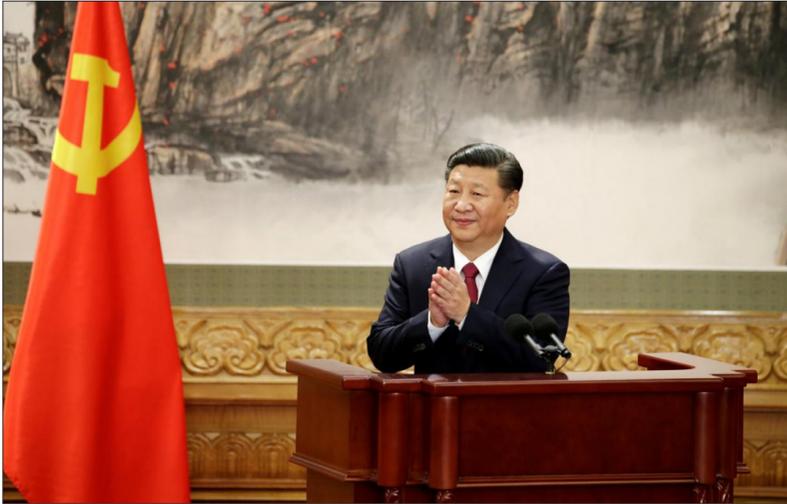


## 'Emperor' Stocks Soar in China as Xi Cleared for Indefinite Reign

SHANGHAI - Chinese speculators pounced on stocks with "emperor" in their name on Monday, after the ruling Communist Party set the stage for President Xi Jinping to stay in office indefinitely. The party proposed on Sunday to remove a constitutional clause limiting presidential service to just two terms in office, boosting prospects of Xi remaining in power after the end of an all but certain second term set to start next month. Shenzhen Emperor Technology Co Ltd <300546.SZ> surged nearly 10 percent in morning trade, while Anhui Yingjia Distillery Co <603198.SS> - whose Chinese name includes the phrase



"greeting the emperor's carriage" - rose as much as 4 percent. Harbin VITI Electronics Corp <603023.SS>, which has words meaning "powerful emperor" in its name, shot up over 7 percent at one point. The broader market <CSI300>, meanwhile, rose less than 1 percent. "This is pure 'stir-frying'." It has got nothing to do with fundamentals," said Yang Hongxun, Shanghai-based analyst at investment consultancy Shandong Shengguang, adding he expects those shares to be dumped "pretty soon". The "emperor" stock boost isn't the first such push by Chinese speculators. (Reuters)

### South Korea President Joins Country's Growing Me Too Movement

SEOUL, South Korea - South Korea's president joined a growing number of supporters of the country's Me Too movement, adding momentum to recent allegations of sexual misconduct against some of the most powerful men in the nation's art and entertainment industry. President Moon Jae-in said in a meeting with his advisers Monday that he respects victims who spoke out and urged authori-

ties to investigate the cases thoroughly, according to his office. Moon also said gender violence and sexual misconduct can be uprooted only when culture and views change, calling for a wider MeToo movement in the country. In recent weeks, many women in conservative South Korea have publicly accused high-profile figures in art, entertainment, religion and literature of sexual misconduct. (AP)

GENEVA - The outgoing U.N. human rights chief on Monday accused the veto-wielding members of the U.N. Security Council of being second only to criminals who kill and maim when it comes to responsibility for some of the world's most egregious rights violations. Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein delivered one of the strongest and clearest denunciations yet from a top U.N. official about certain uses of the Security Council veto, which gives extraordinary

### UN Rights Chief Slams 'Pernicious' Security Council Veto Use



powers to the five countries that wield it: Britain, China, France, Russia and the U.S. Speaking to the Human Rights Council, Zeid didn't mention specific

veto. But the comments were an unmistakable allusion to the war in Syria, over which Russia, a major backer of President Bashar Assad, and China have repeatedly used the veto to block efforts such as to hold war criminals to account or punish Assad's government for alleged use of chemical weapons. (AP)

