

DAILY STOCK MARKET HIGHLIGHTS

Wednesday, 02 January 2019



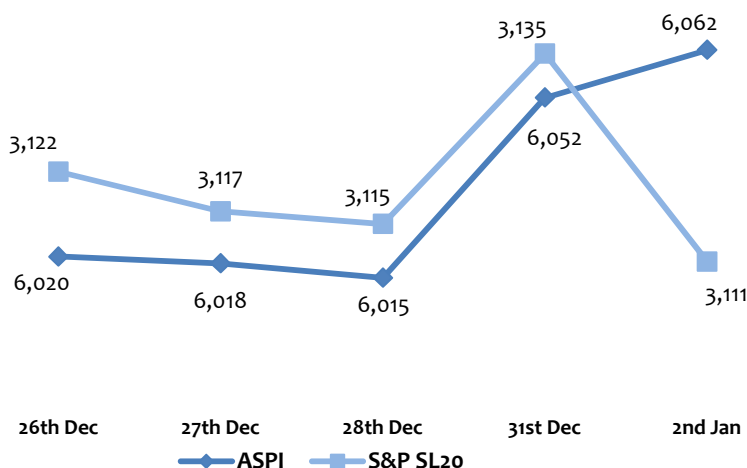
**ASHA PHILLIP
SECURITIES LTD**

Sri Lanka

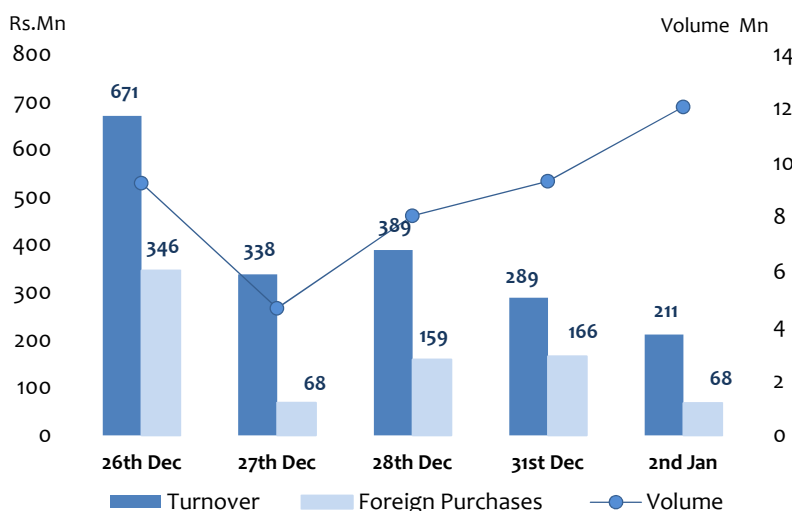
Daily Market Statistics

Index	2nd Jan	31st Dec	Change	% Change
ASPI	6,062.20	6,052.37	↑ 9.83	↑ 0.16%
S&P SL20	3,111.07	3,135.18	↓ (24.11)	↓ -0.77%
Market Stats (LKR, Mn)		2nd Jan	31st Dec	% Change
Turnover		211.50	288.52	↓ -26.7%
Domestic Purchases		143.84	122.48	↑ 17.4%
Domestic Sales		163.04	158.05	↑ 3.2%
Foreign Purchases		67.66	166.04	↓ -59.3%
Foreign Sales		48.46	130.47	↓ -62.9%
Share Volume		12.06	9.33	↑ 29.2%
Market capitalization (Bn)		2,844.06	2,839.45	↑ 0.16%
PER		9.66	9.65	↑ 0.10%
PBV		1.18	1.18	↓ 0.00%

Market Indices



Turnover, Volume and Foreign Purchase



Performance of the Market

- Colombo Bourse started the session with positive momentum but, volatility in large caps JKH, HNB, SAMP & MELS amidst thin trade weighed on both the indices; ASPI was negative during most part of the session, surge in CTC during last hour turned it positive. Investors were seen still on holiday mood, prevailing unstable political situation keeps the investors on cautious stance
- Benchmark index ASPI moved between 6,037.29 - 6,062.20 points and settled the day at 6,062.20 with a gain of 9.83 points (+0.16%).
- Major contributors for the movement in ASPI were **CTC (+18)**, **LION (+4.7)**, **SLTL (+4.2)**, **DIAL (+3.5)**, **CTCE (+2.8)**, **MELS (-5.5)**, **JKH (-5)**, **HNB (-4.6)**, **SHL (-3.8)** & **SAMP (-3)**
- S&P SL20 index also followed a same trend and settled the day at 3,111.07 with a loss of 24.11 points (-0.77%).
- The day's turnover was recorded as LKR 211.50Mn, down by 27% from its previously recorded LKR 288.52Mn. Foreign investors remained net buyers for the day.
- The total market capitalization stood at LKR 2.84Tn, indicating an YTD gain of 0.16%.
- The market PER & PBV were at 9.66x & 1.18x respectively.

Top Contributors - Turnover

- Sampath Bank PLC (SAMP) contributed 22% (45.73Mn) of the turnover; SAMP traded between LKR 230.00 & 235.00 and settled the day at LKR 230.00 with a loss of LKR 5.00 (-2.13%).
- Hemas Holdings PLC (HHL) had contributed LKR 44.69Mn. HHL traded between LKR 88.20 & 88.50 and settled the day at LKR 88.50 with a loss of LKR 0.30 (-0.34%).
- Janashakthi Insurance Company PLC (JINS) contributed LKR 39.19Mn. JINS traded between LKR 29.70 & 31.40 and settled the day at LKR 31.00 with a gain of LKR 1.00 (+3.33%).

