

Hong Kong & Mainland China News – July-2018

People's Daily says Hong Kong is more stable

By news.rthk.hk
Sunday, July 1, 2018

The Communist Party's flagship newspaper says the political environment in Hong Kong has become more stable over the past year. The People's Daily said deep-rooted conflicts here have to be resolved for good governance.

The newspaper praised officials, lawmakers, and judges for looking at matters from the country's perspective. It said the development of the Greater Bay Area and infrastructure projects, like the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau bridge, can strengthen the link between Hong Kong and the mainland.

Meanwhile, the director of the Beijing Liaison Office, Wang Zhimin, has praised Lam's performance over the past year, saying she had boosted social harmony and rational discussion within the community. He also welcomed, what he described as, the proactive approach of her governance.

Retail sales value up 12.9%

By www.news.gov.hk
Tuesday, July 3, 2018

The value of total retail sales in May, estimated at \$40.5 billion, increased 12.9% compared to the same month a year ago, the Census & Statistics Department announced today.

After taking out the effect of price changes over the period, the volume of total retail sales in May increased 11.6% year-on-year.

The sales value of jewellery, watches and clocks, and valuable gifts increased 23.8%.

This was followed by sales of commodities in department stores (+16.7% in value); commodities in supermarkets (+2.8%); apparel (+6.7%); medicines and cosmetics (+18.7%); food, alcohol and tobacco (+5.9%); other consumer goods, not elsewhere classified (+20.1%); electrical goods and other consumer durable goods, not elsewhere classified (+12.8%); motor vehicles and parts (+2.3%); fuels (+17.5%); footwear, allied products and other clothing accessories (+11.9%); furniture and fixtures (+4.8%); books, newspapers, stationery and gifts (+2.5%); Chinese drugs and herbs (+3.9%); and, optical shops (+13.9%).

The department said double-digit growth in retail sales continued in May due to the buoyant local consumption sentiment and a visible increase in visitor arrivals.

The near-term outlook for retail sales remains positive, helped by the robust labour market and sustained growth in inbound tourism, it added.

1.4m local companies registered

By www.news.gov.hk

Tuesday, July 3, 2018

The total number of local companies registered reached 1,407,743 at the end of June, up 23,797 from the end of 2017, the Companies Registry announced today.

A total of 85,449 local companies were newly registered in the first half of 2018, among which 30,447 were incorporated online using the e-Registry.

From March 1, all companies incorporated in Hong Kong, except listed companies, are required to maintain up-to-date beneficial ownership information by keeping a Significant Controllers Register.

A new licensing regime has also been introduced to require trust or company service providers to apply for a licence from the Registrar of Companies before they can provide trust or company services as a business in Hong Kong.

Registrar of Companies Ada Chung said: "The new initiatives have enhanced Hong Kong's regulatory regime for combating money laundering and terrorist financing.

"The registry currently conducts site inspections to ensure proper compliance with the new requirements."

For non-Hong Kong companies that have established a place of business in Hong Kong, 592 companies were newly registered in the first half of the year, compared to 566 in the second half of 2017.

The total number of registered non-Hong Kong companies reached 10,755 by the end of June.

Mainland's June export jump beats market forecast

By news.rthk.hk
Friday, July 13, 2018

China's exports unexpectedly accelerated in June and its trade surplus with the United States hit a record high in a positive sign for the economy, amid an intensifying trade row with the United States.

Exports rose 11.3 percent in June from year ago after a 12.6-percent gain in May. A Reuters poll had forecast 10 percent rise. Imports grew at 14.1 percent last month when compared to a year ago – below expectations.

That resulted in a sizeable trade surplus of more than US\$41.6 billion for last month.

For the first half of this year, exports rose 12.8 percent from same period last year, and Imports rose 19.9 percent.

China's trade performance has got off to a strong start this year, supported by sustained demand at home and abroad.

But the export outlook is being clouded by a heated trade dispute with the United States.

IMF sticks to 3.9pc global growth forecast

By www.thestandard.com.hk
Tuesday, July 17, 2018

The International Monetary Fund is keeping its forecast for global economic growth unchanged at 3.9 percent this year despite worries about rising trade tensions and higher oil prices. But the lending agency is downgrading the outlook for Europe and Japan.

The IMF now predicts that the economy of the 19-country eurozone will grow 2.2 percent in 2018, down from the 2.4 percent it forecast in April. The fund expects the Japanese economy to expand by 1 percent this year, downgrading its 1.2 percent April forecast.

The IMF still expects tax cuts to lift U.S. economic growth to 2.9 percent this year, up from 2.3 percent in 2017.

Citing proliferating trade conflicts, IMF chief economist Maury Obstfeld warned that "the risk of worse outcomes has increased" for the world economy.

HKMA, banks unveil blockchain trade finance setup

By news.rthk.hk

Tuesday, July 17, 2018

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority and seven banks, including HSBC and Standard Chartered, will jointly launch a trade finance platform in September using blockchain Technology which underpins digital currencies such as bitcoin.

The platform will be one of the largest examples globally of a government-led, cross-bank effort to reform the multi-billion-dollar sector.

Trade finance is often described as one of the most manual and paper-oriented parts of the financial services industry.

Banks, insurers and export credit agencies work as middlemen between exporters and importers, to ensure both sides are protected from financial risks such as currency fluctuations, political instability, as well as issues of non-payment or the creditworthiness of the companies involved.

The blockchain project is expected to sharply reduce the amount of paperwork and time needed, especially for international trade, and allow banks to serve new and current clients more effectively.

The HKMA said the next major milestone is to link up with other trade platforms in other jurisdictions to further facilitate cross-border trade.

The trade finance platform will be provided by Ping An Insurance.

Goods exports up 12.9%

By www.news.gov.hk

Thursday, July 19, 2018

The volume of Hong Kong's total exports of goods in May increased 12.9% year-on-year, the Census & Statistics Department announced today.

The volume of imports of goods increased 13.5% in May.

The prices of total exports of goods increased 2.8% year-on-year and the prices of goods imports rose 2.9%.

In the first five months of 2018, the volume of total exports of goods was up 8.1% over the same period last year, while the volume of goods imports rose 9.3%.

The prices of total goods exports increased 2.4% for the period, while the prices of imports of goods went up 2.5%.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, the volume of total exports of goods increased 2.6% in the quarter ending May compared with the preceding three months, while the volume of goods imports increased 2.5%.

Xi hits out at 'economic hegemony'

By www.thestandard.com.hk

Thursday, July 26, 2018

"There will be no winner in trade war," said President Xi Jinping yesterday in his keynote speech at the opening session of the BRICS Business Forum in Johannesburg, South Africa.

"Economic hegemony is not desirable and will damage the common interests of the international world," he went on to say, CGTN reports.

Xi also vowed to build an open world economy, "We are facing a choice between cooperation and confrontation."

"At a time when the world economy is undergoing profound challenges and changes, only openness can lead to common development and prosperity for all countries," Xi noted.

He also said that China will help developing countries, including those in Africa and those that are the least developed, so they can effectively participate in the international division of production capacity.

BRICS countries should uphold multilateralism, Xi insisted.

He believes that a decent and stable global development environment is the prerequisite of the development for all countries.

He admitted that the present international order is not perfect but he believes that the international order is based on rules, oriented by equality and aimed at win-win cooperation, meaning it should not be abandoned at will.

Xi urged for fairness in international society and said emerging markets and developing countries' voices should be heard to ensure they have room to develop.

"For emerging economies and developing countries, this is a world of both opportunities and challenges," Xi stressed.

Xi hailed the role of the BRICS countries in global cooperation and said new advances will be made in 2018.