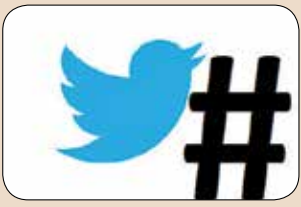



**Did You Know?**



Twitter did not invent the hashtag. Hashtags date back to 1988, when people communicated via chat rooms called Internet Relay Chats (IRCs). The first hashtags made their way to Twitter in 2007, when Chris Messina, formerly of Google and now a lead developer at Uber, proposed using them as a way to lump together related tweets. The simple searchable tags instantly caught on.



**BFC**  
CURRENCIES  
EXCHANGE RATE

COUNTRY/CURRENCIES	BUY	SELL
AUSTRALIA	0.2920	0.2896
BANGLADESH	0.00483	0.00458
CANADA	0.3018	0.2985
DENMARK	0.0627	
EGYPT	0.0241	0.0218
EURO	0.4501	0.4476
HONGKONG	0.04970	0.04930
INDIA	0.00582	0.00585
INDONESIA	0.00003017	0.00002855
IRAN TUMAN	0.00010964	
IRAQI DINAR	0.000300	
JAPAN	0.00352	0.003450
JORDAN	0.5362	0.5354
KOREA	0.00039646	
KUWAIT	1.254	1.254
MALAYSIA	0.0938	0.0936
NEW ZEALAND	0.2616	0.2616
NORWAY	0.0481	
NEPAL	0.00395	0.00365
OMAN	0.98220	0.98340
PAKISTAN	0.00366	0.00358
PHILIPPINES	0.00758	0.00747
QATAR	0.10386	0.10381
SAUDI ARABIA	0.10065	0.10071
SINGAPORE	0.2834	0.2814
SOUTH AFRICA	0.02850	0.02840
SRI LANKA	0.00283	0.00246
SWEDISH	0.0479	
SWITZERLAND	0.3891	0.3861
SYRIA	0.001740	0.0018
TAIWAN	0.013100	
THAILAND	0.011730	0.011710
TURKEY	0.1024	
UNITED KINGDOM	0.5076	0.5047
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	0.102850	0.102870
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	0.37790	0.37800
YUAN	0.056800	0.056800

Rates are for indication purpose only. For firm rates or for currencies not listed above please call Bahrain Financing Company. Telephone: 17228888, Website: www.bfc.com.bh

**GULF INTERBANK RATES**

COUNTRY	1 US DLR	1 UK STG	1 SFR	100 YEN
BAHRAIN	0.3770	0.5738	0.3799	0.3354
KUWAIT	0.2855	32.0873	0.2877	0.2540
OMAN	0.3849	0.3820	0.3878	0.3425
QATAR	3.6420	3.6143	3.6699	3.2405
UAE	3.6730	3.6451	3.7011	3.2681
SAUDI	3.7500	3.7215	3.7787	3.3366



**New York**  
Global stock markets rose on Friday, with major Wall Street indices ending at all-time records, as investors shrugged off a looming shutdown of the US government.

The S&P and Nasdaq both finished at all-time highs, while the Dow also gained. Leading bourses in Europe and Asia advanced, while the dollar recovered some of its losses from the prior session against the euro.

“Investors don’t appear particularly bothered about the prospect of a government shutdown, with the assumption being that (a temporary spending bill) will eventually be signed and any economic impact will be minor or non-existent,” said Craig Erlam, senior market analyst at trading firm OANDA.

Congressional Democratic leaders met with President Donald Trump at the White House early Friday afternoon to try to avert a shutdown as a midnight deadline loomed for the Republican-controlled Senate to approve a new funding bill.

Analysts say a government shutdown could damage the economy, particularly sectors that do extensive business with the government and especially if it is prolonged.

But most market watchers do not expect that to happen. “I think the politicians themselves realise it’s probably not in anybody’s interest to have this be a long-term shutdown,” said JJ Kinahan, chief market strategist of TD Ameritrade.

“The market realises it’s a short-term thing and we’re not going to stay shut down forever.” Kinahan said investors are fixated much more on corporate earnings reports, which have been good so far, although the bulk of major companies have yet to report.

Fitch Ratings said a shutdown in itself would not impact the US government’s top rating, but could further destabilise budget policymaking and “lead to brinkmanship” over raising the debt level before the US Treasury runs out of extraordinary measures to pay the government’s bills in March or April.

In Europe, Frankfurt pushed 1.2 per cent higher, while London managed to break a four-day losing streak despite poor UK retail sales data.

IG analyst Joshua Mahony said the “disappointing set of retail sales figures should be put in the context of shifting shopping habits”.

British retail sales slid 1.5 per cent in December from the previous month after consumers had brought forward their Christmas shopping, official data showed.

Retail sales had jumped by 1.0 per cent in November, boosted by Black Friday price reductions, the Office for National Statistics said.

Asian markets mostly rose Friday after another positive week across trading floors. (AFP)

# TRAI recommends allowing in-flight internet connectivity

**New Delhi**  
The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on Friday recommended that internet services like wi-fi and mobile connectivity should be permitted on domestic and international flights in India.

India is one of the world’s fastest-growing aviation markets and also the world’s fastest growing internet services market, and such a step is likely to boost revenue for service providers as well as airlines.

The recommendations, which include providing a mechanism for the lawful interception and monitoring of wi-fi in aircraft cabins to ensure safety, were provided to the Department of Telecommunications which will draft the final policy.

Once finalised it will, for the first time, allow flyers in India to surf the internet on a plane, a service common in many foreign countries.

India’s concerns over a cyber attack have delayed the policy which has been in the making for several months, local media have reported. (Reuters)



An aircraft files near the setting sun in New Delhi