Top contributors - Traded Volume

- SMB Leasing PLC traded a total of 5.21Mn shares.
- Janashakthi Insurance Company PLC (1.29Mn shares)
- Merchant Bank of Sri Lanka & Finance PLC (0.70Mn shares).

Sectorial Overview

- Bank Finance & Insurance (BFI) stood on top providing LKR 121.76Mn capturing 58% of the total turnover.
- Diversified Holdings (DIV) provided LKR 52.81Mn to the daily aggregated turnover.
- Manufacturing (MFG) provided LKR 16.55Mn

Daily Foreign Transactions

Net Foreign Purchases

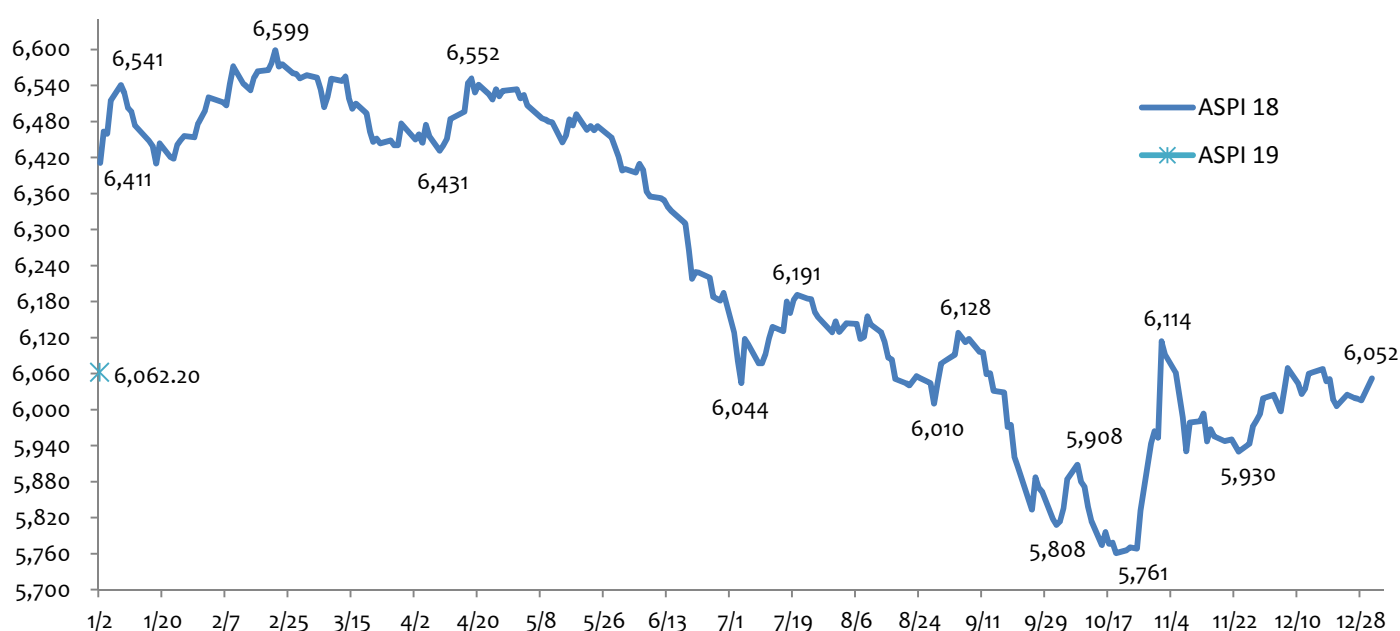
Company Name	Avg Price	Net change in Qty	Net Foreign Inflow
SAMPATH (+)	234.40	54,397	12,750,657
TEEJAY LANKA	32.50	314,865	10,233,113
COMMERCIAL BANK (+)	115.50	1,500	173,250
ACCESS ENG SL	14.00	8,500	119,000
PEOPLES LEASING	15.80	6,128	96,822
ACL PLASTICS	74.10	500	37,050
EXPOLANKA	4.1	4,750	19,475
TAL LANKA	13.60	400	5,440
AITKEN SPENCE	46.30	55	2,547

Net Foreign Sales

Company Name	Avg Price	Net change in Qty	Net Foreign Outflow
LANKA IOC	24.20	(84,808)	(2,052,354)
MELSTACORP	50.20	(38,501)	(1,932,750)
MERCHANT BANK (+)	10.50	(16,000)	(168,000)
HNB[X.0000] (+)	166.10	(228)	(37,871)
A.SPEN.HOT.HOLD.	26.30	(600)	(15,780)
TOKYO CEMENT[X.0000]	21.50	(470)	(10,105)
LAUGFS GAS[X.0000]	15.00	(500)	(7,500)
ALUMEX PLC	13.50	(500)	(6,750)
KEELLS HOTELS	7.70	(536)	(4,127)
E - CHANNELLING	4.30	(10)	(43)

- **Aggregate foreign buying** for the day totaled up to **LKR 67.66Mn**.
- **Foreign sales** for the day amounted to **LKR 48.46Mn**.
- **Net foreign inflow** for the day was **LKR 19.20Mn**, **YTD net foreign inflow** presently stands at **LKR 19.2Mn**.
- **SAMP** notched the “Top Net Purchasers” slot with a net inflow of **LKR 12.75Mn** whilst **LIOC** notched the “Top net Sellers” slot with a net outflow of **LKR 2.05Mn**.