### Korean Peace Olympics End on Hopeful Note



SEOUL - The "Peace" Olympics has succeeded in creating diplomatic momentum toward resolving the nuclear standoff on the Korean Peninsula, but it is unclear whether it

can be sustained. At the closing ceremony of the PyeongChang Winter Olympics in South Korea on Sunday, Thomas Bach, the president of the International Olympic Com-

mittee, praised North and South Korea for using the games to advance reconciliation efforts. "You have shared your faith in a peaceful future with all of us. You have shown how sports brings people together in our very fragile world," said Bach. Diplomatic breakthroughs North Korea's Olympic participation contributed to a prolonged pause in provoca-

tions on the Korean Peninsula. In the two years prior, North Korea fired over 25 missiles and conducted three nuclear tests, with the expressed goal of developing a nuclear-armed intercontinental ballistic missile that can target the U.S. mainland. The U.S. also agreed to delay joint military drills with South Korea to ensure a peaceful environment during the games. North Korean Olympians marched together with the South Korean team under a unification flag at the opening ceremony. (VOA)

### Force India, Toro Rosso, Haas Unveil New Cars for F1 Season

MONTMELO, Spain - Force India, Toro Rosso and Haas unveiled their new cars for the 2018 Formula One season shortly before preseason testing began on Monday. Sergio Perez and Esteban Ocon pulled the tarp off Force India's pink-and-white car, dubbed the VJM11. Perez and Ocon return for Force India after a good 2017, when the team finished fourth in the standings behind Mercedes, Ferrari and

Red Bull. Brendon Hartley and Pierre Gasly, who made their F1 debuts last year, did the honors for Toro Rosso's STR13. Romain Grosjean and Kevin Magnussen also return for Haas, which finished eighth among the 10 teams last year. Testing at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya runs until Thursday. A second four-day session will be held from March 6-9. (AP)

### Turkey Formally Requests Syrian Kurdish Leader's Extradition

ANKARA, Turkey - Turkey has submitted documents to the Czech authorities formally requesting the extradition of the former leader of a Syrian Kurdish party, Deputy Prime Minister Bekir Bozdag said Monday.

Salih Muslim, former co-chair of the Democratic Union Party, or PYD, was detained in the Czech capital of Prague on Saturday under an Interpol red notice based on a Turkish request for his arrest.

Turkey considers the PYD a "terrorist group" linked to outlawed Kurdish insurgents fighting within Turkey's own borders.

Muslim was put on Turkey's most-wanted list earlier in February with a \$1 million reward. (AP)

### Merkel Seeks to Rally Party behind Her over Coalition Deal

BERLIN - German Chancellor Angela Merkel is urging her party to sign off on a deal to form a new coalition government with the center-left Social Democrats.

Merkel told a party convention Monday that Germany is in a "difficult and previously unknown situation" without a new government five months after the election.

She acknowledged the Christian Democratic Union's disappointing result in last September's election, but insisted it had managed to make a strong mark in the agreement for a 'grand coalition' with the Social Democrats, citing financial aid for families and strengthening of law and order measures. (AP)

### Italy's Vaccine Debate Shows Anti-Establishment Sway



ROME - In Italy, the fight against measles has moved from the doctor's office to the political battleground.

The nation is facing one of its worst epidemics of measles in recent years, reporting a six-fold increase in cases last year that accounted for a quarter of all the cases in

Europe. And yet the government's response - a new law requiring parents to vaccinate their kids against measles and nine other childhood diseases - has become one of the most divisive issues going into March 4 general elections. Public health authorities

are incredulous that the small but loud anti-vax movement has gained traction during an entirely preventable measles outbreak, thanks to an election campaign where prominent politicians have questioned the safety of shots and denounced obligatory inoculations. (AP)

### US Should Lower Threshold for Talks with North Korea

SEOUL, South Korea - South Korea's president said Monday that the United States should lower the threshold for talks with North Korea and that the two countries should start a dialogue soon. President Moon Jae-in made the remarks in a meeting with Chinese Vice Premier Liu Yandong one day after a senior North Korean official told Moon that his country is willing to open talks with the United States. The officials were in South Korea for the closing ceremony of the Pyeong-

chang Winter Olympics on Sunday. According to his office, Moon asked for China's support for U.S.-North Korea talks, and Liu responded that China would help facilitate them. Moon also said that North Korea should show a commitment to denuclearization, something it has refused to do. Earlier, the U.S. said the international community needs to maintain maximum pressure on North Korea until it gives up its nuclear weapons development. (AP)

### Rome Blanketed By Snow as Arctic Storm Sets European Records

ROME - The Arctic storm dubbed the "Beast from the East" set record temperatures across much of Europe on Monday and brought a rare snowstorm to Rome, paralyzing the city and giving its residents an unusual chance to ski, sled and build snowmen in its famous parks and piazzas.

Rome's train, plane and bus services were crippled and Italy's civil protection agency even mobilized the army to help clear slush-covered streets as a city used to mild winters was covered by a thick blanket of snow.

