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JUNE 23RD-29TH 2018

Migrant furore in America and Europe

AMLO, Mexico's answer to Donald Trump

Would a trade war wreck the economy?

China's super-cities

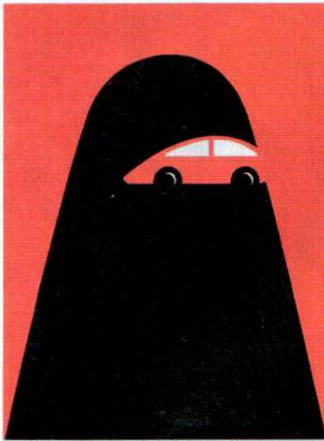


The Saudi revolution begins

A SPECIAL REPORT



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On the cover
 Muhammad bin Salman, the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, wants to transform his country. His taste for autocracy is making the job harder: leader, page 9. Radical reforms in Saudi Arabia are changing the Gulf and the wider Arab world, says Anton La Guardia. See our special report after page 40

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Audio edition: available online to download each Friday Economist.com/audioedition



Volume 427 Number 9097

Published since September 1843 to take part in "a severe contest between intelligence, which presses forward, and an unworthy, timid ignorance obstructing our progress."

Editorial offices in London and also: Beijing, Berlin, Brussels, Cairo, Chicago, Madrid, Mexico City, Moscow, Mumbai, Nairobi, New Delhi, New York, Paris, San Francisco, São Paulo, Seoul, Shanghai, Singapore, Tokyo, Washington DC

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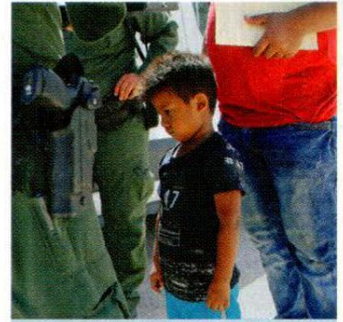
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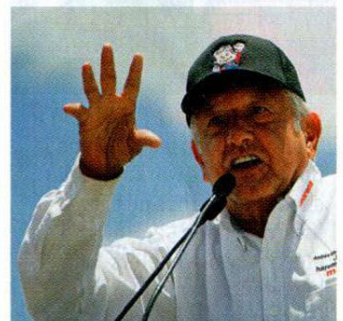
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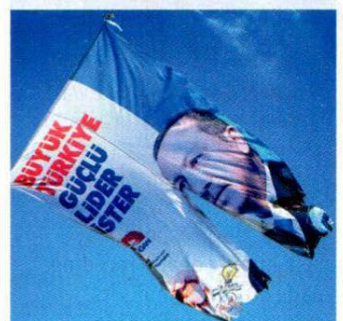
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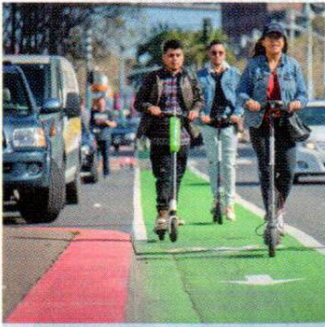
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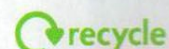
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Politics



Donald Trump signed an executive order allowing the children of **illegal immigrants** to stay with their parents in detention centres if caught crossing the Mexican border. Previously, under the White House's "zero-tolerance" policy for illicit border-crossing, there had been a sharp rise in families being forcibly split up. Pictures of tearful children torn from their parents provoked an outcry, though a poll found that a small majority of Republicans supported the policy. Amnesty International said officials had intentionally inflicted "severe mental suffering" on the migrants.

The director of the **FBI**, Christopher Wray, said his agency would not repeat the mistakes uncovered in a report by the Justice Department's internal watchdog, which criticised the handling of investigations into Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump during the election in 2016. Among other things, it found that James Comey, then the **FBI** chief, had broken policy by making the investigation into Mrs Clinton's e-mail server public, but that he had not acted with political bias.

Paul Manafort, Mr Trump's former campaign manager, was sent to jail by a judge after he allegedly tried to sway the testimony of two witnesses at his forthcoming trial on a range of charges, which include money-laundering. He had been on bail ahead of the trial.

America withdrew from the **UN Human Rights Council**, a body that includes China, Cuba, the Democratic Republic

of Congo and other paragons of virtue. Nikki Haley, America's ambassador to the **UN**, said the body protected abusers of human rights and was a "cesspool of political bias", especially against Israel. The council's supporters retort that the council does some good, and that if democracies such as America pull out it will probably do less.

If at first you don't succeed

New talks were held to try to end **South Sudan's** five-year civil war. It is the first time the two key leaders in the conflict have met in two years. All previous attempts to broker a peace deal have failed.

Israeli jets struck 25 targets in **Gaza** linked to Hamas. The strikes were in response to almost 50 projectiles fired at Israel, said the Israeli military.

The **UN** said that war crimes were committed by forces loyal to the regime of Bashar al-Assad in the Eastern Ghouta region of **Syria**. The **UN** is still investigating whether chemical weapons were used in an attack on rebels in Douma.

The World Health Organisation said that the **Ebola** outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo has largely been contained, but officials warned against complacency.

Hello Duque



Iván Duque, a conservative who opposes parts of the peace agreement between **Colombia's** government and the **FARC** guerrilla group, won the country's presidential election. He took 54% of the vote in a run-off, defeating Gustavo Petro, a far-left former mayor of Bogotá.

Masaya, a town near Managua, **Nicaragua's** capital, declared that it no longer recognises the presidency of Daniel Ortega and will govern itself. At least three people were killed in an operation to regain control of the town. More than 170 people have died in protests since April. Mediators from the Catholic church suspended negotiations between the government and the opposition because the government refused to allow foreign human-rights observers into the country.

Canada's parliament voted to legalise the recreational use of cannabis. The law regulates its cultivation, sets limits on possession and prohibits marketing that would encourage consumption. When it takes effect in October, Canada will be the second country in the world, after Uruguay, to make it legal to puff marijuana for pleasure.

Europe's critical point

A political crisis rocked **Germany**. The alliance between Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats and its more conservative Bavarian sister party, the **CSU**, looked as if it might break down over how to handle migrants. Mrs Merkel seems to have won two more weeks to solve the problem.

Italy's interior minister, Matteo Salvini, called for a census of Roma. He threatened to deport Roma who are not Italian citizens, but said that "unfortunately" those Roma who were Italian would be allowed to stay.

The **Hungarian** parliament passed a law that would send anyone who helps illegal immigrants, including lawyers who assist asylum-seekers, to prison for a year. The nationalist government calls migrants a security threat. There are hardly any of them in Hungary, but many passed through on their way to Germany in 2015.

The British government fended off another attempt by Remainers to ensure that **MPs**

have the final decision should the **Brexit** talks end with no deal. The government won a vote in Parliament by 319 to 303 votes after giving further assurances that **MPs** would have a "meaningful vote". One Tory Remainer said that meant a "real say". Brexiteers said nothing had changed and **MPs** would get no say.

Mounting trouble

India's ruling Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party pulled out of an alliance with the People's Democratic Party in **Kashmir**, prompting the state government to collapse. Kashmir's governor, who is appointed by the BJP-led central government, will assume control of the state. Separately, unknown attackers murdered Shujaat Bukhari, one of Kashmir's most respected journalists.

New Zealand's prime minister, Jacinda Ardern, has given birth to her first child, a baby girl. She will now take six weeks of maternity leave, during which her duties will be performed by the deputy prime minister. She is only the second elected leader in modern history to give birth in office. The first was Benazir Bhutto, a prime minister of Pakistan, in 1990.