Year-to-Date ASPI Movement - 2018 & 2019



Key Announcements

- Mr. **Susantha Chaminda Ratnayake** the Chairman and Executive Director of **John Keells Holdings PLC (JKH)**, retired from JKH with effect from 31 December 2018 and accordingly ceased to be a Director of JKH and its subsidiaries and associate companies, namely Asian Hotels And Properties PLC, Ceylon Cold Stores PLC, John Keells PLC, John Keells Hotels PLC, Trans Asia Hotels PLC, Keells Food Products PLC and Tea Smallholder Factories PLC, with effect from 31 December 2018, **Mr. Krishan Niraj Jayasekera Balendra**, was appointed to JKH as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer; and **Mr. Joseph Gihan Adlsha Cooray** was appointed as Deputy Chairman / Group Finance Director of JKH with effect from 01 January 2019.
- The Net Asset Value of **NAMAL Acuity Value Fund** as at 31st Dec 2018 is LKR 98.60 per unit.
- Net asset value per unit of the **Candor Opportunities Fund** as at 31st Dec 2018, LKR 9.20

Companies under Trading Suspension

Company	MIRA	CIFL	ESL	PCH	PCP	SING	CIFL	SFS
From	26-Feb-15	23-Nov-17	5-Jan-16	2-Apr-18			23-Nov-17	2-July 18.
Reason	SEC Directive	status	Weak position	as per CSE Listing Rules			CBSL	Listing Rules
Company	LCEM	MEL	HUEJ	AINV	CFT	LLMP	PCHH	RGEM
From	7-Sep 18.	25-Sep 18.	26-Nov-18.	10-Dec-2018 for Non-submission of				
Reason	Auditor's Qualified Opinion		***	Non-submission of Annual Reports				

***Non-submission of Interim Financial Statements 30th Jun 2018

Companies on WATCH LIST

Non Submission of Annual Reports, Financial Statements									Default Board
MIRA	LCEM	CIFL	PCH	PCP	SING	HDEV	LLMP	PCHH	SFS
SINH	LLMP	CFT	SFL						
Qualified Opinion in the Independent Auditor's Report									
AINV	ESL	RGEM	MEL	JANA	HVA	PMB	MBSL	ALHP	TFC
SIRA	MSL	CHOU	EAST						
Non-compliance of CSE Listing Rules, minimum public holding & Corporate Governance									
HUEJ	LOFC	ACAP	ARPI	ASPH	BBH	COMD	CPRT	DIST	CLC
ASPM	GOOD	HPFL	INDO	KAPI	LAMB	MADU	MORI	OFEQ	NIFL
PARA	PDL	SELI	MERC	SHAL	LHCL	SLND	AFSL	AMCL	ODEL
SFCL	TAP	MERC	TFIL						

Annual general Meetings (AGMs)

Company	Date
EAST	17-Jan-19
BLUE	28-Jan-19
RGEM	29-Jan-19

Company	Date
COMB	28-Mar-19
DFCC	28-Mar-19

Company	Date
HASU	28-Mar-19
HNB	29-Mar-19

Company	Date
SAMP	29-Mar-19
PABC	29-Mar-19

EGMs

Company	Date
HPWR	18-Jan-19
AAIC	25-Jan-19

Key Announcements

Cash Dividends

CODE	DIVIDEND PER SHARE (LKR)	TYPE	XD DATE	PAYMENT DATE	CODE	DIVIDEND PER SHARE (LKR)	TYPE	XD DATE	PAYMENT DATE
PAP	0.06	Interim	21. Dec.2018	02.Jan.2019	PLC	0.75	Interim	02.Jan.2019	11.Jan.2019
KHL	0.15	Interim	21. Dec.2018	03.Jan.2019	CTC	19.00	4 th Interim	10.Jan.2019	22.Jan.2019
CFIN	2.00	Interim	27.Dec.2018	01.Jan.2019					

Capitalization of Reserves

Company	Proportion	EGM / Allotment	XC Date	Consideration (RS.)
Ceylon & Foreign Trades PLC (CFT)	1 for 1	To be notified	To be notified	4.00

Amalgamation [A]

Transferee	Transferor	Proportion	Offer Closing Date
[A] Browns investments PLC (BIL)	Browns Capital PLC (FLCH)	2 BIL for every 1 FLCH	To be notified

Consolidation of Shares

Company	Proportion	EGM & Entitlement Date	Dealings Suspension	Trading start
Asia Asset Finance PLC (AAF.N)	10 into 1	To be notified	To be notified	To be notified

Repurchase of Shares

Company	Price	Proportion	Entitle	Offer Open	Offer closing	Payment
John Keells Holdings PLC (JKH)	LKR 160.00	1 for 20	03 Dec 2018.	14 Dec 2018.	10 Jan 2019.	25 Jan 2019.