"Beautiful, beautiful!" marveled Roman resident Ginevra Sciarpa, who donned a fur hat and thick scarf to brave the unusual cold. "Even though I'm not a child anymore, the enthusiasm for the snow is still the same. It is always beautiful, and above all I didn't have to go to work."

Elsewhere, the storm set dangerously low temperatures: Meteorologists in Germany reported a record low for this winter of -27 C (-16.6 F) on the Zugspitze mountain in the Alps. Moscow, as well, recorded its coldest night this winter, with the mercury dipping to nearly -20 C (-4 F) on Sunday night.

Doctors in Britain warned that the already-stretched National Health Service may have trouble coping with extra patients affected by what meteorologists are forecasting will be days of cold and high winds.

The intense winter weather has been dubbed "The Beast from the East" by British tabloids, citing Siberia as the source of the frigid temperatures. (AP)

## Neighbor News

### China, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan to Launch New Freight Traffic Routes

TASHKENT - China, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan will accelerate the international road freight transportation between countries. It is planned that relevant routes will be launched this month, said official representative of China's Foreign Ministry, GengShuang, at a press conference on Feb. 23. GengShuang noted that from Oct. 30

to Nov. 1, 2017, the countries conducted test cargo transportation on the Tashkent-Andijan-Osh-Irkeshdam-Kashgar international route, and had favorable results. Therefore, China, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan are accelerating the relevant work and are planning to launch routes for freight transportation this month. (Trend)

### Russia, Turkmenistan to Jointly Fight Against Drug Trafficking

ASHGABAT - An agreement on cooperation between Russia and Turkmenistan in the fight against drug trafficking has come into force, according to the official legal information website of the Russian Federation. Under the five-year agreement, the parties will exchange information on crimes related to drugs, as well as people and organizations suspected of involvement in drug

trafficking. The sides will also cooperate as part of activities aimed at preventing and detecting such crimes, as well as exchange experience and provide assistance in the training of personnel.

The document was signed by President of Russia Vladimir Putin and his Turkmen counterpart Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov in Ashgabat in October 2017. (Trend)

### Uzbekistan, US Businesses Consider Boosting Interaction

TASHKENT - Business circles of Uzbekistan and the US have considered cooperation issues at a round table held by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Uzbekistan jointly with the US-Uzbek Chamber of Commerce.

The participants discussed issues such as bilateral trade between the United States and Uzbekistan, strategy of entering the US market, market research methods and international marketing, including localization and adaptation of the product, adjustment of prices for local market demand, global e-commerce for entrepreneurs in Uzbekistan. Over 20 companies engaged in production of food, polypropylene pipes, pharmaceutical products, agricultural products, wholesale trade, electronic commerce took part in the roundtable.

The high efficiency and effectiveness of the Uzbek-American business forum, held within the framework of the visit of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev to New York in September 2017, was highlighted at the event. Within the event, the business circles of two states signed contracts for \$2.6 billion.

The trading house of Uztrade was opened in New York in 2017 to enhance cooperation in the sphere of trade. Presently, Uzbekistan mainly exports to the United States are chemical products, fresh and dried fruit and vegetables, various spices, handicrafts and engineering products. In 2016, the volume of trade turnover between the two countries increased by 1.7 times and reached \$453.8 million. (Trend)

### Pakistan to Be an Economic, Business Giant Following Completion of CPEC Projects

PESHAWAR - Economics and political experts here Monday said the world and Asian trade will revolve around Pakistan after completion of CPEC projects and

will make the country a prime choice for international investors. The CPEC projects signed during PMLN Government tenure had not only enhanced the geo-economic and political importance of Pakistan but also made the country a prime choice for local and foreign investors due to establishment of state of the art roads and railways network, establishment of industrial zones and full operationalization of Gwadar Port, the experts said.

Senior economist, Professor Dr. Muhammad Naeem told APP that Pakistan would become an economic and busi-

ness giant in Asia after completion of CPEC projects as the world's trade would revolve around it with full operationalization of Gwadar Port.

Pakistan, China, Central Asian Republics, Middle East and Central Asian states, countries of African continents, Afghanistan and other regional and international countries would be directly and indirectly linked with Gwadar Port, enhancing the country's geo-strategic and political-economic importance manifolds in world.

By linking Kashgar with Gwadar port through state of the network of roads and railway lines, he said, CPEC project has a vast potential to inject new life into the region's economies besides making Pakistan a prime choice for investment. (Monitoring Desk)