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NEWS SUMMARY 23 May 2018

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Trump floats management changes instead of sanctions for China's ZTE

U.S. President Donald Trump on Tuesday floated a plan to fine ZTE Corp and shake up its management, as his administration considered rolling back more severe penalties that have crippled the Chinese telecommunications company.

Donald Trump casts doubt on Singapore summit with North Korea's Kim Jong Un, says could be delayed

U.S. President Donald Trump has said there is a "very substantial chance" a historic summit with North Korea's Kim Jong-un next month may not happen.

Trump weighs 10 pct cut in EU steel, aluminium exports to U.S.- WSJ

U.S. President Donald Trump is weighing trade measures to cut European Union steel and aluminum exports to the U.S. by about 10%.

Small banks trump Wall Street on Dodd-Frank rewrite

The House passed on bipartisan legislation that would ease bank rules introduced in the wake of the 2007-2009 financial crisis. The bill would rewrite some key parts of the 2010 Dodd-Frank law.

Key Senate Democrat not committed to further financial rule-easing

Democratic U.S. Senator Heidi Heitkamp said she has not committed support for further rule-easing sought by Republican lawmakers. Heitkamp added she could be open to certain other measures sought by the House to ease capital markets rules.

Congress reviewing sale of precision munitions to Saudis, UAE: sources

The Trump administration, working to increase exports of U.S.-made weapons, has asked the U.S. Congress to review the sale of more than 120,000 precision-guided munitions to allies Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

China slashes auto import tariffs in boost to BMW, Tesla

China will cut tariffs on imported cars to 15% from 25%, moving to ease trade tensions with a U.S. government eager to reduce its trade deficit with the Asian economic powerhouse.

China says eastern European summits are good for EU

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said annual summits between China and central and eastern European countries are beneficial to the European Union as a whole. He added the "16+1" platform had had a positive effect on economic development.

China to Australia: Remove 'colored glasses' to get ties back on track

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told Julie Bishop that Australia needs to remove its "tinted glasses" and "translate its words into concrete actions" to improve ties after tensions over a bill proposed by Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull to limit foreign influence in Australia, including political donations.

UPDATE 1-Australia's CBA exits China insurer with \$503 mln stake sale to Mitsui

Commonwealth Bank of Australia is selling its 37.5% stake in a Chinese life insurer to Japan's Mitsui Sumitomo Insurance Co for 3.2 billion yuan (\$660 million).

The value of Australian construction didn't increase much in early 2018

The amount of construction work done in Australia rose 0.2% in the March quarter, falling short of market expectations for a 1.3%cent gain. Total building work done on homes and non-residential buildings declined 0.7% in the quarter.

Japan's manufacturing growth cools to nine-month low in May - flash PMI

Japan Manufacturing PMI was down from 53.8 in April to 52.5 in May. New order growth softened to a nine-month low, while input prices climbed at the fastest rate since January 2014.

Japan, Russia, Turkey bring potential US tariff retaliation to \$3.5 billion

Japan, Russia and Turkey detailed their compensation claims in notifications to the World Trade Organization, bringing the total U.S. tariff bill to around \$3.5 billion annually.

North Korea has accepted list of South Korea reporters to visit nuclear test site - official

North Korea has accepted a list of South Korean reporters to visit their nuclear testing site at Punggyeri, a South Korean unification ministry official said on Wednesday.

Boris Johnson Warns May to 'Get On With It' and Deliver Brexit

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said Theresa May must "get on with it" and take Britain out of the European customs union "as fast as is reasonably possible".

EU agrees to start Australia, New Zealand trade talks

The European Commission has leapt ahead of the UK in the pursuit of free trade deals with Australia and New Zealand after member states gave the green light for talks to start within weeks.

Facebook face-off - EU gets little news from Zuckerberg

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg apologized for the company's mistakes but angered European lawmakers by dodging their questions. Zuckerberg avoided answering specific questions, notably around opt-outs from targeted advertising, the sharing of data between Facebook and WhatsApp.

Chinese-Australian billionaire involved in UN bribery case, MP claims

Andrew Hastie, the chair of Australia's intelligence and security committee, identified political donor and philanthropist Chau Chak Wing as "co-conspirator 3 [CC-3]" who allegedly funded a \$200,000 bribe to UN General Assembly president John Ashe in 2013.

Hong Kong developers raise prices of flats by up to 70 per cent as record Kai Tak land sale boosts confidence

Hong Kong developers are raising the prices of their unsold units by as much as 70%, fuelled by a recent land auction which fetched HK\$25.16 billion (US\$3.21 billion), a record price for a residential plot.

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