

Aug 27, 2026

Three Take-Aways

- 1) July PCE showed slightly firmer headline inflation but softer consumer spending.
- 2) Hormuz de-escalation hopes pushed oil lower, though tighter-than-expected US inventories limited losses.
- 3) The BoK hiked its policy rate by 25bp as a pre-emptive move to address inflation and debt sustainability issues, helping KRW consolidate recent gains.

MACRO THEME: PCE Signals Cooling Demand

- Headline PCE inflation in July rose **0.2% MoM** and held at **3.7% YoY**, both coming in slightly above market expectations. However, underlying price pressures remained more contained, with **core PCE rising 0.2% MoM and 3.3% YoY**, broadly in line with consensus expectations.

- Importantly, the details suggest that inflation momentum was less concerning than the headline readings imply. **A significant share of the monthly increase in core prices came from higher portfolio-management fees, which contributed 0.16ppt.** These fees typically reflect changes in investment valuations in the previous month and are therefore inherently volatile. **Meanwhile, several discretionary services categories recorded softer price increases. Travel-related prices weakened notably as the boost from the World Cup faded,** pointing to more selective consumer spending.

- The spending side of the report was arguably more dovish. **Real consumer spending was flat in July**, down from a 0.4% increase in June. While some moderation reflected payback following Amazon Prime Day and FIFA-related spending in June, **households also appear to be feeling the squeeze from elevated fuel costs and restrictive financial conditions.** Meanwhile, personal income rose 0.4%, allowing the saving rate to edge higher.

- Overall, while the headline inflation reading was slightly firmer than expected, the combination of **in-line core inflation and subdued real spending is unlikely to alter the Fed's policy stance for the September FOMC meeting.**

Hormuz Hopes Push Oil Lower

- US-Iran tensions showed **further signs of de-escalation** overnight. **Iran and Oman agreed on a temporary maritime route** for commercial ships travelling through the Strait of Hormuz and reportedly **reached an understanding on their respective shares of the waterway and related revenues.** However, Tehran said the agreement would not automatically trigger a full reopening, leaving implementation dependent on further negotiations.

- Diplomatic efforts are also broadening. **Qatar's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister will visit Tehran on Thursday** to discuss de-escalation, freedom of navigation and conditions for renewed dialogue.

- Oil prices initially fell by around 2% as hopes for improved shipping access reduced the Hormuz risk premium. However, losses were **partly reversed after US crude inventories rose by just 95,000 barrels, well below market expectations.** Brent settled 0.8% lower

DATA/EVENTS

Overnight	Actual	Exp.	Prior
(US) PCE/Core Price Index YoY (Jul)	3.7%/3.3%	3.6%/3.3%	3.7%/3.3%
(US) Personal Consumption (2Q S)	3.4%	3.2%	3.2%
(US) GDP Annualized QoQ (2Q S)	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%
(US) Durable Goods Orders/Nondef Ex Air	1.1%/0.2%	0.5%/0.7%	0.5%/1.2%
(US) Personal Income/Spending (Jul)	0.4%/0.2%	0.2%/0.1%	0.2%/0.3%
(JP) PPI Services YoY (Jul)	3.6%	3.2%	3.2%
(SG) Industrial Production YoY (Jul)	6.8%	6.7%	7.5%
(AU) CPI/Trimmed Mean YoY (Jul)	3.5%/3.6%	3.3%/3.5%	3.8%/3.6%
(TH) BoT Benchmark Interest Rate	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Today	Actual	Exp.	Prior
(US) Initial Jobless Claims	208k	206k	206k
(US) Kansas City Fed Manf. Activity (Aug)	10	9	
(US) Wholesale Inventories MoM (Jul P)		0.2%	0.2%
(JP) Machine Tool Orders YoY (Jul F)		--	50.4%
(CH) Industrial Profits YoY (Jul)		--	15.1%
(KR) BOK Base Rate		3.00%	2.75%
(PH) BSP Overnight Borrowing Rate		5.00%	4.75%
(PH) Budget Balance PHP (Jul)		--	-264.3b

at US\$87.84/bbl, while WTI edged down 0.2%.

Yields (2Y: +3.6bp; 10Y: +1.8bp; 30Y: +0.3bp)

Equities (Nasdaq: -0.08%; S&P500: -0.02%; Dow: -0.2%)

FX (DXY: +0.3%)

Bank of Korea: Shifting Calculus & Compounding Concerns

- This morning, the **BoK raised rates by 25bp** to 3.00% as they upgraded growth forecasts with 2026 GDP growth projected at 3.3%.

- A relatively rare **consecutive increase in rates** with inflation at 2.8% point to **broader financial stability concerns compounding onto increasing upside inflation risks.**

- The decision may also be reflecting Governor Shin's inclination to be pre-emptive on both inflation and debt sustainability issues.

- At this juncture, given the shifts in monetary policy response function, we envisage room for two more rate hikes which would take the policy rate to 3.50%, a recent high in 2022-23.

- While the BoK may be inclined that the **front-loaded nature of their move may imply less need for hikes**, the rather sticky nature of housing price momentum may be hard to quell with their 50ps of hikes thus far.

