

Foreign Exchange Summary

as at December 20, 2019

Member State	USD	CAD	GBP	Euro
Bahamas (BSD)	1.00	0.76	1.30	1.11
Barbados (BBD)	2.03	1.55	2.66	2.27
Belize (BZD)	2.02	1.54	2.65	2.25
Guyana (GYD)	218.00	160.17	274.41	233.58
Haiti (HTG)	93.41	70.07	124.18	102.72
Jamaica * (JMD)	133.65	100.43	178.11	152.32
OECS (XCD)	2.71	2.06	3.52	3.00
Suriname (SRD)	7.52	5.67	9.81	8.36
T&T (TTD)	6.80	5.42	9.34	7.94

*Rates applicable for Customs & GCT purposes

Business News In Brief

T&T losing \$8b in VAT revenue annually

Government Senator Allyson West has stated that Trinidad and Tobago is losing TT\$8 billion in VAT revenue annually through improper compliance by the Board of Inland Revenue (BIR) and policy decisions that led to revision of the zero-rated list. West, contributing to the 2020 budget debate, said a draft report emanating from an ongoing VAT gap analysis, has shown T&T losing \$3 billion to improper compliance and a further \$5 billion based on the revised zero-rated list, as the Government sought to provide relief to citizens, leading to a combined loss of \$8 billion, she said. [\(TE\)](#)

Oil production begins offshore Guyana

ExxonMobil has begun oil production offshore Guyana 3 months ahead of schedule and less than five years after the discovery of hydrocarbons in commercial quantities there. In recognition of this development, Guyana President David Granger declared December 20, National Petroleum Day. Production from the first phase of the Liza field, located in the Stabroek Block, is expected to reach full capacity of 120,000 barrels of oil per day in coming months with the first cargo set to be sold sometime in January 2020. ECLAC has projected that with the commencement of production, Guyana's GDP is expected to skyrocket by more than 85% in 2020. It is projected that over 6 billion barrels of recoverable oil is situated off the Guyanese coast. [\(NG\)](#) (CB)

Airport fees set to rise in Jamaica in 2020

The Mexican-owned Pacific Airport Group, GAP, which operates Jamaica's two international airports plans to spend US\$213 million over the next 5 years to upgrade the runways and buildings, but will result in higher passengers fees, according to its latest filings. Over 5 years, some US\$111.7 million will be spent on capital projects at the Sangster International Airport in Montego Bay, and US\$101.4 million at the Norman Manley International Airport (NMIA) in Kingston. The increased capital spend will come with a concurrent rise in passenger fees, or tariffs, which are levied when travelling through the airports. NMIA tariffs are set to move from US\$22.47 per passenger in 2020 to US\$29.41 in 2024. In Montego Bay, the passenger tariff will increase from US\$15.71 to US\$16.47. "The tariffs are based on projections for traffic, operating costs and capital investments included in the master development programme, in accordance with the parameters established in the concession agreements," stated GAP in its filing in mid-December. [\(JG\)](#)

Corporate Movements

- ⇒ ANSA McAL Limited has appointed Anthony N. Sabga III as Group Chief Executive Officer, effective January 1;
- ⇒ Barita Investments Limited has advised that Ian McNaughton, Managing Director and Company Secretary of Barita has resigned effective December 24, 2019;
- ⇒ Massy Holdings Ltd has appointed Angélique Parisot-Potter as Executive Vice-President, Business Integrity and Group General Counsel, effective, January 1, 2020.

CDB approves US\$50m policy based loan to The Bahamas

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) has approved \$US50 million loan to provide relief support to The Bahamas after hurricane Dorian. The exogenous shock response policy-based loan is an instrument to provide resources for financing needs that arise from external and natural hazards shocks that have a significant economic and social impact. "The CDB has revised economic growth downwards from 1.7% to 1.0% in 2019 and from 1.8 % to 1.5% in 2020. In addition to providing finance for the ongoing recovery, the loan will also support the implementation of the comprehensive reform programme of The Bahamas that aims to achieve fiscal sustainability and enhance economic and physical resilience to external shocks and natural disasters. [\(JO\)](#)

Stock Market Summary

as at December 20, 2019

Jamaica Stock Exchange

Overall Market activity resulted from trading in 49 stocks of which 14 advanced, 19 declined and 16 traded firm. Market volume amounted to 37,939,404 units valued at over J\$92,284,015.58. Wigton Windfarm Limited Ordinary Shares was the volume leader with 17,798,120 units (46.91%) traded. JSE Index declined by 2,824.34 points (0.56 %) to close at 504,241.70.