Kim Jong Un's makeover continued with a two-day visit to China, where the **North Korean** dictator was hailed as a leader trying to develop his impoverished nation. Mr Kim, who keeps babies in prison camps and has had members of his own family killed, attended a banquet hosted by Xi Jinping, China's president. The pair discussed Mr Kim's recent summit with Donald Trump, which was held in Singapore. ▶▶

The Saudi revolution begins

Muhammad bin Salman could transform the Arab and Islamic world for the better. How to ensure he succeeds



ONE Saudi cleric thundered that letting women drive would lead to immorality and a lack of virgins. Another declared that women were incapable of taking the wheel because they were half-brained. Still another drew on science, ruling that driving would damage their ovaries. Such tosh is at last being cast aside. On June 24th Saudi women will be allowed to drive their cars. That is one step towards emancipation; among the others must be an end to male “guardianship”, for example, in deciding women can study or travel abroad. Yet getting women behind the wheel is a welcome blow against the idea that Islamic piety is best shown by repressing them.

Female drivers are the most visible aspect of a social revolution, one brought about not from the streets but the palace of Muhammad bin Salman, the crown prince. Cinemas have opened; music is performed in public; the killjoy morality police are off the streets. Social liberalisation is part of the crown prince’s ambition to wean the economy away from oil. But as our special report sets out, his changes come with more authoritarianism at home, and recklessness abroad. The world must hope that the bold prince triumphs over the brutish one.

Can’t buy me love

Saudi Arabia is uniquely disliked by Westerners of all political stripes. They are appalled by its sharia punishments and mistreatment of women, and scared by its Wahhabi form of Islam, which has fed gruesome jihadist ideologies such as that of Islamic State. Despite the kingdom’s wealth, businessmen would rather work in freewheeling Dubai than Riyadh. Fellow Arabs often deride Saudis as rich, lazy and arrogant.

Yet the world has a vital interest in Saudi Arabia’s fate. It is the biggest oil exporter, and home to Islam’s two holiest sites. It is central to the Gulf, the Arab region and the Islamic world. Successful reforms would help spread stability to a region in chaos, and dynamism to its economies. A more normal Saudi Arabia should moderate the Islamic world, by example and because the flow of petrodollars to zealots would slow. Failure, by contrast, could spread turmoil to the Gulf, which broadly avoided the upheaval of the Arab spring of 2011.

It is thus worrying that Saudi Arabia faces such daunting problems. Volatile oil revenues make up more than 80% of government income, the IMF reckons. Even with rising crude prices, the country is grappling with a large budget deficit. For all the gains in health and education, GDP per person has been flat for decades. Saudis work mostly in cushy government jobs. Oil wealth has hidden a woefully unproductive economy, and fuelled Islamic ultra-puritanism around the world.

To his credit, Prince Muhammad recognises that change is needed. However, he is unnecessarily adding to his task. Abroad, he has proved rash. His war against the Houthis, a Shia militia in Yemen—now centred on the battle for the port of Hodeida—has brought disease and hunger to Yemenis, a missile war over Saudi cities and embarrassment to Western allies

that provide weapons and other help. Last year Saudi Arabia sullied itself by detaining the Lebanese prime minister, Saad Hariri, releasing him only under international pressure. With its main ally, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), it has led the way in isolating Qatar, a contrarian emirate, by cutting land, sea and air links (the Saudis even want to dig a canal to make the place an island). In doing so they have split the Gulf Co-operation Council, the club of oil monarchies. As the Arab cold war spreads, Iran and other foes are gaining advantage.

At home Prince Muhammad has developed a taste for repression. The number of executions has risen. More dissenters are in jail, among them, perversely, women who campaigned to drive. Everything, it seems, must be a gift from the Al Sauds: the name of the country, the oil bounty and now the right to drive a car. He has also adopted the view that all Islamists, even the non-violent offshoots of the Muslim Brotherhood, are as grave a menace as Sunni jihadists and Shia militias. Thus, the Saudis and Emiratis are leading a counter-revolution against the Arab spring and the hope of democracy. Sadly, America has all but given them carte blanche.

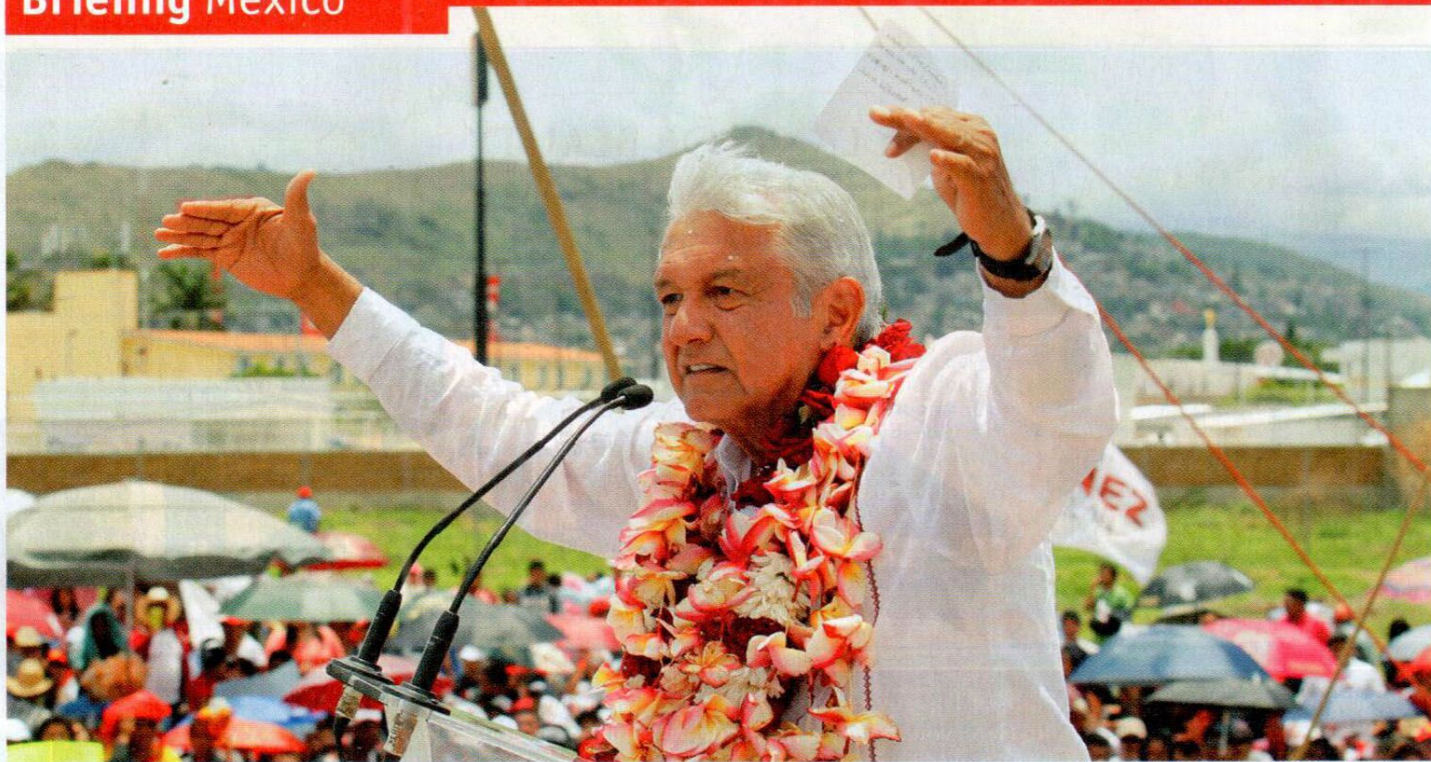
And the crown prince’s effort to boost the private sector is strangely centralised. Even the promotion of entertainment is run by a government agency. His focus on “giga-projects”, notably plans to build NEOM, a futuristic city in the north-west with separate laws, looks mega-risky. Previous attempts to carve out copycat versions of Dubai, the business and tourism hub in the UAE, have been a disappointment. The King Abdul-lah Financial District in Riyadh stands almost empty.

