

Foreign Exchange Summary

as at November 19, 2021

Member State	USD	CAD	GBP	Euro
Bahamas (BSD)	1.00	0.79	1.38	1.16
Barbados (BBD)	2.03	1.61	2.76	2.32
Belize (BZD)	2.02	1.61	2.74	2.30
Guyana (GYD)	218.00	124.07	282.87	237.69
Haiti (HTG)	100.08	78.53	131.76	112.53
Jamaica * (JMD)	156.94	125.73	211.84	178.02
OECS (XCD)	2.71	2.14	3.62	3.09
Suriname (SRD)	21.64	17.00	29.30	23.82
T&T (TTD)	6.77	5.72	9.65	8.21

*Rates applicable for Customs & GCT purposes

Business News In Brief

Sagicor records a 94% increase in revenues

Sagicor Financial Company Ltd. (Sagicor), a leading Regional financial services with a growing presence in the United States, has announced revenue of US\$781.9 million in the third quarter, a 94% increase year over year. The company has reported net insurance premiums of US\$623.5 million during the period, an increase 135% year over year, while the net income to shareholders of US\$50.4 million. It reported earnings per share of US\$0.349 and stated that total comprehensive income to shareholders was US\$50.7 million in the third quarter. A dividend of US\$0.05625 per common share will be paid during the fourth quarter. [\(NAN\)](#)

With inflation at 8.5%, BOJ hikes interest rate to 2%

The Bank of Jamaica (BOJ) has effected another interest rate hike, from 1.5 % to 2.0%. The BOJ's policy rate is equivalent to the overnight rate it charges banking institutions for placements with the central bank. BOJ kept rates at a record low of 0.5% for several years, after a long series of rate cuts, but changed direction at the end of September when it hiked the policy rate by one percentage point to 1.5%, in defence of its inflation target of 4-6%. Inflation remains unchecked, however. The annual inflation rate as of October was estimated at 8.5%, up from 8.2% in September. The new BOJ interest rate became effective on November 17 with the next rate decision is scheduled for December 20. [\(JG\)](#)

IMF predicts growth of 5.7% for T&T in 2022

Anticipating recovery in oil and gas production, the IMF is projecting growth for Trinidad and Tobago of 5.7% and headline inflation of 2.4% in 2022. These projections reflect the findings of the recently concluded Article IV consultations, which projected a decline in real GDP of 1% for 2021, however the inflation rate of 2.2% as at July 2021 remains a data point of interest. At 10.1% of GDP, the overall fiscal deficit in FY2021 remained high due to continued weak revenue performance. As a result of the large deficits and the deep GDP contraction, central government debt rose sharply from 45.4% in FY2019 to 66% of GDP in FY2021. Public debt rose to 87% of GDP, significantly surpassing the government's soft public debt target of 65% of GDP. The fiscal deficit is projected to narrow to 7.5% of GDP in FY2022, reflecting a combination of higher revenue mobilization and modest spending cuts. Over the medium term, the fiscal deficit is projected to gradually narrow and reach balance by FY2027. Central government debt will peak at about 69% of GDP in FY2023 and thereafter gradually decline. [\(IMF\)](#)

Corporate Movements

⇒ Jamaican Teas Limited has appointed Dianna Blake-Bennett, CEO, Jamaican Teas Manufacturing Division, effective November 15, 2021

IMF: Jamaica poised for 8.25% growth as tourism rebounds

The IMF is projecting economic growth for Jamaica of 8¼ % in financial year 2021/22, moderating to 3.5% in financial year 2022/23. This comes in the wake of the recently concluded 2021 Article IV Mission, where the Fund noted that tourism has rebounded to near 70% of pre-crisis levels, despite 2 COVID-19 waves this year, and other sectors have picked up as well. Real GDP in the 2nd quarter of 2021 was 14.2% higher than the same quarter a year earlier. However, the Fund cautioned that the sharp rise in world food and energy prices has helped boost year-on-year inflation to 8.2%. Inflation is expected to increase to 8.8% at end-2021 and then recede to 6.7% at end-2022. Public debt has increased to 109% of GDP with the government's goal to reduce debt to 60% of GDP by 2027/28 being deemed appropriate by the Fund. For their part, deposit taking-institutions' recorded a Capital Adequacy Ratio at end-2020 was 14.3% (well above the regulatory minimum of 10%) and NPL's have remained below 3 %. [\(IMF\)](#) [\(JG\)](#)

Stock Market Summary

as at November 19, 2021

Jamaica Stock Exchange

Overall Market activity resulted from trading in 53 stocks of which 12 advanced, 30 declined and 11 traded firm. Market volume amounted to 8,907,757 units valued at over J\$199,296,925.05. Caribbean Cement Ltd was volume leader with 1,393,328 units. The JSE Index declined by 6,433.10 points (1.64 %) to close at 386,813.17.