Barbados Stock Exchange

1 security advanced and 2 traded firm as 23,569 shares traded on the Regular Market, with a total value of BDS\$50,450.94. Goddard Enterprises Limited the volume leader trading 11,604 shares at \$3.27. Index closed at 3,034.12.

Trinidad & Tobago Stock Exchange

Overall Market activity resulted from trading in 16 securities of which 6 advanced, 6 declined and 4 traded firm. Trading activity on the First Tier Market registered a volume of 300,290 shares crossing the floor of the Exchange valued at TT\$2,553,270.98. NCB Financial Group Limited was the volume leader with 124,465 shares changing hands for a value of TT\$1,405,703.00. The All T&T Index declined by 2.26 points (0.12%) to close at 1,836.20. The Composite Index declined by 3.47 points (0.24%) to close at 1,468.48 and the Cross Listed Index declined by 0.64 points (0.43%) to close at 149.19.

Guyana Stock Exchange

2 stocks advanced and 3 traded firm as 197,089 units traded on the Regular Market. Banks DIH was volume leader with 175,330 shares traded. The LSI closed at 604.85.

Eastern Caribbean Securities Exchange (ECSE)

Overall market activity resulted from trading in 3 stocks with a volume of 4,841 shares. St Kitts Nevis Anguilla National Bank Ltd was volume leader trading 4,064 shares. Index closed at 147.48.

CARICOM Business is a weekly newsletter produced by the Directorate of Trade & Economic Integration.

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Business News In Brief

Deeper regional integration will boost Barbados - IMF

Barbados continues to make good progress in implementing its economic reform program with all quantitative performance criteria, indicative targets, and all structural benchmarks for end-September 2019 being met. That's the word from the Tao Zhang, Deputy Managing Director of the IMF. "The fiscal adjustment continues as programmed with the primary surplus targeted at 6% of GDP for FY2019/20 and subsequent years. This target for end-September 2019 was met by a significant margin, and the FY2019/20 budget provides a solid basis for reaching the target for the next fiscal year. The planned adoption of a fiscal rule in 2020 will also help sustain the adjustment effort". However, the IMF warns that "structural reforms are needed to unlock Barbados' growth potential with much room for improvement in the business climate remaining. Deeper regional integration would also help increase Barbados' growth prospects." ([IMF](#))

Bank of England to set up tough climate stress tests

Lenders and insurers in the UK are to be tested against three different environmental scenarios under what the Bank of England claims will be the world's stiffest climate stress tests. The BoE has set out how it would test the balance sheets of the largest UK banks and insurers, pledging to scrutinise how they would cope with more frequent severe weather events such as floods and subsidence, as well as what would happen if there were a sudden fire sale of "brown" assets — those considered detrimental to the environment. In the most severe scenario, lenders and insurers would be tested against temperature rises of as much as 4C by 2080. The first results will be published in the second half of 2021 as part of the normal annual stress tests the BoE runs. The seven lenders that at present undergo those tests — including Barclays, HSBC and Lloyds Banking Group — will take part, as well as a far higher number of insurers that are already subject to confidential climate-related tests, the inaugural results of which will be published in the first quarter of next year. ([FT](#))

International Oil Prices as at December 20, 2019

Futures	Price	US\$ Change	Change
WTI Crude	US\$60.36	-0.94	-1.53
Brent Crude	US\$66.10	-0.46	-0.69
OPEC Basket	US\$67.93	+0.16	+0.24
Natural Gas	US\$2.33	+0.04	+1.75