Instead of planning a dream city, the crown prince should aim to make all of Saudi Arabia a bit more like Dubai—open to the world, friendly to business, efficiently run, socially liberal, religiously tolerant and, above all, governed by a predictable system of laws. His decision to lock up hundreds of tycoons, officials and princes arbitrarily in a gilded Saudi hotel last year in an “anti-corruption campaign” frightened investors.

He should also study the UAE’s federalism. The loose union of seven emirates in 1971 may be unique, but a country as large and diverse as Saudi Arabia has much to gain from devolving power. It would let different parts of the country express their identities more freely and adapt religious rules to their traditions—more relaxed in Jeddah, more strict inland in Riyadh and allowing more space for Shias in the east. It would also permit experimentation with economic reforms. Above all, it could lead to forms of local representation.

Crowning success

In carrying out his transformation, Prince Muhammad is weakening the old pillars of Al Saud rule—the princes, the clerics and the businessmen. Democracy can help him build a new base of legitimacy. The crown prince could turn his popularity among the young and women into a political force. That would help him in what is likely to be a long reign once he becomes king. Right now, he is on the road to becoming another Arab strongman. As the Arab spring showed, autocracy is brittle. Better to become a new sort of Arab monarch: one who treats his people as citizens, not subjects. ■



Tropical messiah

MEXICO CITY AND VILLAHERMOSA, TABASCO

Voters are so fed up with their ruling class that they are taking a chance on a populist, Andrés Manuel López Obrador

EVEN a short walk in Tabasco can feel unbearable. When Graham Greene visited Mexico 80 years ago, he lamented the tropical southern state's "blinding heat and the mosquito-noisy air" that left "no escape for anyone at all". Now Tabascans can at least endure the humidity with fans and air-conditioning. But half of the state's residents are poor and electricity prices are among the highest in the country. Twenty-three years ago a local politician decided to do something radical. Andrés Manuel López Obrador (known as AMLO), fresh from an unsuccessful run for governor, organised a campaign of "civil resistance", instructing Tabascans not to pay their electricity bills.

The campaign has lasted for over two decades. Some 570,000 Tabascan households have racked up debts with the Federal Electricity Commission (CFE) averaging 10,500 pesos (\$500) each. In 2015 the CFE began another bout of cutting off non-payers. Mr López Obrador, by then head of his newly created party, the Movement for National Regeneration (Morena), summoned a brigade of vigilante electricians to reconnect them. He also warned the state's governor, Arturo Núñez Jiménez, that his palatial office would suffer power cuts were he to try disconnecting people again.

These events sum up what many Mexi-

cans have long liked about Mr López Obrador, and what others fear. His concern for the poor and wish to improve their lot is sincere. However, Mr López Obrador has a shaky grasp of economics—urging some people not to pay their bills tends to drive up prices for everyone else, for example. And he has little respect for rules or institutions. This matters because Mr López Obrador is set to become Mexico's president in an election on July 1st. He has a poll lead of 25 points over his nearest challenger, Ricardo Anaya of the conservative National Action Party (PAN). José Antonio Meade, a non-party candidate picked by the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), is further adrift. There is also a chance that a coalition led by Morena, founded four years ago, will win control of congress.

Mexicans are likely to deliver a *voto de castigo* (punishment vote) because the president, Enrique Peña Nieto of the PRI, is the least popular leader for decades. People are also angry at the PAN. Though the PAN turfed the PRI from power in 2000, ending seven decades of one-party rule, it failed to govern much better and the PRI returned under Mr Peña in 2012.

Mr López Obrador promises drastic change. Mexico will have a charismatic president for the first time since the 19th century, says Enrique Krauze, a historian

who first called him a "tropical messiah". On the campaign trail he says that a "fourth transformation" of Mexico is coming, after independence in 1821, a civil war and liberal reforms in the 1850s and 1860s, and a revolution that began in 1910. The change will be "as profound" as the revolution, but "without violence", he promises. He vows to overthrow the "mafia of power", that he believes holds back Mexico.

When he says he will "uproot the corrupt regime", he is talking about everyone in the political class except himself and his circle. His opponents say he wants to unravel the market-friendly policies that the PRI and PAN have cleaved since the 1980s. Some fear that in a country where democracy is barely old enough to order a tequila, a charismatic populist might seriously undermine it.

Third time lucky

Mexicans are fed up. During 30 years of growing democracy and economic liberalisation, they were told that Mexico would become a rich country. Income per head has risen by 40% over the same period. But growth has been uneven. The parts of the country near the United States have prospered while peasants in the south still toil outdoors in the sun. The economy has been sluggish in recent years, partly thanks to a low oil price. Meanwhile, Mexicans are furious about corruption and terrified of gang violence.

Mr López Obrador governed Mexico City between 2000 and 2005, before unsuccessful presidential runs with the centre-left Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) in 2006 and 2012. The question as he seeks the presidency for a third time is ▶▶



The army and politics in Pakistan

General dysfunction

ISLAMABAD

Even as the army corrals politicians, humbler Pakistanis are protesting at its unchecked power

EARLIER this month a spokesman for Pakistan's army decided to respond to claims that it was attempting to fix next month's general election. It would not be the first time. In 1990, for instance, the army-dominated spy agency, Inter-Services Intelligence, funnelled cash to opponents of the left-wing Pakistan People's Party (PPP), helping to secure its defeat. The military spokesman, General Asif Ghafoor, sternly denied that any such "engineering" was going on this time around. But a pile of evidence to the contrary is poking through the camouflage.

The object of the army's meddling is Nawaz Sharif, who was ousted as prime minister by the courts last year. Mr Sharif had been the beneficiary of the army's largesse in 1990, when he began his first stint as prime minister. But they soon fell out.

He resigned under pressure from the army in 1993 and was toppled again by it in a coup in 1999. Mr Sharif returned to power in 2013 eager to assert civilian control of foreign and security policy, which the army regards as its exclusive domain. In reply, the army undermined Mr Sharif, backing a months-long street protest by a big opposition party, the Pakistan Movement for Justice (PTI), aimed at overthrowing his government. It also refused the government's request for help in dispersing another

group of protesters that had blocked a busy intersection last year. A general was photographed at the scene handing money to the protesters. The army bristles at claims that it steered the Supreme Court to remove Mr Sharif last year on flimsy charges of "dishonesty". But Mr Sharif (pictured, with gun) blames its unseen hand.

Indeed, Mr Sharif is trying to turn the impending election into a referendum on his treatment by the generals, although he coyly refers to them using such codewords as "the establishment" and "aliens". Last month he accused the army of facilitating a terrorist attack in India in 2008, in which 166 people were killed. Never has the army felt its privileged position so threatened, says Talat Masood, a former general.

Misguided democracy

Indirect elections to the upper house of parliament earlier this year give a sense of how the army operates. Weeks before the country's four provincial assemblies were due to select the new senators, the government of the sparsely populated province of Balochistan, which was led by Mr Sharif's party, the PML-N, collapsed owing to the abrupt defection of several lawmakers. One of Mr Sharif's allies accused the ISI of orchestrating the insurrection. At any rate, independents and the former PML-N mem-

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bers went on to form the pro-military Balochistan Awami Party (BAP), which then secured several of Balochistan's seats in the senate. The new senators, in conjunction with an improbable alliance of otherwise feuding opposition parties, together mustered enough votes to defeat the PML-N's candidate for chairman of the senate. (An Urdu-language newspaper carried details of how the army allegedly helped senators to remember how to vote, by marking the corners of their ballot papers.) That, in turn, put paid to the PML-N's hopes of passing legislation to scrap the woolly articles of the constitution that the courts had used to justify Mr Sharif's dismissal.