- This is especially so as **supply and demand dynamics** collide with risk asset price buoyancy as the KOSPI continues to recover alongside perverse tendencies to front run further rate increase.

- While we await further communication from the press conference, **KRW bulls** have further impetuous to consolidate recent gains.

High Bar for US Fiscal (Consolidation) Conviction

- Impending **US fiscal consolidation plans risks being a damp squib.** Even if the Treasury recovers \$200bn-\$400bn may **merely temper UST yields.**

- Focus on **recovering tariff revenue forgone** (from Supreme Court strike down) may **underwhelm**, even compound economic/fiscal worries – as with US-Canada now. And **further revenue-boosting initiatives are limited**, partly worsened to mid-terms.

- Most conspicuously, aversion to rollback "Big Beautiful Bill" tax cuts undermines credibility/commitment.

- To be sure, **Bessent may attempt strategic expenditure cuts.** But binding limitation suggest subpar responses, not a convincing solution.

- Above all, Iran and **wider geo-political aggression/conflicts conspiring with the global race for AI supremacy warn of structural fiscal deterioration** exacerbated by higher rates (amid cost shocks) that trigger worries of "doom loop".

- Meanwhile, **acutely polarized US politics raise the bar** for committed bi-partisan endorsement required for any **convincing fiscal consolidation.**

- Market Implication: Skeptical markets raise the bar for fiscal consolidation, measuring yield pullback (to 10-20bp), with long-end especially vulnerable to "Sell America" risks.

FX OUTLOOK

FX	Close (NY)	Open*	Daily %Δ	Forecast	
USDJPY	159.31	159.26	+0.08%	158.00	- 160.30
EURUSD	1.1651	1.1655	▼0.21%	1.1590	- 1.1740
GBPUSD	1.3595	1.3596	▼0.40%	1.3530	- 1.3720
AUDUSD	0.7170	0.7181	+0.10%	0.7100	- 0.7200
DXY	99.2	--	+0.25%	98.3	- 99.8
USDCNY	6.7221	--	+0.03%	6.7000	- 6.7700
USDCNH	6.7225	6.7209	+0.08%	6.7000	- 6.7700
USDHKD	7.8390	7.8390	+0.01%	7.8200	- 7.8500
USDSGD	1.2719	1.2715	+0.20%	1.2620	- 1.2750
USDKRW	1385	1384	+0.00%	1373	- 1390
USDTHW	31.82	--	▼0.18%	31.70	- 32.15
USDINR	95.42	--	+0.00%	94.70	- 96.30
USDIDR	17712	--	+0.00%	17600	- 17850
USDMYR	4.027	4.028	▼0.40%	4.010	4.070
USDPHP	61.63	--	▼0.17%	61.30	- 62.20
USDTHB	32.76	32.80	+0.09%	32.5	- 32.9
USDVND	26099	26097	▼0.06%	25900	- 26300

*Open is as at 8am HKT/SGT.

MARKET MOVES

Bond Yields	2Y Close	10Y Close	2Y Δ (bps)	10Y Δ (bps)
UST (US)	4.211	4.648	3.6	1.8
JGB (JP)	1.687	2.885	1.4	-0.4
Bunds (GE)	2.839	3.233	3.0	3.3
Gilts (UK)	4.351	5.031	4.1	4.3
AGB (AU)	4.628	5.032	5.2	1.0
SGS (SG)	1.628	2.272	-1.2	-1.2
CGB (CN)	1.247	1.685	1.0	0.3
KGB (KR)	3.719	4.296	2.1	-3.0
SDL (IN)	6.246	6.850	0.0	0.0

G3 Equities	Close	Net Chg	Daily %Δ
S&P500 (US)	7675.7	-1.58	▼0.02%
Nasdaq (US)	26130.2	-21.10	▼0.08%
DJIA (US)	53463.88	-113.52	▼0.21%
N225 (JP)	66262.16	405.73	+0.62%
STOXX50 (EU)	6470.74	15.11	+0.23%