Jamaica Junior Stock Exchange

Overall market activity resulted from trading in 33 stocks of which 15 advanced, 16 declined and 2 traded firm. Market volume amounted to 5,618,593 units valued at over J\$22,682,268.14. Index closed at 3,348.31.

Barbados Stock Exchange (as at November 17)

2 securities traded firm as 208 shares traded on the Regular Market, with a total value of \$202.20. Eppley Caribbean Property Fund SCC – Value Fund was the volume leader trading 185 shares. Index closed at 2,420.49.

Trinidad & Tobago Stock Exchange

Overall Market activity resulted from trading in 16 securities of which 6 advanced, 5 declined and 5 traded firm. Trading activity on the First Tier Market registered a volume of 326,780 shares crossing the floor of the Exchange valued at TT\$2,623,018.52. JMMB Group Ltd was volume leader with 235,258 shares changing hands for a value of TT\$531,683.08. The All T&T Index advanced by 4.66 points to close at 2021.44 and the Composite Index advanced by 3.97 points to close at 1465.14.

Guyana Stock Exchange

3 stocks advanced and 2 traded firm as 75,543 units crossed the floor. Demerara Distillers Ltd (DDL) was volume leader with 34,000 shares traded. The LSI closed at 1,004.44.

Eastern Caribbean Securities Exchange (ECSE)

2 stock traded as 79,349 shares crossed the floor. Grenada Co-op. Bank Ltd was volume leader trading 79,291 shares.

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

Editorial Manager: Joseph Cox ; Email: tei.info@caricom.org

Business News In Brief

T&T signs US\$1.8 billion natural gas development contract

T&T recently signed a 25 year agreement with Shell valued at US\$1.8 billion for the development of a large natural gas field. The Manatee Production Sharing Contract with Shell Trinidad and Tobago Ltd and Shell Trinidad and Tobago Resources SRL is in respect to the shallow-water field that straddles the maritime boundary of T&T and Venezuela. The Manatee field has a surface area of 48.35 sq.km with reserves of 2.712 trillion cubic feet of gas. The Manatee investment is expected to begin producing gas by 2025. However, T&T will begin earning fees and other financial benefits immediately from a range of charges that begin 10 days from the contract date and are due annually. This includes among others an administrative charge of US\$300,000, which will increase at 4% per annum & training and R&D contributions of US\$150,000 that will increase by 6% annually. [\(NAN\)](#) [\(JG\)](#)



CLICK TO DOWNLOAD
[The New Normal - A Post-COVID Primer for Business](https://www.caricom.org/the-new-normal/)
<https://www.caricom.org/the-new-normal/>

The Bahamas spends \$434.2 million in 1st qtr. debt servicing

The Bahamas has spent \$434.2 million to service central government debt in the first quarter of this fiscal year. According to the inaugural issue of the recently published public debt statistical bulletin, of the \$434.2 million repaid, \$61.2 million was in foreign currency— \$36 m for principal payments and \$24.7 m for interest. The remaining \$373 million was repaid in domestic currency - \$306.3 million for principal payments and \$66.7 million for interest. At the end of the first quarter the national debt stood at \$10.08 billion, comprised of \$4.35 billion in external debt and internal debt liabilities of \$5.73 billion. However, according to the document, \$1.986 billion in internal debt is expected to come due between October 2021 and June 2022. [\(NG\)](#)

International Oil Prices as at November 19, 2021

Futures	Price	US\$ Change	Change %
WTI Crude	US\$78.82	+0.62	+0.79
Brent Crude	US\$78.66	-2.39	-2.95
OPEC Basket	US\$79.37	-1.73	-2.13
Natural Gas	US\$5.08	+0.18	+3.67