Imran Khan, the leader of PTI, does not deny that the army interferes in politics. He says a stronger civilian government (meaning one led by him) is the answer. He may have his way. PTI has benefited from a wave of defections from the PML-N in the most populous province, Punjab. In private, many politicians admit to being pressed, in some cases with the threat of corruption charges, to leave the PML-N. If the PTI can make headway in Punjab, where the PML-N won 116 of 148 seats at the last election, in 2013, Mr Khan stands a good chance of becoming the leader of a coalition government. Such a government would be "preferable" to the army, adds Hussain Haqqani, a former diplomat.

Media outlets that caterwaul about all this become the victims of commercial crises. Geo, the most popular television station in the country, was mysteriously dropped by cable companies. They relented when it toned down its criticism of the judiciary and its support for Mr Sharif. Gul Bukhari, a journalist who supports the PML-N, was recently abducted for several



Urbanisation

A tale of 19 mega-cities

KUNSHAN

The country tries to reshape itself into a series of conurbations

CHINA'S urbanisation is a marvel. The population of its cities has quintupled over the past 40 years, reaching 813m. By 2030 roughly one in five of the world's city-dwellers will be Chinese. But this mushrooming is not without its flaws. Rules restricting migrants' access to public services mean that some 250m people living in cities are second-class citizens (see chart), who could in theory be sent back to their home districts. That, in turn, has crimped the growth of China's cities, which would otherwise be even bigger.

Restraining pell-mell urbanisation may sound like a good thing, but it worries the government's economists, since bigger cities are associated with higher productivity and faster economic growth. Hence a new plan to remake the country's map. The idea is to foster the rise of mammoth urban clusters, anchored around giant hubs and containing dozens of smaller, but by no means small, nearby cities. The plan calls for 19 clusters in all, which would account for nine-tenths of economic activity (see map on next page). China would, in effect, condense into a country of super-regions. Three are already well on track: the Pearl River Delta, next to Hong Kong; the Yangtze River Delta, which surrounds Shanghai; and Jingjinji, centred on Beijing.

For some urban planners, the strategy is

beguiling. They see the clusters as engines for growth that could transform China into a wealthy, innovative powerhouse. But others think it is a trap—a government-driven exercise in development that will lead to gridlock and waste.

Hu Qiuping, a safety manager for a chemicals company, is in the urban vanguard. She lives in Wuxi, a city of 6m about 150km west of Shanghai. A trip between the two used to take a couple of hours. Today the bullet train takes just 29 minutes. Every Monday and Friday she works in Wuxi, inspecting the chemicals factory. From Tuesday to Thursday she travels to

the firm's headquarters in Shanghai. She could have based herself in either city, but living costs were much lower in Wuxi. At first she wondered whether her commute was unusual. It was not. "I see familiar faces on the train every day," she says.

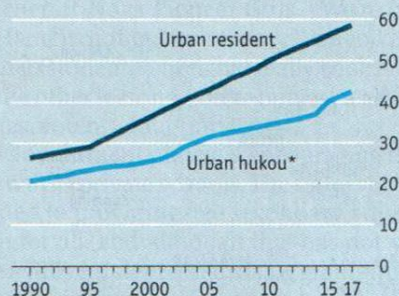
For those in bedroom communities near London or Manhattan, Ms Hu's train rides probably sound familiar. But three features make China's super-regions exceptional. The first is scale. The biggest existing city cluster in the world is greater Tokyo, home to some 40m people. When it is fully connected the Yangtze delta, where Ms Hu is based, will be almost four times as big, with 150m people. The average population of the five biggest clusters that China hopes to develop is 110m. Part of the reason is that the physical area of most of the Chinese clusters will also be bigger. The most prosperous, the Pearl delta, is expected to cover 42,000 square kilometres, about the same as the Netherlands.

Given that spread, it might seem nonsensical to talk of the clusters as unified entities. But the second point is the speed of transport links, notably the bullet trains between cities. This expands the viable area of China's clusters. The Jingjinji region around Beijing has five high-speed train lines today. By 2020 there should be 12 more intercity lines, and another nine by 2030. Towns that are woven into the networks can see their fortunes change almost overnight. Plans for a new intercity train to Haining, a smaller city in the Yangtze River Delta, partly explain a doubling of house prices there. "The way that we measure distances has changed from space to time," says Ren Yongsheng of Vantown, a property developer in Haining.

The third difference is the top-down na- ▶▶

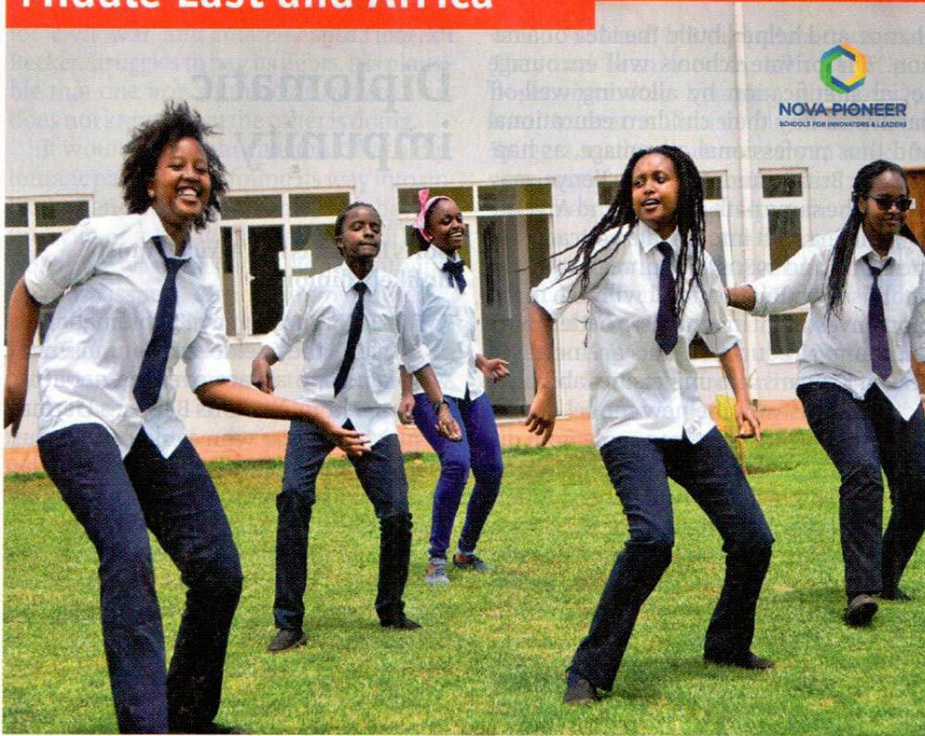
Paperless cities

China, % of total population



Sources: CEIC; CICC; National Bureau of Statistics

*Methodology changed in 2015



Private schools in Kenya

On the playing fields, not beaten

NAIROBI

Foreign investment in Kenyan schools is changing elite education, and society

LAST year stories appeared in the press, illustrated by pictures of bloody clothing, of an initiation ceremony at Alliance High School outside Nairobi, in which boys were beaten and made to lie on the founders' graves. The country was shocked, in part because Alliance is regarded as one of the country's top schools, and the headmaster resigned. The scandal has hastened a shift that is changing Kenyan education.

