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Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Oil gains on tighter U.S. supply, Venezuela sanctions

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Oil prices rose on Wednesday, as U.S. government data that showed signs of tightening supply and investors remained concerned about supply disruptions following U.S. sanctions on Venezuela's oil industry.

U.S. crude futures rose 92 cents to settle at \$54.23 a barrel, a 1.73 percent gain. Brent crude futures gained 33 cents, or 0.54 percent, to \$61.65 a barrel.

Prices extended gains after government data showed U.S. crude oil stockpiles rose less than expected last week due to a drop in imports, while gasoline inventories fell from record highs as refiners slowed production.

Crude inventories rose by 919,000 barrels, the Energy Information Administration said, compared with analysts' expectations in a Reuters poll for an increase of 3.2 million barrels.

After eight straight weeks of builds to a record high, gasoline stocks fell 2.2 million barrels last week, versus forecasts for a 1.9 million-barrel gain.

"The report looked supportive on several fronts with the most obvious being a smaller-than-expected crude build of less than 1 million barrels," Jim Ritterbusch, president of Ritterbusch and Associates, said in a note. "While the slight increase may not appear monumental, we will reiterate that the build compared with 5-year average increases of about 7.5 million barrels."

The market has been supported since Washington announced export sanctions against Venezuela on Monday, limiting transactions between U.S. companies and Venezuelan state-owned oil firm PDVSA.

The fight to control Venezuela, which has the world's largest oil reserves, has intensified with the new sanctions aimed at driving President Nicolas Maduro from power, the strongest U.S. measures yet against the socialist president who has overseen economic collapse and an exodus of millions of Venezuelans in recent years.

The sanctions aim to freeze sale proceeds from PDVSA's exports of roughly 500,000 barrels per day of crude to the United States, the OPEC member's largest crude importer.

Traders who sell Venezuelan crude to the United States are looking for avenues to keep crude flowing during the sanctions, according to people familiar with the discussions, while U.S. companies that buy Venezuelan oil have also been looking for work-arounds, seeking counsel for instance on whether the use of third-party intermediaries, such as commodity merchants, can continue

"Yet the risks of such an event seem very low," he added. "This oil will find its way to the market."

Market participants remained worried about global economic growth, which has shown signs of slowing amid a trade dispute between the United States and China, the world's two biggest economies.

World markets slip on China worries; dollar steady ahead of trade talks

Officials from Washington and Beijing launched a new round of trade talks on Wednesday. The two sides have slapped hefty import tariffs on each other's goods.

China reported its lowest annual economic growth in nearly 30 years last week, adding to a litany of worrying economic data from Europe and East Asia. court, a process which requires consensus among member states. As a result, the court is running out of judges, and will be unable to issue binding rulings in disputes.

While the United States was among the signatory countries of the e-commerce agreement, it did not participate in a separate informal WTO gathering chaired by Switzerland.



A supporter of Venezuelan opposition leader and self-proclaimed interim president Juan Guaido takes part in a protest against Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro's government in Caracas, Venezuela January 30, 2019. The banner reads: "Going hungry". REUTERS/Andres Martinez Casares

Vale, miners' shares climb on post-disaster plan to shut dams

BRUMADINHO, Brazil (Reuters) - Vale SA's shares recovered some extensive recent losses on Wednesday that were triggered by a deadly tailing dam collapse, after the world's largest iron ore producer announced a plan to sacrifice production for safety. Vale will cut 10 percent of its output by decommissioning 10 dams, Chief Executive Fabio Schvartsman said on Tuesday, as the death toll following the miner's second dam collapse in just over three years was expected to exceed 300.

The announcement triggered an 8.5 percent rally in Vale shares as well as a broader bounce in Chinese iron ore futures and shares of rival companies.

At least 84 bodies have been recovered from the slurry at the Corrego do Feijao mine so far following the dam's collapse last week, with over 250 people still missing and presumed dead.

Vale's initiative aims to pre-empt tough questions about its safety record in the wake of Friday's disaster, coming after a similar deadly dam collapse in 2015 at the nearby Samarco mine, which Vale co-owns with BHP Group.

U.N. human rights experts called for an official investigation into the disaster. Baskut Tuncat, a U.N. expert on disposal of hazardous substances, urged

Brazil to prioritize dam safety evaluations and block new tailing dams until safety could be ensured.