Rights Issues with pending dates

Company,	Issue Price	Proportion	Company,	Issue Price	Proportion
Agalawatte Plantations (AGAL)	LKR 15.3	21 for 4	Adam Investments PLC (AINV)	LKR 1.00	01 for 01
Adam Capital PLC (PCHH)	LKR 1.50	02 for 01	Blue Diamonds Jewellery (BLUE)	LKR 1.00	01 for 04
Asia Asset Finance PLC (AAF.N) - TR-1	LKR 10.00	03 for 10	Asia Asset Finance PLC (AAF.N) - TR-2	LKR 10.00	02 for 10

Upcoming Listings

Company	Issue Size	Coupon Rate	Price	Issue Opening	Tenure	Nature
Citizens Development Business (CDB)	LKR 1.25Bn	To be notified	100.00	17 - Jan - 2019.	5 Years	Normal
Commercial Bank of Ceylon PLC (COMB)	LKR 15Bn	To be notified	100.00	To be Notified	5 - 10 Years	BASEL III
National Development Bank (NDB)	LKR 6.5Bn	To be notified	100.00	To be Notified	5 Years	BASEL III
Seylan Bank PLC (SEYB)	LKR 5Bn	To be notified	100.00	To be Notified	5 Years	BASEL III
Sampath Bank PLC (SAMP)	LKR 7Bn	To be notified	100.00	To be Notified	5 Years	BASEL III
Bogawantalawa Tea Estates (BOPL)	LKR 0.85Bn	To be notified	85.00	To be notified	5, 6 & 7 Years	Normal

Market Highlights & Statistics

Market Capitalisation

Company Name	Symbol	Price	Issued Quantity	Market Capitalisation	(as a % of MKT Cap.)
CEYLON TOBACCO COMPANY PLC	CTC.No000	1,460.00	187,323,751	273,492,676,460	10.34
JOHN KEELLS HOLDINGS PLC	JKH.No000	158.00	1,387,528,658	219,229,527,964	8.29
COMMERCIAL BANK OF CEYLON PLC	COMB.No000	115.50	945,709,403	109,229,436,047	4.13
NESTLE LANKA PLC	NEST.No000	1,700.00	53,725,463	91,333,287,100	3.45
DIALOG AXIATA PLC	DIAL.No000	10.30	8,143,778,405	83,880,917,572	3.17
HATTON NATIONAL BANK PLC	HNB.No000	208.50	395,451,248	82,451,585,208	3.12
DISTILLERIES COMPANY OF SRI LANKA PLC	DIST.No000	16.10	4,600,000,000	74,060,000,000	2.80
CEYLON COLD STORES PLC	CCS.No000	729.80	95,040,000	69,360,192,000	2.62
SAMPATH BANK PLC	SAMP.No000	230.00	280,902,248	64,607,517,040	2.44
MELSTACORP PLC	MELS.No000	48.10	1,165,397,072	56,055,599,163	2.12

Highest Volume

Company Name	Turnover (Rs)	Share Vol.
SMB LEASING PLC	2,605,791	5,211,702
JANASHAKTHI INSURANCE COMPANY PLC	39,188,728	1,285,268
MERCHANT BANK OF SRI LANKA & FINANCE PLC	7,223,835	701,312
HEMAS HOLDINGS PLC	44,685,414	504,920
ACCESS ENGINEERING PLC	6,118,547	436,225
TEEJAY LANKA PLC	10,767,570	331,300
SOFTLOGIC CAPITAL PLC	2,007,021	314,179
PEOPLE'S LEASING & FINANCE PLC	3,772,290	240,263
SAMPATH BANK PLC	45,725,201	197,555
SOFTLOGIC LIFE INSURANCE PLC	8,536,603	184,070

Highest Turnover

Company Name	Share Vol.	Turnover (LKR)
SAMPATH BANK PLC	197,555	45,725,201
HEMAS HOLDINGS PLC	504,920	44,685,414
JANASHAKTHI INSURANCE COMPANY PLC	1,285,268	39,188,728
TEEJAY LANKA PLC	331,300	10,767,570
SOFTLOGIC LIFE INSURANCE PLC	184,070	8,536,603
MERCHANT BANK OF SRI LANKA & FINANCE PLC	701,312	7,223,835
ACCESS ENGINEERING PLC	436,225	6,118,547
HATTON NATIONAL BANK PLC	23,756	4,971,278
PEOPLE'S LEASING & FINANCE PLC	240,263	3,772,290
LANKA IOC PLC	130,312	3,171,106

Top Gainers

Company Name	VWA Days Close	Change (LKR)	Change %	Turnover (LKR)
S M B LEASING [X]	0.30	0.10	50.00	244
BLUE DIAMONDS	0.60	0.10	20.00	1,523
RENUKA CITY HOT.	298.40	43.40	17.02	105,946
MULLERS	0.70	0.10	16.67	1,841
NATION LANKA	0.70	0.10	16.67	18,641
HUNAS FALLS	91.80	12.80	16.20	947,658
ODEL PLC	29.00	3.50	13.73	23,185
RENUKA HOTELS	56.00	5.00	9.80	320,302
MERCHANT BANK	10.50	0.90	9.38	7,223,835
CITRUS WASKADUWA	2.70	0.20	8.00	1,651