Alliance, which sits in wooded grounds in Kikuyu, a small town north-west of Nairobi, was founded in 1926 by missionaries to educate bright Africans and, by selecting boys from all the country's regions and tribes, to build a country. After independence in 1963 it became one of Kenya's "national" schools, similar to Britain's selective state "grammar" schools. Eight ministers in the post-independence cabinet in 1963 were Alliance old boys. Alumni still proliferate in the top ranks of the professions, government and business.

On a hilltop 20 miles to the east are the Nova Pioneer boys', girls' and primary schools. They were founded in 2015 by Chris Khaemba, headmaster of Alliance from 1998-2007. Secondary-school fees are 500,000 shillings a year (\$4,945). At Alliance, tuition is free; boarding fees are 54,000 shillings a year.

The pupils at both establishments have similarly impeccable manners and many

come from similarly prosperous backgrounds. But they reflect the past and future of Kenyan elite education.

In the past, rich Kenyans tended to send their children to private primary schools, in the expectation that they would do well enough to get a place in a national school and thus a free, rigorous secondary education. But in recent years, several things have changed.

One is the growth of a class of prosperous Kenyans, many of whom take foreign holidays, clog Nairobi's streets with 4x4 cars and have novel views about education. Kenyan schools tend to feature large classes and rote-learning. At Nova Pioneer, classes are smaller—32 pupils, on average—and more participatory. "Many parents want a wholesome experience that isn't just drilling," says Rose Nduati, the head teacher of Nova Pioneer Girls. "We're being taught coding," says Stacey Wanyoike, a Year 10 student. "I find that really cool. And in the other lessons, you're not just reading notes, you're taking part."

Government policy is encouraging the growth of private schools. The state is committed to providing free secondary education for all, and although that has not yet been fully implemented, rising grants from central government have brought fees down. Pupil numbers have therefore been increasing. At Alliance they have doubled

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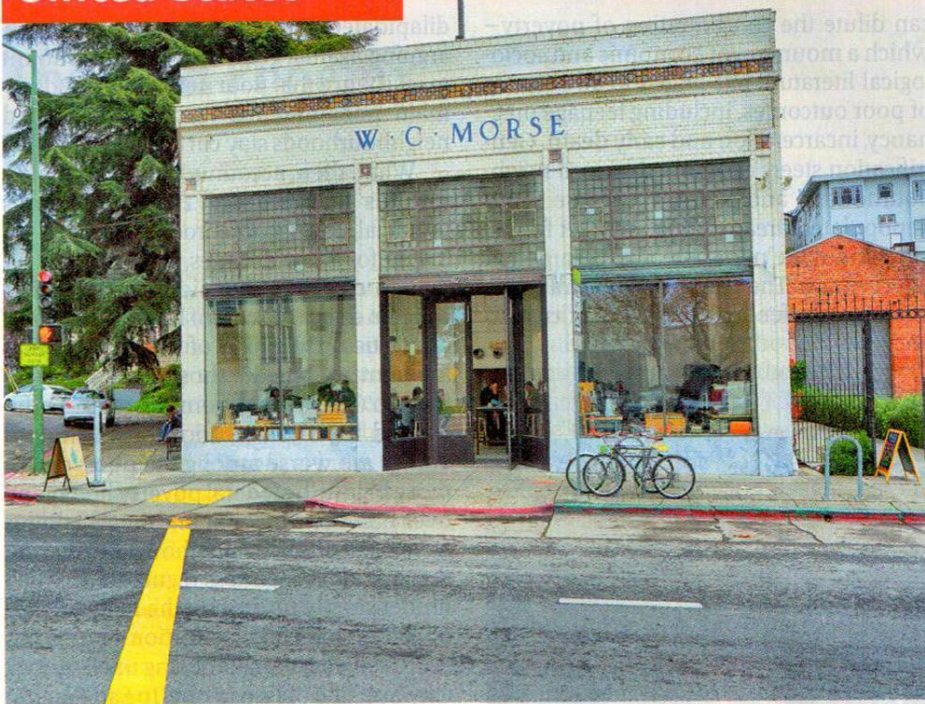
in the past decade, to 1,600, and class sizes have increased from an average of 42 to 50-55. "We are a little bit stretched," says James Kinyanjui Kuria, Alliance's deputy head. A new curriculum may reduce the rote element in state education, but there are fears that teachers are not prepared, so it may put a further strain on state schools.

Duncan Olumbe, an Alliance alumnus, decided that his son Roy should not follow him to his old school. Roy was put off by the stories of bullying; Mr Olumbe and his wife liked the ways of Nova Pioneer and thought that "the transition from a private primary to an overcrowded [state secondary] may be a bit difficult." He is pleased with his investment, but some customers are trickier. "Most parents are middle-class [by which Kenyans mean the top 2% or so]. Catering to the needs of a very discerning demographic brings with it a certain element of challenge," says Charles Tsuma, the head of Nova Pioneer Boys, delicately.

Super Nova

Nova Pioneer has plenty of competition: in 2013-17 the number of private primary schools almost doubled and the number of private secondaries rose by half. Some schools are said to be struggling, especially at the top end of the market (1m-2.5m shillings a year) which is beyond the reach of all but the richest Kenyans, and therefore relies to a large extent on expats.

Supply is growing to meet demand, thanks in part to international capital. Education has a particular appeal to long-term investors, for children are locked in for up to 12 years. Growth prospects are good because governments are not satisfying the rising demand for good education. And the regulatory environment for private schools in the three big African markets, ▶▶



Cities

In praise of gentrification

NEW YORK, OAKLAND AND WASHINGTON, DC

Accusations levelled at gentrification lack force, meanwhile its benefits go unsung

GENTRIER has surpassed many wretched slurs to become the dirtiest word in American cities. In the popular telling, hordes of well-to-do whites are descending upon poor, minority neighbourhoods that were made to endure decades of discrimination. With their avocado on toast, beard oil and cappuccinos, these people snuff out local culture. As rents rise, life-long residents are evicted and forced to leave. In this view, the quintessential scene might be one witnessed in Oakland, California, where a miserable-looking homeless encampment rests a mere ten-minute walk from a Whole Foods landscaped with palm trees and bougainvillea, offering chia and flax seed upon entry. An ancient, sinister force lurks behind the overpriced produce. “Gentrification’ is but a more pleasing name for white supremacy,” wrote Ta-Nehisi Coates. It is “the interest on enslavement, the interest on Jim Crow, the interest on redlining, compounding across the years.”

This story is better described as an urban myth. The supposed ills of gentrification—which might be more neutrally defined as poorer urban neighbourhoods becoming wealthier—lack rigorous support. The most careful empirical analyses conducted by urban economists have failed to detect a rise in displacement within gentrifying neighbourhoods. Often, they find that poor residents are more like-

ly to stay put if they live in these areas. At the same time, the benefits of gentrification are scarcely considered. Longtime residents reap the rewards of reduced crime and better amenities. Those lucky enough to own their homes come out richer. The left usually bemoans the lack of investment in historically non-white neighbourhoods, white flight from city centres and economic segregation. Yet gentrification straightforwardly reverses each of those regrettable trends.

One in, none out

The anti-gentrification brigades often cite anecdotes from residents forced to move. Yet the data suggest a different story. An influential study by Lance Freeman and Frank Braconi found that poor residents living in New York’s gentrifying neighbourhoods during the 1990s were actually less likely to move than poor residents of non-gentrifying areas. A follow-up study by Mr Freeman, using a nationwide sample, found scant association between gentrification and displacement. A more recent examination found that financially vulnerable residents in Philadelphia—those with low credit scores and no mortgages—are no more likely to move if they live in a gentrifying neighbourhood.

These studies undermine the widely held belief that for every horrid kale-munching millennial moving in, one long-

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time resident must be chucked out. The surprising result is explained by three underlying trends.