Vale's plan to spend 5 billion reais (\$1.3 billion) decommissioning dams over the next three years involves suspending operations at mines producing about 40 million tonnes of iron ore and 11 million tonnes of pellets per year, Schvartsman told journalists.

Israeli military personnel search for victims of a collapsed tailings dam owned by Brazilian mining company Vale SA, in Brumadinho, Brazil January 30, 2019. REUTERS/Washington Alves Shares in Vale's rivals BHP Group, Rio Tinto and Fortescue Metals Group rose, lifting Australia's metals and mining index.

"In our reports published over the last few days, we highlighted that the two main uncertainties in the area of financial impact were the impact on short and medium-term production and potential legal actions stemming from the event," XP strategist Karel Luketic said in a research note.

Vale's announcement "helps ease worries relative to the first uncertainty mentioned, production," Luketic said.



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Trump slams U.S. intelligence chiefs as 'passive and naive' on Iran

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - President Donald Trump on Wednesday called U.S. intelligence chiefs "extremely passive and naive" on Iran and dismissed their assessments of the threat posed by North Korea a day after they contradicted his views during congressional testimony. Leaders of the U.S. intelligence community told a Senate committee on Tuesday that the nuclear threat from North Korea persists and that Iran is not taking steps toward making a nuclear bomb, conclusions that contrasted starkly with Trump's assessments of those countries. "The Intelligence people seem to be extremely passive and naive when it comes to the dangers of Iran. They are wrong!" Trump, whose has criticized U.S. intelligence agencies starting even before he took office, said in a Twitter post. Trump cited Iranian rocket launches and said that Tehran was "coming very close to the edge." "Perhaps Intelligence should go back to school!" Trump said. Trump last year pulled out of an international nuclear deal with Iran put in place under his Democratic predecessor Barack Obama, saying Tehran was "not living up to the spirit" of the agreement, and re-imposed sanctions. Under the 2015 deal, Iran agreed to restrictions on its nuclear activities in exchange for the lifting of sanctions. FBI Director Christopher Wray, CIA Director Gina Haspel, Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats, Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) Director Gen. Robert Ashley, National Security Agency (NSA) Director Gen. Paul Nakasone and Robert Cardillo, director of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, testify to the Senate Intelligence Committee hearing about "worldwide threats" on Capitol Hill in Washington, U.S., January 29, 2019. REUTERS/Joshua Roberts The U.S. intelligence officials told the Senate Intelligence Committee that Iran was not developing nuclear weapons in violation of agreement. Their assessments also broke with other assertions by Trump, including on the threat posed by Russia to U.S. elections, the threat that the Islamic State militant group poses in Syria and North Korea's commitment to denuclearize.

"The President has a dangerous habit of undermining the intelligence community to fit his alternate reality," Senator Mark Warner, the Intelligence Committee's top Democrat, wrote on Twitter. "People risk their lives for the intelligence he just tosses aside on Twitter." Republican U.S. Representative Mike Gallagher, who served as a Marine Corps intelligence officer during the Iraq war, defended the intelligence agencies, saying, "They are doing a very difficult job and they are actually trying to advance the president's priorities." Trump has challenged U.S. intelligence agencies' findings in the past, including casting doubt on their conclusion that Russia interfered in the 2016 U.S. election with a campaign of hacking and propaganda to help him win the presidency. Former CIA Director John Brennan last year called Trump's performance at a joint news conference with Russian President Vladimir Putin "nothing short of treasonous" after Trump seemed to give credence to Putin's denial of Russia meddling in the 2016 election. In retaliation, Trump revoked Brennan's security clearance. On Wednesday, Brennan called Trump's refusal to accept the intelligence assessments a sign of "intellectual bankruptcy." The CIA and the Director of National Intelligence office did not comment on Trump's remarks. Trump has invested heavily in improving relations with North Korea in hopes of getting the reclusive communist nation to abandon its nuclear ambitions. He broke with decades of U.S. policy when he agreed to meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un last June and has planned a second summit in February. "North Korea relationship is best it has ever been with U.S. No testing, getting remains, hostages returned. Decent chance of Denuclearization," Trump said on Twitter. "I look forward to seeing Kim Jong Un shortly. Progress being made-big difference!" was unlikely to give it up.



