

CIO OFFICE MORNING MARKET WRAP 16 September 2024

Today probably heralds the most important week of the year. The Fed is expected to start its first rate cut since 2020 on Wednesday. The market has been swinging between expectations of a 25 or a 50 bps rate cut with latest expectations implying a 60% probability of a 50-bps rate cut. Our House View is for a 25 bps rate cut in September. We also believe there is a distinct possibility of a larger rate cut post the US elections if the Fed wants to frontload the rate cuts to be preemptive. In addition, it will be crucial to listen to the press event and the Q&A session as a dovish tilt from chairman Powell even after a 25 bps rate cut would be taken positively by the bond markets that would limit the ability of the yields to grind higher.

The higher rate cut expectations have been positive for long duration assets. The US Treasury long-end yields have moved lower by 3 to 5 bps last week. S&P 500 is up 4% over the week to close at 5,626 on Friday. Nasdaq has rallied 6%. Most of the MSCI sector indices had a positive week except Energy as oil prices moved lower. Gold is up over 3% to touch a new high of \$2,586.

All of these expectations of a supportive Fed ahead of the US elections could result in increased volatility especially as the results are anticipated to be a close call. In a shocking incident, Bloomberg reported that, former President Donald Trump was safe after his Secret Service detail opened fire at a man who was wielding an assault rifle at his West Palm Beach, Florida, golf course Sunday, in what is dubbed as the second assassination attempt in two months. The greatest volatility would ensue if the election results are contested and not accepted by either party.

Asian stocks continue to waver under a string of weak data releases from China over the weekend. Measures of factory output, consumption and investment all slowed more than economists had forecast, while the jobless rate unexpectedly rose to a six-month high. China's central bank signaled late Friday it would step up its fight against deflation and prepare more policies to revive the economy, after credit data showed private confidence remained weak. Today, Japan, South Korea and Mainland China are closed for a Holiday. Treasuries trading markets are closed this morning as a result. US stock futures are flat. Brent Crude trades at \$71.25 while Bloomberg reported that Hedge funds turned net bearish on Brent crude for the first time on record since 2011.

Apart from the big Fed decision, the BoE would also take a rate decision on Thursday with market expecting a Hold. BoJ also meets on Friday as traders would parse the press briefing for hawkish tones. From the US, we have the Empire manufacturing data today followed by Retail Sales Industrial Production tomorrow. We have the European Zew Survey estimation on Tuesday and the Eurozone CPI release on Wednesday. Stay Safe.

Have a great day.

Chief Investment Office Wealth Management, Emirates NBD.

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