The first is that poor Americans are obliged to move very frequently, regardless of the circumstances of their district, as the Princeton sociologist Matthew Desmond so harrowingly demonstrated in his research on eviction. The second is that poor neighbourhoods have lacked investment for decades, and so have considerable slack in their commercial and residential property markets. A lot of wealthier city dwellers can thus move in without pushing out incumbent residents or businesses. “Given the typical pattern of low-income renter mobility in New York City, a neighbourhood could go from a 30% poverty population to 12% in as few as ten years without any displacement whatsoever,” noted Messrs Freeman and Braconi in their study. Indeed, the number of poor people living in New York’s gentrifying neighbourhoods barely budged from 1990 to 2014, according to a study by New York University’s Furman Centre. Third, city governments often promote affordable-housing schemes, such as rent control or stabilisation, in response to rising rents.

Gentrification has been so thoroughly demonised that a mere discussion of its benefits might seem subversive. That does not make them any less real. Residents of gentrifying neighbourhoods who own their homes have reaped considerable windfalls. One black resident of Logan Circle, a residential district in downtown Washington, bought his home in 1993 for \$130,000. He recently sold it for \$1.6m. Businesses gain from having more customers, with more to spend. Having new shops, like well-stocked grocery stores, and sources of employment nearby can reduce commuting costs and time. Tax collection ▶▶

The
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SPECIAL REPORT
THE GULF

June 23rd 2018



The new Arab revolution



A wild ride

Radical reforms in Saudi Arabia are changing the Gulf and the wider Arab world, says Anton La Guardia

YEAR AFTER YEAR Arwa Alneami's pictures of women at an amusement park captured the obsessions of Saudi Arabia's killjoy religious police. On "the ship", a wild-swinging ride, black-clad women and white-robed men were made to sit at opposite ends. When they started throwing telephone numbers to each other, men and women had to take turns (pictured). The ship then sprouted opaque plastic sides to prevent men from looking at the women, and bright lights to dazzle the gawpers.

Then suddenly last year the *mutawaeen* disappeared. The Committee for the Prevention of Vice and the Promotion of Virtue, to give them their formal title, no longer have the power to enforce public morality. These days the Saudi state is all about promoting fun: concerts, fashion, art, sport. The ratchet of social rules has gone into reverse. Along with the muezzin's call to prayer the unfamiliar sound of laughter can be heard.

Ms Alneami's pictures also capture the pathos, humour and defiance of women riding bumper-cars at funfairs, the closest most could come to driving real cars. But on June 24th they will, at last, be allowed to take the wheel on Saudi roads. The artist says she and her four sisters are torn. One thinks it is too dangerous to drive. Another will dispense with a driver and pick up her children from school herself. Ms Alneami and the others will be patient. She has driven in the desert but will wait until the rush of women applying for driving lessons slows and the cost falls.

Saudi women have a long way to go—they are still subject to legal guardianship by husbands or male relatives who must, for instance, give them permission to travel. But Saudi Arabia is becoming less exceptional. The quest for normality is part of a remarkable revolution; an attempt to refashion Saudi society away from ultra-strict Islamic codes and diversify its economy away from dependence on oil. The kingdom is the world's biggest oil exporter and home to Islam's two holiest places, so the success or failure of the reforms will affect the rest of the world, starting with the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC), a regional body that also includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. As one Saudi official put it: "Where Saudi Arabia goes, the GCC follows. Where the GCC goes, the Arab world follows. Where the Arab world

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In addition to those quoted in this Special Report, many other people gave generously of their time and offered their invaluable insight. Some, given their position, could not be quoted. Others did not feel able to speak openly in the current political climate of the region. The author wishes to express his warm thanks to them all. He is also grateful for the kindness and expertise of: Elliott Abrams, Jon Alterman, Mohammed Baharoon, Alfred Bloom, Toby Dodge, HRH Turki Al Faisal, Nicolas Farah, Philip Gordon, Shadi Hamid, Bernard Haykel, David Hobbs, Hussein Ibish, Martin Indyk, Nadine Kettaneh, Jane Kinninmont, Ali Lootah, Robert Malley, Helal Almarri, Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak al-Nahyan, Ghanim al-Najjar, Zaki Nusseibeh Ahmed Al Omran, Faisal Allothinah, Mina al-Oraibi, William Patey, Madawi al-Rasheed, Bruce Riedel, Nasser Saidi, Ali Shihabi, Fahad al-Sumait, Karen Young and Khalifa al-Zaffin.



Colombia's election

Duque, príncipe, presidente

BOGOTÁ

The new president wants to be a healer. His alliances and campaign promises will make that difficult

WHEN Colombia's news channels declared Iván Duque the winner of the presidential election on June 17th, 45 minutes after polls closed, many Colombians were relieved. "I was terrified of Gustavo Petro,"—Mr Duque's left-wing rival—said a woman waiting for the winner to give his acceptance speech at a convention centre in Bogotá. When Mr Duque came on stage he sought to overcome the campaign's bitterness. He would "turn the page of polarisation", he promised.

Mr Duque's victory, with 54% of the vote, was comfortable. The job that awaits him, starting on August 7th, will be arduous. He campaigned as a sceptic of the peace agreement with the FARC, a guerrilla group that ended its 52-year war against the state in 2016. He must now work out how to revise the accord without pushing some former guerrillas into taking up arms. Mr Duque will have to control corruption, which fuelled the anger that gave Mr Petro 8m votes, more than any other left-wing candidate in Colombia's history. He must speed up sluggish economic growth. And he will also have to step out of the shadow of his mentor, Álvaro Uribe, a former president who inspires as much fear and loathing as Mr Petro.

The son of a prominent politician, Mr Duque has wanted to be president since he was a child. But until six months ago few Colombians knew who he was. He began

his career as a protégé of the current president, Juan Manuel Santos. As Colombia's deputy representative to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Mr Duque helped lead negotiations in 2010 to increase its capital base. He did "the carpentry work of talking to every country", says Luis Alberto Moreno, who was then the IDB's president.

Mr Duque's ticket to the presidency was Mr Uribe, who fervently opposed the peace process launched by Mr Santos. They bonded when Mr Uribe, mandated by the UN to investigate an attack by Israel on a Turkish flotilla in 2010, asked Mr Duque to help. In 2014 Mr Duque was elected to the senate as a candidate of the Democratic Centre, the party Mr Uribe formed to oppose Mr Santos.

For the Democratic Centre, "Duque is a great invention," says Carlos Cortes, a political analyst. His mentor is a hate figure for many Colombians, who associate the successful offensive against the FARC during his presidency with atrocities by paramilitary groups. Mr Duque is unstained by that history. He is young, charming and sings *vallenato*, a type of Colombian folk music. Unlike some of Mr Uribe's allies, he is not under investigation for corruption or links to paramilitary groups.

He will have to prove that he is his own man without alienating Mr Uribe, who remains a powerful senator. To obtain ma-

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orities in congress, the new president will have to strike bargains with parties other than the Democratic Centre and its conservative allies.

His trickiest task will be to modify the peace accord, as demanded by the *uribistas*, without wrecking the peace itself. Their biggest objection is to the "transitional-justice" provisions, which offer lenient sentences to FARC members if they confess to their crimes. Ten members of the FARC, now a political party, will be able to take their seats in congress before they serve any prison time. While the accord says the government should co-operate with farmers to replace coca, the raw material for cocaine, with legal crops, Mr Duque wants to return to the practice, ended by Mr Santos, of fumigating coca from the air.

