Kim Kardashian

Kim Kardashian Spotted Without Her Wedding Ring...but Why? [t.co/M73cF0ep](http://t.co/M73cF0ep)



## Christina Hendricks

Mad Men's Christina Hendricks "Would Love to Be on Glee," but Can She Sing? [t.co/BOQ1AQMI](http://t.co/BOQ1AQMI)



## Justin Timberlake

Justin Timberlake and Jessica Biel Together in Las Vegas— but Is He Gambling With Her Heart? [t.co/6RcsbGR6](http://t.co/6RcsbGR6)



## Angelina Jolie

Angelina Jolie's kids enjoy a playdate with Gwen Stefani's little rock star! PHOTO: [t.co/yzXXZAAW](http://t.co/yzXXZAAW)



## Joe Jonas &amp; Ashley Greene

Joe Jonas & Ashley Greene spotted together again! [t.co/pRWGICJQ](http://t.co/pRWGICJQ)



## Kate Middleton

Kate Middleton Gets Her Hair Done in a new style: Do You Like it? [t.co/yuSqliWo](http://t.co/yuSqliWo)

## Movies

## "Better late than never": Polanski gets his award



(Reuters) - "Better late than never" was how director Roman Polanski summed up his feelings on Tuesday as he received an award from the Zurich film festival two years after being arrested on his way to pick up the prize.

Polanski was intercepted at Zurich airport by Swiss police on September 26, 2009 and held in prison and later house arrest until Swiss authorities decided in 2010 not to extradite him to the United States due to technical faults in the U.S. request.

The Oscar-winning Polish-French film maker, who had holidayed in his chalet in luxury Swiss resort Gstaad for years before the arrest, is wanted in the United States for the alleged rape of a minor in 1977.

"What can I say?" said the visibly moved 78-year-old as he picked up his lifetime achievement award.

"Better late than never."

It's a strange anniversary for me, two years, day for day. "Certain parts of it I'd rather forget, but I'm happy to be here."

It is a very moving moment for me so do not expect any speeches." The director behind acclaimed movies including "Chinatown" and "The Pianist" thanked those who had supported him during "these difficult months".

"I would in particular like to thank the prison staff who tried to make my stay as bearable as possible, including the head of the prison of Zurich." There was loud laughter in the audience, but Polanski interjected: "This is not a joke." He continued: "I love coming to Switzerland, I have been coming for years, and I'm happy to be here." At the time of the original U.S.

court case, Polanski pleaded guilty to having sex with a 13-year-old girl but fled the United States on the eve of his 1978 sentencing as he feared an unfair trial.

The film maker, married to French actress and singer Emmanuelle Seigner, has since lived in France, avoiding travel to countries that might extradite him.

Polanski's arrest in Switzerland prompted an outcry amongst his admirers in political and cultural circles, mainly in France, with directors from Woody Allen to Martin Scorsese and Jean-Luc Godard expressing support for the artist.

## Universe

## Solar storm delivers "glancing blow" to Earth

(Reuters) - A solar storm born of a monster sunspot delivered a "glancing blow" to Earth, with little impact on electrical systems, U.S.

space weather experts said.

"The current storm is probably at its end," said Joe Kunches, a scientist at NOAA's Space Weather Prediction Center in Boulder, Colorado.

"It seems that the solar wind that was really energized... seems to have passed us by." At its height, the storm was rated as strong-to-severe by NASA's Goddard Space Weather Lab outside Washington D.C.

The storm of charged particles from the Sun -- the solar wind -- was generated after the huge sunspot 1302 threw off a coronal mass ejection of solar material -- a flare -- early Saturday, the NASA lab said in a statement.

Sunspot 1302 was large enough to be seen without a telescope from Earth, though that would be inadvisable because it could hurt human eyes.

It is about 99,000 miles across, big enough to fit more than 10 Earths lined up side by side.

"I wouldn't say that it's rare at this particular time in the cycle," Young said by telephone.

"We're about two years away from the peak of the 11-year solar cycle." Solar activity should peak sometime in mid-2013, he said.

Solar storms can interfere with satellites, power grids and navigation systems such as GPS, but there was little evidence that this storm had much damaging impact.

People in extreme northern latitudes may see heightened auroras.

If the storm had been directed straight at Earth, NOAA said, "the geomagnetic storming could have reached 'severe' to 'extreme' levels." As the Sun rotated and Earth moved around it over the last three days, the sunspot came in range to deliver a direct hit, but that is not forecast, Kunches said.

"Since the eruptions over the weekend, it seems that the parent of the activity (sunspot 1302)... has relaxed a little bit," he said.

Of sunspots, he said, "They grow, they twist, they erupt and they go back to a more happy state and they're kind of in that happy state right now."