Top Losers

Company Name	VWA Days Close	Change (LKR)	Change %	Turnover (LKR)
HAPUGASTENNE	15.00	(1.30)	(7.98)	1,516
SOFTLOGIC	20.00	(1.50)	(6.98)	2,737,212
KINGSBURY	14.20	(1.00)	(6.58)	53,820
TOKYO CEMENT [X]	21.50	(1.50)	(6.52)	1,338,232
NAWALOKA	4.40	(0.30)	(6.38)	9,659
CITY HOUSING	4.60	(0.30)	(6.12)	29,435
ASIA CAPITAL	6.20	(0.40)	(6.06)	68,530
SINHAPUTHRA FIN	8.30	(0.50)	(5.68)	188,386
BROWNS INVSTMNTS	1.80	(0.10)	(5.26)	105,738
EASTERN MERCHANT	4.20	(0.20)	(4.55)	927

Crossings

Name	Symbol	Price	Trades	T.Volume	Turnover
Nil					

Market Highlights & Statistics

Sector Wise Summary

Sector	Price Index		Turnover			Sector	
	Today	Previous	Value (Rs)	Volume	Trades	P/E	PBV
BANK FINANCE AND INSURANCE	16,442.60	16,490.94	121,764,388	8,449,877	1,876	5.40	0.90
BEVERAGE FOOD AND TOBACCO	24,730.64	24,289.61	1,794,747	237,344	96	18.10	6.10
CONSTRUCTION AND ENGINEERING	1,375.97	1,377.23	6,298,119	474,071	244	22.10	0.60
CHEMICALS AND PHARMACEUTICALS	5,191.95	5,182.48	15,676	2,654	10	5.70	0.70
DIVERSIFIED HOLDINGS	1,568.82	1,590.94	52,813,119	963,157	369	10.50	0.90
FOOTWEAR AND TEXTILE	950.93	858.34	1,077,669	115,875	54	76.10	1.00
HOTELS AND TRAVELS	2,664.98	2,663.96	2,696,034	357,356	356	64.50	1.70
HEALTH CARE	803.19	833.79	306,081	19,709	40	15.40	1.80
INVESTMENT TRUSTS	9,512.94	9,527.75	416,749	26,385	35	32.00	0.40
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	25.52	25.52	4,301	1,000	3	0.00	0.00
LAND AND PROPERTY	554.50	553.60	1,939,548	139,955	162	5.40	0.60
MANUFACTURING	2,837.23	2,832.36	16,549,260	637,157	374	7.70	0.90
MOTORS	12,998.95	13,149.48	70,200	302	7	12.10	0.50
OIL PALMS	49,942.23	49,942.23	1,828	5	2	28.40	1.00
POWER & ENERGY	106.46	107.45	3,576,696	200,252	109	78.90	1.30
PLANTATIONS	736.20	734.67	435,077	83,037	84	6.70	0.70
STORES SUPPLIES	28,408.28	28,408.28	0	0	0	13.10	0.50
SERVICES	16,266.12	16,250.92	526,687	170,538	43	11.30	1.20
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	143.25	139.21	1,164,385	94,900	95	8.10	0.90
TRADING	12,334.19	12,344.88	47,353	88,394	101	31.80	0.90

GICS Industry Group Statistics

Industry Group	Price Index		Turnover			Sector	
	Today	Previous	Value (Rs)	Volume	Trades	P/E	PBV
Automobiles & Components	481.23	481.23	0	0	0	4.80	0.60
Banks	826.06	833.19	52,530,916	263,755	381	6.00	0.80
Capital Goods	851.86	862.32	55,141,724	1,237,474	471	11.00	0.80
Commercial & Professional Services	766.19	766.19	7,624	136	2	0.00	1.00
Consumer Durables & Apparel	789.61	784.06	12,230,835	500,516	140	25.30	1.00
Consumer Services	253.78	253.50	2,696,034	357,356	358	67.00	1.60
Diversified Financials	767.38	770.57	19,208,352	6,738,175	715	5.30	0.80
Energy	617.20	625.74	3,389,658	144,524	86	0.00	1.00
Food & Staples Retailing	1,241.50	1,241.50	44,086	88,114	97	15.10	2.20
Food, Beverage & Tobacco	946.43	935.34	6,230,125	486,806	272	15.80	2.50
Health Care Equipment & Services	863.13	895.03	312,223	23,339	45	15.50	1.80
Household & Personal Products	1,065.93	1,065.93	0	0	0	14.60	2.00
Insurance	2,181.00	2,147.63	50,896,904	1,502,924	884	4.40	1.80
Materials	540.58	539.35	4,464,074	158,142	271	7.10	0.90
Pharmaceuticals, Biotechnology & Life Sciences	1,807.58	1,807.58	13,805	23	7	4.70	1.40
Real Estate	755.29	753.42	1,960,156	138,428	156	5.10	0.60
Retailing	790.20	777.16	487,186	133,472	37	15.70	0.70
Technology Hardware & Equipment	0.00	-	0	0	0	0.00	0.00
Telecommunication Services	748.46	727.34	1,164,385	94,900	100	8.10	0.90
Transportation	702.71	685.99	338,723	82,615	33	20.30	0.70
Utilities	734.58	736.42	187,038	55,728	26	8.70	0.70