In his victory speech Mr Duque promised not to tear up the deal, bits of which are part of the constitution. His government will see to it that "justice and security are suitable sisters", he said. But his notion of justice contradicts that of the FARC's leaders. Old and war-weary, they are unlikely to return to jungle hideouts. But Mr Duque's confrontation with the group may add to the growing number of FARC "dissidents" who refuse to accept the accord. They are fighting the ELN, another guerrilla group, and the Clan del Golfo, a mafia linked to demobilised paramilitary groups, for control of the cocaine trade.

A return to aerial fumigation could encourage farmers to sell coca to such groups and to join their ranks. The new president might also end the peace talks Mr Santos

Correction: A story last week on infectious diseases in Latin America ("Disease déjà vu") stated that a case of paralysis in Venezuela had been caused by polio. The Pan-American Health Organisation later clarified that, according to further analysis, the cause of the paralysis would not lead to an outbreak of polio.



Turkey's elections

Can anyone stop Erdogan?

BURSA

Opposition leaders have a chance of ending, or at least crimping, the president's increasingly autocratic rule

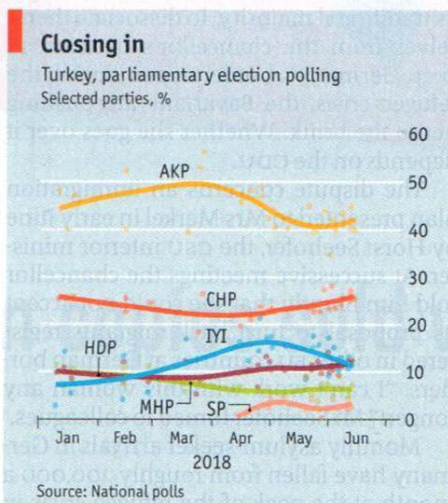
MUHAMMAD SHEIKHOUNI came to Turkey from Syria in 2006, long before his native country plunged into civil war, and fell in love with Recep Tayyip Erdogan. A decade later, after setting up a tourism and construction company in Bursa, the former seat of the Ottoman empire, the businessman joined the president's ruling Justice and Development (AK) party. This year, after Mr Erdogan called early elections for June 24th, Mr Sheikhouni decided to run for a seat. In the meantime, he also changed his last name—to Erdogan.

Inside his election tent, pitched on one side of a large square in Bursa, Muhammad Erdogan can hardly peel his eyes from the president's image, printed on one of the walls, as he delivers his talking points. "There's no one else like our reis," he says, using the Turkish word for chief. "He opened his doors to the people of Syria, he helped the Somalis and he stood up for Palestine. He's not only the leader of Turkey, but of the whole Muslim world."

After 15 years in power—more than Kemal Ataturk, the founder of modern Turkey—Mr Erdogan has left an indelible mark on his country. To many of his supporters, he has turned into a father figure, the symbol of a return to Ottoman glory, the architect of Turkey's boom years, and a beacon of hope for oppressed Muslims across the globe. Turks routinely complain about the problems posed by the 4m refugees who

have poured into the country since the start of the Syrian war. But even Mr Erdogan's critics acknowledge that he has done more for the displaced than practically any foreign government. Many of them also credit him with rescuing Turkey from the bloodiest coup attempt in its history, in 2016. An entire generation has already come of age under Mr Erdogan. Armed with constitutional changes that give him full control of the executive and up to three more terms as president, Mr Erdogan could rule the country well into the 2030s.

There is just one problem. Close to half of the electorate views Mr Erdogan as an



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increasingly unscrupulous autocrat. Turkey's president already had a taste for hounding opponents long before the abortive putsch of 2016. Over the past couple of years, he has indulged it as never before. Out for revenge against the Gulen movement, a sect that colonised parts of the bureaucracy and spearheaded the coup, he has filled Turkey's prisons with tens of thousands of former officials, only a fraction of whom were involved in the violence; thousands of Kurdish activists; over a hundred journalists; and a dozen members of parliament, including one of his opponents in the presidential election, Selahattin Demirtas. His tolerance for dissent within his own party has reached zero.

Mr Erdogan has also made sure to stack the deck before the vote by forcing the media to march to his beat. Most Turkish newspapers now read like AK election leaflets. The state media have, in effect, placed two of the three main presidential contenders under embargo. According to a recent report, the main state broadcaster devoted a total of 13 minutes of coverage to Meral Aksener and her newly hatched Iyi (Good) party in the last two weeks of May, compared with 68 hours for Mr Erdogan and his allies. The imprisoned Mr Demirtas and his Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) did not get even a single minute of airtime.

Turkey's president used to campaign as a leader who brought jobs, growth and services. Since 2013, after a wave of anti-government protests, a corruption scandal and a messy split with the Gulen movement, Mr Erdogan has reinvented himself as the commander of a country at war. In the universe he and many of his supporters inhabit, Turkey is under attack by Western powers jealous of its bridges and highways, by currency speculators and by their



The NHS at 70

Theresa May's sticking-plaster

Birthday celebrations for the NHS belie the health service's problems

ON JULY 5th 1948 Sylvia Beckingham was admitted to Park Hospital in Greater Manchester. The 13-year-old was the inaugural patient of the National Health Service (NHS), the world's first universal health system free at the point of use. At her bedside Aneurin Bevan, the health secretary, called the NHS the most civilised step any country had ever taken.

Elsewhere patients lined up at clinics with horrendous coughs, festering wounds and hernias spilling into trusses. Pregnant women queued, too; in 350 mothers were dying in childbirth, about the same as in Gabon today. Bevan assumed that demand would eventually moderate. It did not. "We never shall have all we need," he soon realised. "Expectation will always exceed capacity."

Call it Bevan's law. Seven decades on it is still true. In a speech on June 18th to mark the NHS's 70th birthday, Theresa May acknowledged that rising demand and years of low growth in funding had put the service "under strain". Promising that spending would rise more quickly from April 2019, the prime minister vowed to do more than apply "a sticking-plaster" to the NHS's ailments. Yet that is all she has done.

In recent years the NHS has deteriorated. Five years ago more than 90% of patients waited less than 18 weeks from being referred by their family doctor to receiving treatment in hospital. Today less than 75% do so. The share of patients seen within

four hours at accident and emergency (A&E) departments—another key indicator—is the lowest since records began in 2003-04. This winter, hospitals from Northampton to Nottingham were cancelling all non-urgent operations.

Such grim symptoms need a dose of historical perspective. In 1987 average inpatient waiting time was 45 weeks. The NHS has not suddenly regressed to the 1940s. Yet the trend in its performance remains noticeably downwards. And the cause is that demand is outstripping the NHS's ability to supply care. Not only are more patients turning up at hospital, but they are presenting with more complex cases. The number of patients at A&E is up 26% on a decade ago. The number of emergency admissions has risen by 42%. One in three patients admitted as an emergency has at least five conditions, against one in ten nearly a decade ago.

The NHS has been spared cuts made to other public services. Since 2009-10 health spending has increased by 1.4% a year in real terms. But that is barely enough to keep pace with a growing and ageing population. And the reality is even worse than this suggests, for two reasons.

The first is that the cost of medical technology (drugs, scanners and so on) keeps rising faster than inflation. Between 2011-12 and 2016-17 the total bill for prescriptions from hospital pharmacies rose by about 70%. The second arises from cuts in adult

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social-care funding, which has shrunk by 1.5% a year in real terms since 2009-10. This has increased pressure on hospitals by making it harder for them to send mostly elderly patients home.

At times of poor performance, critics of the NHS always exhort the service to be more efficient. There are obvious areas for improvement. Primary care remains a cottage industry. It is also difficult for high-performing hospitals to take over laggards. Yet since 2010 productivity in the NHS seems to have grown faster than it has in the economy overall.