I.P. Park, president and chief technical officer for LG Electronics, speaks on artificial intelligence during a keynote address at the 2019 CES in Las Vegas

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Editor's Choice



FILE PHOTO: Deutsche Telekom logo is seen during preparations at the CeBit computer fair, which will open its doors to the public on March 20, at the fairground in Hanover, Germany, March 19, 2017. REUTERS/Fabian Bimmer/File Photo



Canada's PM Trudeau poses with MPs in the interim House of Commons on Parliament Hill in Ottawa



A 3D printed Huawei logo is placed on glass above displayed cyber binary code in this illustration taken January 29, 2019. REUTERS/Dado Ruvic/Illustration



A man walks past a Huawei sign in a mall in Beijing, China, January 29, 2019. REUTERS/Thomas Peter



A member of a private security firm escorts a visitor into the home of Huawei's financial chief Meng Wanzhou, in Vancouver



U.S. Attorney General Matthew Whitaker wipes perspiration as he addresses a news conference to announce indictments against China's Huawei Technologies at the Justice Department in Washington



A member of a private security firm stands outside of the family home of Huawei's financial chief Meng Wanzhou, in Vancouver



FILE PHOTO: Britain's Prince Charles in Lagos, Nigeria, November 7, 2018. Sunday Alamba/Pool via Reuters -/File Photo

2019 Is The Year Of The Pig On The Chinese Zodiac

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



The Pig is the twelfth of all zodiac animals. According to one myth, the Jade Emperor said the order would be decided by the order in which they arrived to his party. Pig was late because he overslept. Another story says that a wolf destroyed his house. He had to rebuild his home before he could set off. When he arrived, he was the last one and could only take twelfth place.

Personality and characteristics

Pigs might not stand out in a crowd. But they are very realistic. Others may be all talk and no action. Pigs are the opposite. Though not wasteful spenders, they will let themselves enjoy life. They love entertainment and will occasionally treat themselves. They are a bit materialistic, but this is motivation for them to work hard. Being able to hold solid objects in their hands gives them security.

Men born in the Pig year are optimistic and gentle. They are very focused. Once they decide on a goal, they'll put everything into it.

They are not the best with money. Though cool-headed, they are also gullible. They trust others easily and are often scammed. This can cause them to lose a fortune.

Women born in the Pig year are full of excitement. They attend social events whenever possible and treat everyone genuinely. Combined with their easygoing personality, they gain everyone's trust. However, they are sometimes over-friendly. In their excitement, they can forget to give others personal space. They also have good fortune with wealth. As long as they keep at it, the efforts will not go to waste. Though they don't start with an advantage, their hard work will keep money

flowing in.

Compatibility

Most compatible with Pig: Tiger, Rabbit, Goat

Pigs are the most compatible with Tigers. The brave Tiger gives Pigs the security they need.

Least compatible with Pig: Snake, Monkey

Pigs and Snakes have clashing personalities and are the least compatible. They have biases against each other and can't compromise. It's hard to get along with Monkeys as well. The relationship is full of tension.

Careers fit for Pigs

Pigs are gentle and rarely lose their temper. Even when they do, it's never a dramatic commotion. They'll always try to compromise and settle things quickly. Because their goal in life is for everyone to live in harmony, they are suitable for careers related to charity and fundraisers.



Health and lifestyle

Pigs mostly have a great build and a resilient body. They are always spirited, as if they will never run out of energy. Their natural health is something Pigs are proud of.

But sometimes they can be overconfident and overlook some minor symptoms. If neglected for too long, even the smallest things can become grave.

Pigs in the Year of the Pig (2019)

The year of one's zodiac sign is their **本命年** (ben ming nian). It is traditionally the most unlucky year with trouble and danger lurking at every corner.

Similar to the previous year, Pigs may find luck in some areas of their life, but others

will require hard work to avoid potential pitfalls. Pigs will most likely experience many emotional ups and downs, making them feel frustrated and sad at times.

This will not be a transitional year for Pigs, and it is best to try and "stick it out" in situations if at all possible. While that can be terribly frustrating, try to remember that a key element to utilizing your luck is timing. Next year will bear good fruit for Pigs, but the time isn't right to harvest the fruits of your labor. Instead, familiarize yourself with possible oversights and improve upon them so you may take advantage of similar situations as they occur in the future. This is a key element in many Asian religions, that is to say, you may be stuck consulting the same problem over and over until you solve it.