Economic Indicators & Other Statistics

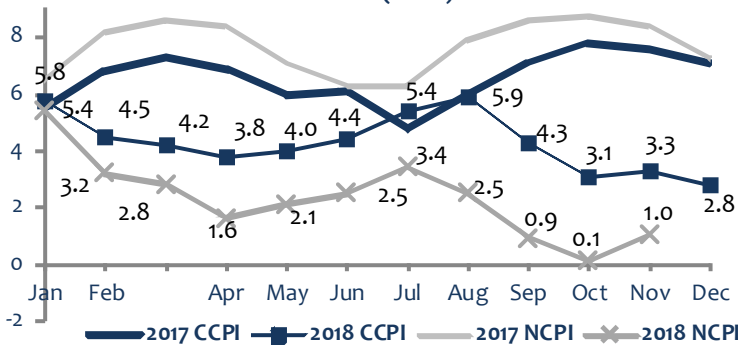
Exchange Rates

Currency	2nd Jan		31st Dec	
	Buying	Selling	Buying	Selling
Dollar (USA)	180.57	184.55	180.72	184.70
Pound (UK)	228.86	236.33	228.22	235.65
Euro (EU)	205.42	212.66	205.45	212.69
Dollar (Australia)	125.45	130.83	126.32	131.72
Dollar (Canada)	131.54	136.43	131.73	136.63
Franc (Switzerland)	182.28	189.11	182.31	189.13
Renminbi (China)	26.00	27.25	25.96	27.20
Yen (Japan)	1.6393	1.6995	1.6268	1.6865
Dollar (Singapore)	131.61	136.10	131.72	136.21

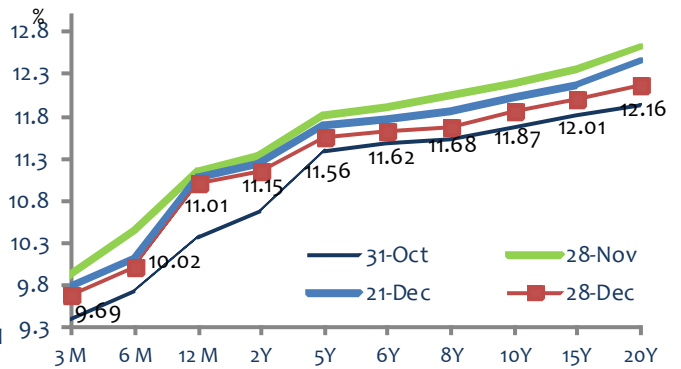
Indicative Rates

Currency	2nd Jan	31st Dec
	Ind: Value	Ind: Value
Yuan (Offshore)	26.5640	26.5486
Rupee (India)	2.6283	2.6132
Won (Korean)	0.1631	0.1644
Dinar (Kuwait)	601.7286	601.3686
Ringgit (Malay)	44.0827	44.0839
Rial (Oman)	474.1588	474.6874
Riyal (Qatar)	50.1288	50.1846
Riyal (KSA)	48.6615	48.7054
Dirham (UAE)	49.6975	49.7529

Inflation Colombo Consumers' Price Index (CCPI) & National Consumer Price Index (NCPI)



Government Securities - Secondary Market Yield



Central Bank's Policy Rates

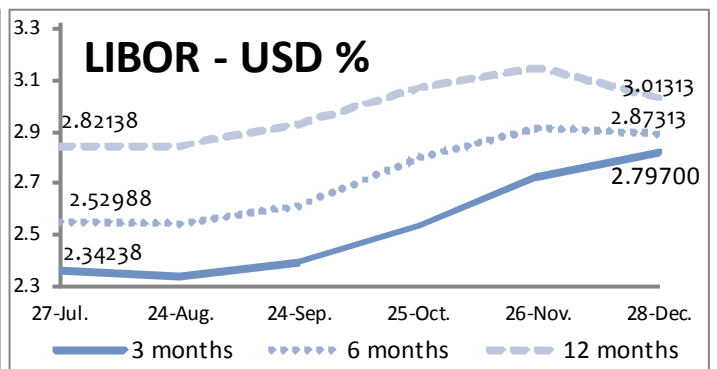
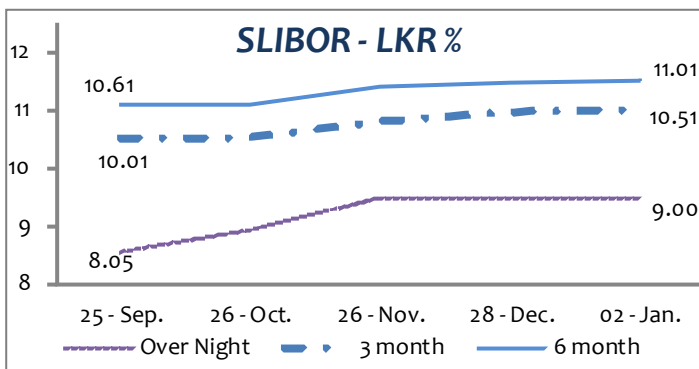
Description	Present	Previous		19.12.2018	12.12.2018	05.12.2018	19.11.2018
Standing Deposit Facility (SDF)	8.00%	7.25%	91 Days %	na	na	na	10.01
Standing Lending Facility (SLF)	9.00%	8.50%	182 Days %	9.99	10.03	10.01	na
Bank Rate	15.00%	15.00%	364 Days %	11.20	11.24	11.20	11.21
Statutory Reserve Ratio (SRR)	6.00%	7.50%	Amount	18Bn	23Bn	19Bn	15.5Bn