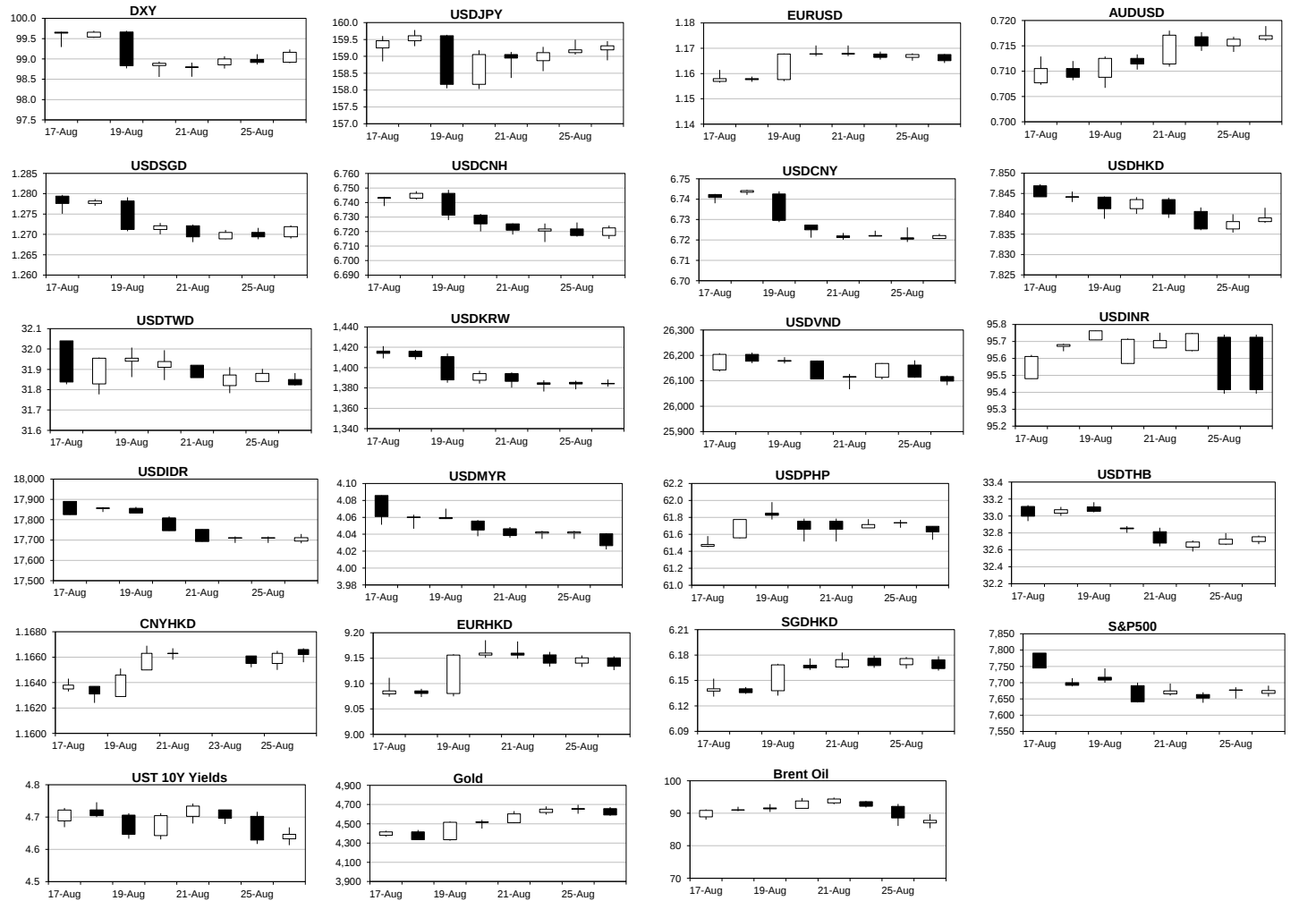
Commodity	Close	Net Chg	Daily %Δ
COPPER (LME)	14,461.57	-44.37	▼0.31%
IRON ORE (CN)	96.00	0.64	+0.31%
GOLD	4,591.07	-66.10	▼1.42%
SILVER	68.12	0.07	+2.60%
OIL (BRENT)	87.84	-0.74	▼0.84%
OIL (WTI)	82.23	-0.13	▼0.16%
NATURAL GAS	2.84	-0.54	▼0.78%

Cross FX	Close (NY)	Open*	Daily %Δ
EUR/JPY	185.62	185.62	▼0.12%
GBP/JPY	216.561	216.52	▼0.33%
JPY/SGD (100yen)	0.7982	0.7984	+0.14%
JPY/HKD (100yen)	4.9206	4.922	▼0.04%
CNH/JPY	23.713	23.692	+0.10%
CNH/HKD	1.1662	1.1661	▼0.01%
EUR/GBP	0.8571	0.85724	+0.20%
AUD/NZD	1.206	1.2075	+0.63%
EUR/CNH	7.8328	7.8331	▼0.11%
GBP/CNH	9.1406	9.137	▼0.30%
CNY/HKD	1.1662	1.1661	▼0.01%
EUR/HKD	9.1339	9.1361	▼0.18%
SGD/HKD	6.1642	6.1651	▼0.19%

*Open is as at 8am HKT/SGT.

Asia Equities	Close	Net Chg	Daily %Δ
ASX (AU)	5866.59	-2.70	▼0.05%
STI (SG)	5721.59	-14.09	▼0.25%
SHCOMP (CN)	3912.523	23.08	+0.59%
SZCOMP (CN)	2517.871	12.47	+0.50%
HSI (HK)	25652.97	141.87	+0.56%
SENSEX (IN)	77472.94	-183.15	▼0.24%
JSE (ID)	6405.685	-95.98	▼1.48%
KLSE (MY)	1748.54	12.21	+0.70%
PSE (PH)	6137.23	-53.00	▼0.86%
SET (TH)	1601.92	5.91	+0.37%
VNINDEX (VN)	1821.32	0.02	+1.67%

CHARTS



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