Careers

Pigs' 2019 horoscope reveals that changing careers may bring unforeseen consequences, and in most cases should be avoided. Instead, keep your nose to the grindstone and be wary of conflict. Pigs have a way of directly confronting their problems and at times this can impair their ability to see the deeper meaning of an issue. While Pigs can expect confrontation this year it will be best to face these problems with patience and practicality, two tools that are in Pigs "tool belt" but aren't always utilized when they should be. Luckiest Months: April 8th - July 20th Unluckiest Months: September 12th - December 2nd

Education

The education forecast for Pigs, however, reveals some good fortune. For those seeking higher education, it seems the stars are aligned in your favor. The 2019 Pig horoscope shows that investing in education will position them to take better advantage of future opportunities.

Health

Health can be rated as a mediocre category for Pigs this year. While there are no major illnesses on your horizon, Pigs will have to pay attention to minor ailments to keep them from growing into something large.

If you feel ill, don't delay in consulting a physician or healer, this is a major key to staying healthy this year. Other than this, maintain a consistent exercise regimen and a diet made up of healthy, unprocessed foods. Add more fruits and vegetables to your diet for an extra boost to your immunity



Relationships

The love forecast for Pigs is also pretty unremarkable for 2019. It seems that while this is not the year for true romance,

Fortunately for Pigs, the lack of relationship drama means they can focus on making new friends and connections. Extending their network could have a significant impact on Pigs' future, and in some respects be more rewarding than an intimate relationship. Remember not to be too quick to jump into a relationship as it may lead to more problems than it is worth, focus instead on enlarging your circle of friends.

Lifestyle

Pigs are in for almost an unfair year it seems. This year is about favoring the characteristics of Pigs in order to succeed, but for Pigs, to whom this comes naturally, they will have a difficult year and must practice patience and discipline.

It is important to remember not to be short sighted. You could focus on this year and say it is unfair, or you could focus on the future and realize that this time is meant to set up opportunities for the long term and practice the elements that will make you successful in your future endeavors.

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Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Possibly The Largest Caravan Yet New Caravan Of 12,000 Migrants Heading To U.S.



Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Another massive migrant caravan is on its way to the U.S. from Central America. The possibly largest-ever caravan from Central America has amassed more than 12,000 people, some of who intend to pursue refugee status in Mexico, while many more are headed for the U.S., the New York Times reported Friday.

The number in the caravan isn't just an estimate - it's the number of migrants who have requested visas from the Mexican government.

Dan Bongino @dbongino

Newest Migrant Caravan Grows to More Than 12,000 Members

3,793 9:00 AM - Jan 28, 2019

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The migrant caravan that formed on January 15 in Honduras has now grown from 2,000 to over 12,000 members, according to Breitbart.

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On Jan. 17, Mexico's new president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, has vowed to issue one-year humanitarian visas that will allow migrants to travel and settle in Mexico. It is part of Obrador's policies aimed at reducing migration and spurring job growth in Mexico. As of Thursday, 8,446 adults and 1,897 children had applied for the visas, most of which are Honduras nationals, according to the Washington Post. Obrador's new visa policy is said to be a huge attractor of migrants, though less than 1,000 visas have been granted so far. President Trump tweeted to acknowledge the caravan on Saturday, saying, "We have turned away, at great expense, two major Caravans, but a big one has now formed and is coming. At least 8000 people! If we had a powerful Wall, they wouldn't even try to make the long and dangerous journey. Build the Wall and Crime will Fall!"

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

We have turned away, at great expense, two major Caravans, but a big one has now formed and is coming. At least 8000 people! If we had a powerful Wall, they wouldn't even try to make the long and dangerous journey. Build the Wall and Crime will Fall!

8:06 AM - Jan 26, 2019

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Trump later followed up with, "Only fools, or people with a political agenda, don't want a Wall or Steel Barrier to protect our Country from Crime, Drugs and Human Trafficking. It will happen - it always does!"

Donald J. Trump @realDonaldTrump

Only fools, or people with a political agenda, don't want a Wall or Steel Barrier to protect our Country from Crime, Drugs and Human Trafficking. It will happen - it always does!

2:52 PM - Jan 26, 2019

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The Mexican government released data showing that 132,000 illegal immigrants were detained throughout 2018. The U.S. Border Patrol captured nearly 400,000 illegal immigrants between Oct. 2017 and Sept. 2018 - before the Central American caravans even began in the fall.

Mexican authorities stopped 18,000 migrants in October, and another 12,000 in November. With the new humanitarian visas, they are completely shifting their approach on migration.

Thousands of migrants still remain in Tijuana, Mexico, where the last major caravans stopped in their attempt to cross into the U.S.