Treasury Bill Issuance

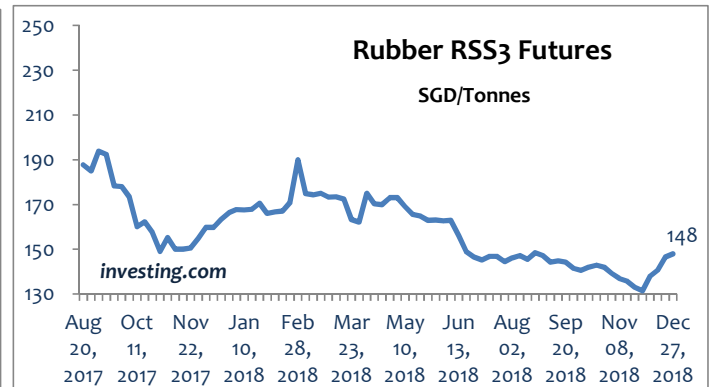
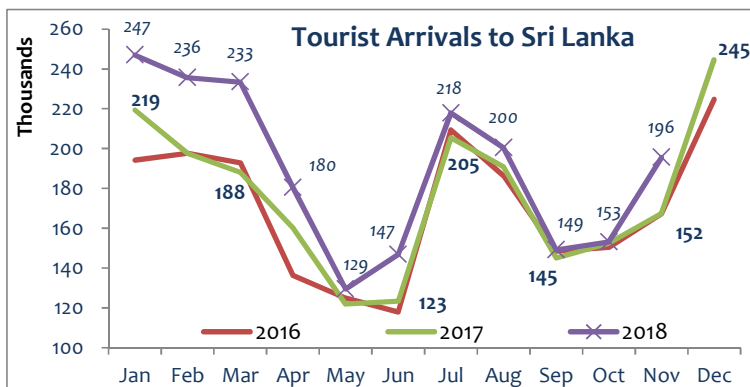
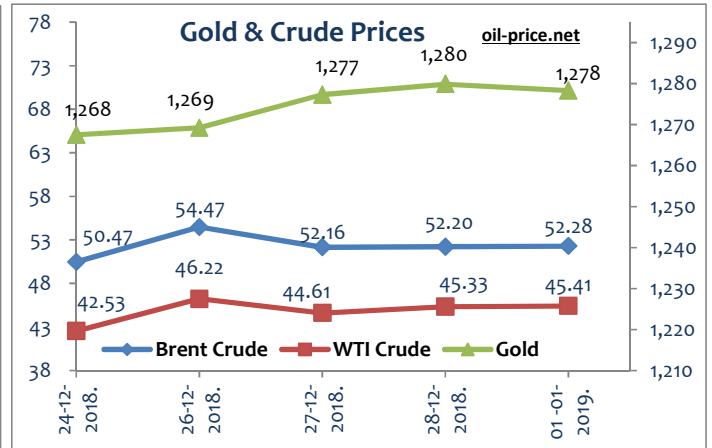
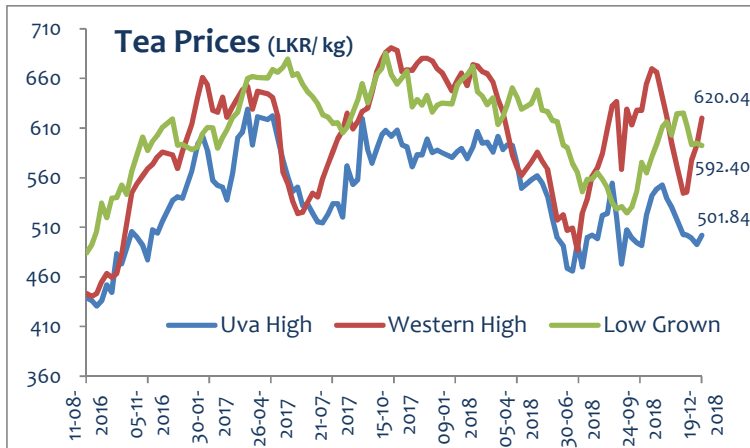
Date	13.12.2018	17.07.2016	15.10.2018	17.07.2016	17.09.2018	13.12.2018	15.08.2018	15.10.2018
Maturity	3 Years	4 Years	5 Years	6 Years	7 Years	8 Years	10 Years	15 Years
Current Yield	11.88	11.14	11.69	11.21	10.32	12.23	10.20	11.90
Previous Auction	17.09.2018	15.06.2017	15.08.2018	15.06.2017	16.07.2018	02.01.2018	01.06.2018	16.07.2018
Previous Yield	10.03	11.37	9.91	11.38	10.53	10.06	10.72	10.88

Treasury Bond Issuance

Date	13.12.2018	17.07.2016	15.10.2018	17.07.2016	17.09.2018	13.12.2018	15.08.2018	15.10.2018
Maturity	3 Years	4 Years	5 Years	6 Years	7 Years	8 Years	10 Years	15 Years
Current Yield	11.88	11.14	11.69	11.21	10.32	12.23	10.20	11.90
Previous Auction	17.09.2018	15.06.2017	15.08.2018	15.06.2017	16.07.2018	02.01.2018	01.06.2018	16.07.2018
Previous Yield	10.03	11.37	9.91	11.38	10.53	10.06	10.72	10.88



Economic Indicators & Other Statistics



Local News

Sri Lanka to halve foreign investor limit of rupee Treasuries

ECONOMYNEXT - Sri Lanka will cut the volume of rupee bonds foreigners can hold from 10% of total outstanding to 5%, Central Bank Governor Indrajit Coomaraswamy said as a soft-pegged regime has put renewed pressure on the currency. Some bond investors are footloose, and making the external sector volatile, he said. "In view of the increased volatility global financial markets we intend to reduce the threshold for foreign investment in rupee denominated from 10 percent to 5 percent," Governor Coomaraswamy said presenting a road map for monetary policy for 2019.

