

Financial services will be fine after Brexit

Critics of Brexit on this site have regularly alleged that if we do not get the same access arrangements as today to the EU market after Brexit, the City will lose jobs and business to the continent. I have been accused of complacency for thinking that is untrue.

I have pointed out we were told the UK would lose jobs, influence and business if we refused to join the Euro. We did decline to give up the pound, and our business in Euros grew substantially. Attempts to prevent clearing in London failed, as of course if you run one of the world's large trading currencies you cannot stop non members of your union trading the currency and securities in it. Business goes to where the talent is and where the capital to execute the transactions resides.

This week there has been a most important statement from the CEO and Chairman of one of our major banks. Barclays has said that they do not see any need to transfer personnel from London to elsewhere on the continent, whatever the outcome of the Brexit talks. They also state that the technical changes they are making to ensure continuity of EU business are less complex than the changes they had to make last year to comply with new business rules in the US, or the large task of ring fencing their commercial bank in the UK to comply. They confirm that complying with any new EU arrangement will be cheaper as well as easier than these changes.

London out of the EU like London inside the EU will face competitive challenges from all round the world. IF you are good at something you need to get better at it to maintain your position. You constantly have to strive to improve and to keep up with or lead change. There is no reason why London should stop doing that once we are out of the EU. In some ways it will be easier, because we will be free to decide on our own arrangements with the rest of the world without having to adopt the EU model for that. The UK will regain its vote and voice in the global talks and formal bodies, where today we often have to be represented by the EU instead.

As Barclays said "We are confident we have multiple choices for how we might continue to serve our customers and clients regardless of the outcome. (Of Brexit)"

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Attentive train station worker saves distressed woman

Weng Jianzhong, a worker at the Xianyou railway station in Putian, Fujian province, was awarded 6,000 yuan for saving a woman trying to kill herself by jumping onto the train tracks as a high-speed train was approaching.

Weng was on duty Wednesday afternoon and noticed the woman was visibly distressed at around 2:50 pm, according to a notice from railway authorities.

When the woman entered the platform after checking her ticket at around 4:50 pm, Weng asked for her carriage number, but she did not answer. As train D6529 approached, the woman ran towards it.

Fortunately, Weng was keeping an eye on her, and rushed to her in time, dragging her back before she could reach the track.

The woman was not hurt, but Weng's head was injured after falling to the ground while struggling to pull the woman back.

The woman was later taken home by her family members.

City acts after ministry requires tougher measures

Langfang city in Hebei province will redouble its efforts to control air pollution by the end of October, as required by the Ministry of Environmental Protection, local authorities said on Thursday.

The ministry announced last week that it would be supervising the city's efforts going forward. "We will take stricter measures to shut down or oversee polluting companies that have been identified by the ministry," said Li Chunyuan, deputy head of the Langfang Environmental Protection Bureau.

The ministry said in a notice on its website on Friday that it will oversee Langfang's work on air pollution control because the city, which has been haunted by environmental issues in recent years, still has many prominent problems to deal with.

"Some local government officials of Langfang don't realize the seriousness of the environmental issues and are slow to implement related plans, leading to continuous illegal pollution-discharging activities by clusters of companies," the notice said.

According to the notice, two counties in Langfang, including Wenan and Dacheng, are facing serious pollution caused by a number of companies making plywood and thermal insulation materials, and processing plastics and nonferrous metals, all of which are polluting.

According to Langfang Daily, 2,290 companies in 20 clusters were identified by the ministry.

Most of the companies emit volatile organic waste without proper processing, it said. They have poor environmental protection facilities, directly discharge waste or disperse it in the open air.

According to Li, all of the companies processing nonferrous metals in Dacheng county have been closed permanently, while some others were temporarily shut down pending improvements.

This is the first time the ministry has stepped in directly to oversee a city's work on preventing air pollution since earlier last month when it began intensified environmental scrutiny in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region, chinanews.com reported.

Beyond Langfang, the ministry also found clusters of polluting companies – the major environmental issue for the region – in Binzhou and Jining, Shandong province; Cangzhou and Hengshui, Hebei province; Yangquan and Changzhi, Shanxi province; and Zhengzhou, Henan province.

All will be urged by inspection teams designated by the ministry to deal with pollution in a more timely manner.

[China gets tough with personal information leaking](#)

China courts have issued a harsh judicial ruling, stipulating those who illegally obtain or sell 500 or more pieces of personal information could face a sentence of up to seven years.

The judicial interpretation, the first of its kind jointly released by the Supreme People's Court (SPC) and the Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP), came amid increasing public outcry against rampant online and telecom fraud in China.

It clearly defines personal information, a concept of which is controversial in practice, said Yan Maokun, research director at the SPC.

Judges will be able to give an accurate and consistent ruling based on the interpretation, Yan added.

Under China's Criminal Law, those convicted of selling or providing personal information could face a maximum sentence of three years if "the circumstances are serious," while if "the circumstances are especially serious," violators could face up to seven years in prison.

The judicial ruling defines which situations considered "serious" or "especially serious" according to the types and amounts of leaked personal information, as well as the impact caused such encroachment.

Situations considered "especially serious" include illegally obtaining, selling or providing 500 or more items of data about a person's location, communication content, credit or property information; 5,000 or more items of communication record, accommodation, health or transaction information; or 50,000 or more items of personal information other than the aforementioned types.

Should violators make more than 50,000 yuan (\$7,239) from these activities or their crimes lead to victim's death, serious injury, mental disorder or kidnapping, their offenses will be considered "especially serious."

The amount of leaked information in cases considered "especially serious" is ten times that in "serious" cases.

"Such specific penalty standards for personal information infringement assists law enforcement and will act as a powerful weapon to fight information leaking," said Ren Xianjie, from the legal policy research department of the SPP.

Investigation found that employees of the banking, e-commerce, education, express delivery and telecom industries are the most likely to leak customers' personal information, said Xu Jianzhuo from the Ministry of Public Security (MPS).

Police arrested 4,261 suspects in 1,886 cases related to infringement of personal information in 2016, and 391 of them were employees leaking customers information, according to MPS data.

The new rule has stipulated that employees who illegally sell or provide half of the aforementioned amounts of data about customers personal information could face the same penalties as individuals.

"The interpretation lowered the penalty threshold for employees, which provided legal basis for us to fight information leaking," said Xu.

Leaking personal information has become a public nuisance in China. Last year, a telecom fraud case involving leaked personal information aroused shock and anger among the public.

Xu Yuyu, a recent high school graduate in east China's Shandong Province, died of cardiac arrest in August 2016 after losing 9,900 yuan earmarked for her university fees to telecom fraudsters.

The Internet Society of China estimated junk messages, leaked personal

information and fraud led to losses of about 91.5 billion yuan in 2016.

Top graft authority exposes official corruption

The top disciplinary arm of the Communist Party of China (CPC) named and shamed 88 officials in 71 corruption cases that directly undermined public interests Thursday.

The CPC Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI) said the cases involved extortion of state subsidies, embezzlement of poverty relief funds, misappropriation of compensation for land requisitions, abuses of power and receipt of kickbacks.

Those named on the list were mainly low-level bureaucrats. A total of 3,333 officials in 2,412 cases have been exposed since the CCDI established the monthly reporting system to disclose such violations in July 2015.

Investigation found that extortion of state subsidies for agriculture was the most common misdemeanor, followed by misappropriation of compensation for land requisitions and embezzlement of allowances for house renovation, according to the CCDI.