There, migrants are awaiting asylum interviews with U.S. immigration agencies after the U.S. mandated that migrants must remain in Mexico while their asylum cases are pending.

Mexico had offered jobs and assistance to migrants in the previous caravans, but the migrants refused, instead wanting to pursue asylum in the U.S. (Courtesy americanmilitarynews.com)

Related

Mexico Moves to Encourage Caravan Migrants to Stay and Work



Migrants in Huixtla, Mexico, trying to get a free ride on a sugar cane truck during their journey toward the United States. (Photo/Reuters)

CIUDAD HIDALGO, Mexico — Mexico's new president has moved decisively to encourage migrants fleeing poverty and violence in Central America to stay and work in Mexico, making it easier for them to get visas and work permits and promoting investments and ambitious public works projects to create jobs.

President Andrés Manuel López Obrador's policies are already proving to be a magnet for migrants, who are finding it harder to enter the United States given President Trump's antipathy toward immigration. A migrant caravan heading to Mexico from Central America — the largest ever — has already swollen to over 12,000 people, with many saying they intend to remain in Mexico, at least for the time being.

The new Mexican president's generosity toward immigrants, officials say, dovetails with his broader commitment to protect human rights, reduce inequality and prioritize the poor. Mr. López Obrador's pro-immigrant stance also serves as a dramatic counterpoint to the White House, without directly challenging Mr. Trump. But these policies could ultimately put pressure on the Mexico-United States border, as most in the caravan eventually hope to cross into the United States.

Mr. López Obrador's pro-immigrant stance also serves as a dramatic counterpoint to the White House, without directly challenging Mr. Trump. But these policies could ultimately put pressure on the Mexico-United States border, as most in the caravan eventually hope to cross into the United States.



A Honduran man in Tecun Uman, Guatemala, part of a caravan of Central American migrants, washed his clothes in the Suchiate River, which runs along the Guatemala-Mexico border. (Photo/Getty Images)

Many in the caravan said they decided to migrate after a decision by the Mexican government to drastically speed up the process for securing a yearlong humanitarian visa that allows migrants to legally travel and work in Mexico.

"The humanitarian visa that they're giving

now is the reason we are here," said Carlos del Valle, a Guatemalan teacher who was standing in line with his family this week to apply for the visa on the bridge connecting Guatemala with Mexico. "Later, if possible, we can get to the United States," he said.

Under the streamlined process, which began last week, the government is seeking to issue the humanitarian visa in an average of five days rather than a month. Migration officials said the policy would be permanent.



Migrants from the caravan playing cards this month to pass the time in the Barret shelter in Tijuana, Mexico. (Photo/The New York Times)

The initiative, officials say, is part of the president's strategy to make Mexico's immigration policy more humane, after years of stepped-up deportations under pressure from the United States. But it could also draw even more migrants to trek north to the border with the United States, inflaming tensions with a Trump administration determined to build a border wall and lower immigration numbers.

On Thursday, the Trump administration said it would institute a new policy to return most asylum-seekers to Mexico if they had arrived at the southwest border by land. Under the policy, which is intended to discourage Central Americans from migrating to the United States and to ease pressure on the asylum system, the petitioners would be required to remain in Mexico while they await the outcome of their cases.

The Mexican government initially said it was speeding up the application process for humanitarian visas as an "exception" for the current migrant caravan only. But on Thursday, a spokeswoman with Mexico's national migration agency said the expedited process would be permanent. (Courtesy The New York Times)

Advertisement for Dunhuang Flooring (敦煌地板) with a list of services and prices: 地毯 \$1.99/sq ft, 複合地板 (8mm) \$2.49/sq ft, 複合地板 (12.3mm) \$2.99/sq ft, 塑膠地板 \$3.99/sq ft, 實木複合地板 \$5.99/sq ft, 花崗石 \$14.99/sq ft.

Advertisement for Mei Lian Concrete (美联混凝土) with contact info: (832) 868-1090, WE SELL CONCRETE FROM 1~10,000 YARDS, and a list of services like patios, parking lots, etc.

Advertisement for Adolphus Rice (靚苗米) featuring a large image of a rice bag and promotional text: 靚苗米 經濟, 營養, 美味. Includes contact info for American Rice, Inc.

Footer advertisement for Southern Daily News (美南新聞日報) with contact info: 電話: 281-498-4310, 傳真: 281-498-2728, E-mail: ad@scdaily.com.