Rupee ends 19% down in 2018; bond outflows weigh

REUTERS: The Sri Lankan rupee fell 19% in 2018, making it one of the worst performing currencies in Asia, as heavy foreign outflows from government securities weighed on the local currency. The rupee hit a record low for a seventh straight session yesterday on continued outflows of foreign funds mainly from government bonds as political uncertainty dented investor sentiment. The rupee hit an all-time low of 183.00 against the dollar in early trade, surpassing its previous record of 182.90 marked in the prior session, Refinitiv Eikon data showed. It has weakened about 5.4% since Sri Lanka's political crisis began on Oct. 26, and lost 19% this year. The rupee ended at 182.80/183.00 per dollar, compared with 182.75/183.25 in the previous session. (dailymirror.lk)

The Port of Colombo handles record breaking 7 millionth TEU

The Port of Colombo handled its 7 millionth TEU on 31st December 2018. "The port of Colombo having handled one million TEUs in 1995, took nine years to handle 02 million TEUs in 2004. Having handled 04 million TEUs in 2010, it took 05 years to handle 05 million TEUs in 2015. In the year 2017, the port handled 06 million TEUS and it took 02 years to handle that extra million. But what is unique is that this year, the Port of Colombo handled 07 million TEUs and that 01 million took only 01 year. By the end of this year the transshipment volumes of the Port of Colombo has increased by 19.3%," the Secretary said. (adaderana.lk)

December inflation decelerates to 2.8%

The headline inflation in December measured by the Colombo Consumer Price Index (CCPI) decelerated to 2.8% on a YoY basis, from 3.3% recorded for November. During December, the CCPI rose only 0.1% to 126.3 points. The contribution to inflation by food commodities for the month of December was -0.48. The contribution of non-food items was 3.24%. The moving average inflation rate for the month of December 2018 was 4.3%. The corresponding rate for the month of November was 4.6%. Core inflation rose 3.1% during 2018, which is broadly in line with the headline number. ([dailymirror.lk](#))

Sri Lanka maize output expected to be up 61-pct

ECONOMYNEXT - Sri Lanka's maize output for 2018 is estimated to top 300,000 metric tonnes, up 61% from 2017 when the country went through a severe drought. The maize output for the 'Yala' minor agricultural season which falls in the second half of the year was estimated to be 32,402 metric tonnes up 22% from 46,533 metric tonnes of 2017, by the Department of Agriculture. Most of the maize is produced in the Maha or main agricultural season, where cultivation is currently underway for 2019. In 2018, Sri Lanka was estimated to have produced 273,951 metric tonnes of maize in the Maha seasons, up 67% from a year earlier.

Sri Lanka's Horton Place to see US\$5mn serviced apartment

ECONOMYNEXT - A 5.17Mn US dollar serviced apartment will be built in Horton Place, an upmarket suburb in Sri Lanka's capital Colombo, the state investment promotion agency said. The Board of Investment said it the serviced apartment will be built by a company called ARC Estate (Private) Ltd. The project will provide employment for 100 people.

Foreign News

Global stocks nurse New Year hangover as China data disappoint

(Reuters) - Asian shares turned tail on the first trading day of the New Year as more disappointing economic data from China darkened the mood and upended U.S. stock futures. MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan .MIAPJ0000PUS skidded 1.6 percent as a private sector survey showed China manufacturing activity contracted for the first time in 19 months. The Caixin/Markit Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) for December fell to 49.7, from 50.2 in November, and followed a poor official survey on factory output.

The Shanghai blue chip index .CSI300 quickly shed 1.2 percent and South Korea .KS11 fell 1.5 percent. Japan's Nikkei .N225 was closed for a holiday.

The safe-haven yen extended its broad rally as the U.S. dollar dropped to 109.37 JPY=, its lowest since June last year. The dollar has been dragged by a steep fall in Treasury yields in recent weeks as investors wagered the U.S. Federal Reserve would not raise rates again, even though it is still projecting at least two more hikes.

Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell will have the chance to comment on the economic outlook when he participates in a joint discussion with former Fed chairs Janet Yellen and Ben Bernanke on Friday.

The pullback in the dollar and the chance of no more U.S. rate hikes has been a boon for gold. The precious metal fetched \$1,283.71 an ounce XAU= to be close to a six-month peak.

Oil prices sagged anew after a punishing 2018. U.S. West Texas Intermediate crude (WTI) futures slumped nearly 25% last year, while Brent lost 19.5%. On Wednesday, U.S. crude futures CLC1 eased 43 cents to \$44.98 a barrel, while Brent LCOc1 fell 58 cents to \$53.22.

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