In a nod to reality, Mrs May has pledged to increase spending on the NHS in real terms by an average of 3.4% a year from 2019-20 to 2023-24. Breathless reports called the rise "massive" and "extraordinary". The truth is more mundane. It is less than the annual average growth of 3.7% in spending since 1948. It falls short of the 4% a year that think-tanks like the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) and the Health Foundation say is the minimum required to improve services. And important things are excluded from Mrs May's pledge, such as training staff and building hospitals.

Nor is it clear where the extra money will come from. Mrs May says part is "a Brexit dividend". But this is nonsense. Brexit will shrink the available cake for public spending, not expand it. The truth is that extra money for the NHS must come from lower spending elsewhere, higher taxes or more borrowing.

Mrs May has limited room for manoeuvre. Over the past 40 years public spending on health has, in effect, been paid for by spending less on other things, such as defence. Today public spending on health is 7.3% of GDP, similar to the average in other longstanding members of the EU, up from 4% four decades ago. Mrs May cannot now easily swap soldiers for surgeons. More →



Urban mobility

Electric invasion

AMSTERDAM AND BEIJING

How e-bikes and scooters are weaving their way into the transport system

THE streets of Beijing are thronged with two-wheeled contraptions. Some appear to be conventional petrol mopeds but as they zoom through red lights at pedestrian crossings their eerie silence and lack of exhaust reveals them as electric. Executives in suits cruise by on electric kick-scooters, looking like big kids on their way to school, though travelling much more enthusiastically. Electric bicycles, hacked together with a battery strapped to the frame and wired to a back-wheel hub containing a motor, crowd the edges of roads.

China's cities are at the forefront of a quiet swarm of electric two-wheeled vehicles. Millions now roam their centres. This transformation of urban mobility is also happening in the West, albeit with a notable addition that has yet to take off in China: firms that rent out electric kick-scooters. These are taking many American cities by storm and are arriving in Europe.

In the bike-mad Netherlands nearly one in three newly bought bikes last year was electric, up from one in 20 a decade earlier. Commuters, from the sweat-averse to the environmentally conscious, are keen. Some 40% of Dutch e-cyclists use them to replace car journeys. Riding for fun is on the rise, too: a best-selling model in Europe last year was the e-mountain-bike.

In Germany, 15% of new bikes sold in 2016 were electric, with sales up by 13% and exports by 66% compared with 2015. Bel-

gium and France are big markets too. Whereas exports of regular bikes from China, Taiwan and Vietnam to the European Union fell by 15% between 2014 and 2016, e-bike exports more than doubled. Businesses are also joining the ride. One of Germany's largest electric fleets is owned by Deutsche Post DHL, a logistics giant, and includes around 12,000 e-bikes and e-trikes (three-wheeled ones).

For consumers the vehicles do not come cheap. They typically cost a couple of thousand euros—more once you add bells and whistles. Hence new businesses are popping up to rent or lease them out. Some of these serve couriers working in the gig economy. Others go after hipster lei-

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sure riders. Bike-sharing services are rushing to include them. Nearly a third of Paris's Vélib fleet, for example, is electric, though the roll-out has been tricky.

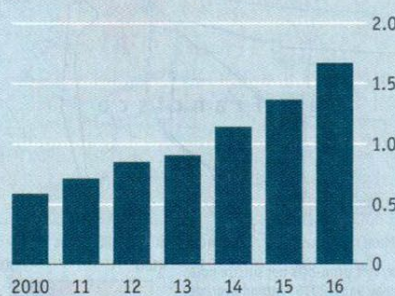
For riders in American cities, however, e-scooters may steal the show. Their characteristics fit even more neatly into rental models than e-bikes do. Powered not just by electricity, but by volleys of venture money, e-scooters are the latest craze coming out of California. Revenue for some of the firms renting them is increasing so fast as to surprise even seasoned Silicon Valley venture capitalists. Bird Rides, a pioneer of the business, and not yet a year old, has become a "unicorn" faster than any other American startup before it. Its valuation has now reportedly reached \$2bn.

In some places, such as Santa Monica, one of the first places where Bird introduced e-scooters, using them to get around has already become a habit. With a few taps on an app riders can unlock them and off they go. Once they have reached their destination they park the scooter at a spot where it can be picked up by another rider. Each ride costs \$1 plus 15 cents per minute.

Another aspect of the model is that people can make money by charging them. Freelance "bird hunters" pick up scooters with empty batteries and plug them in at home. The startup pays between \$5 and \$25 per vehicle charged, depending on how hard they are to find (the locations of "dead" scooters are shown in another app). Charging mostly happens at night and the vehicles must be back on the street in specified locations before 7am the next day. That Bird and other firms can outsource this activity explains why they have been able to launch their services so quickly in so many cities. Hot on Bird's wheels is Lime, co-founded by Toby Sun, a Chinese entrepreneur, which boasts a similar

The road less pedalled

European Union, electrically power-assisted bicycle sales, m



Source: Confederation of the European Bicycle Industry



US-China trade (1)

Battle-lines drawn

WASHINGTON, DC

As the Trump administration threatens further tariffs, the prospect of a last-minute deal with China is receding

IT IS becoming increasingly likely that the phoney trade war between America and China will develop into the real thing. On June 15th the Trump administration published two lists of Chinese products it plans to hit with tariffs of 25%, worth \$50bn in 2018. The first will come into force on July 6th. The Chinese snapped back with their own list, laying out a retaliation of equal size. Then on June 18th President Donald Trump directed Robert Lighthizer, the United States Trade Representative (USTR), to draw up a further list of products worth \$200bn that would face tariffs of 10%, and threatened yet another, covering an additional \$200bn of goods, if the Chinese retaliated again. At least some of these tough words will probably turn into deeds. Both sides can expect to take casualties.

China regards the first round of American tariffs as a unilateral violation of global trading rules. It has lodged a complaint at the World Trade Organisation (WTO). But Mr Trump's team maintains that China started the conflict, by stealing America's intellectual property and engaging in unfair industrial policy. Once tariffs have been imposed, the rights and wrongs—and even the role of the WTO itself in the dispute—could be forgotten.

There is still a faint hope that July 6th will pass without the tariffs coming into force. The fact that the tariffs were not im-

posed immediately could allow time for further negotiation. But the prospects for peace are dimming. On June 19th Peter Navarro, Mr Trump's adviser, said there were no immediate plans for talks. The delay between announcing the tariffs and imposing them was to give American customs authorities time to prepare.

The office of the USTR has also taken its time to decide which products should be subject to tariffs. It wants to inflict as little pain as possible on American consumers, and as much as possible on Chinese exporters. Of the products announced on June 15th, 95% by the value of American imports were capital or intermediate goods. That should lessen the immediate effect on consumer prices in America, as only a fraction of production costs will rise because of tariffs. The USTR has also sought to ensure that American importers would be able to find alternative suppliers. According to the International Trade Centre, a multilateral agency, China accounts for just 8% of America's total imports of the affected products.

Still, tariffs will hurt American companies by imposing costs their competitors do not face. Even for products where China accounts for a small share of imports, rebuilding supply chains may be easier said than done. In public testimony GE, an industrial conglomerate, pointed out that its

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specialised components go through all sorts of quality-control processes and regulatory approval. But of the 34 products the firm asked to be removed from the list, not a single one was.

Inflicting pain on China could also be easier said than done. The Trump administration wants to stymie China's ambitions in the strategic sectors it has identified as part of its "Made in China 2025" policy. But according to Yang Liang of Syracuse University and Mary Lovely of the Peterson Institute for International Economics, a think-tank in Washington, DC, 55% of high-tech Chinese exports to America in 2013 came from wholly foreign-owned enterprises. The \$3.6bn of semiconductor imports from China in the firing line are mostly from subsidiaries of American companies, contain chips designed and made in America, and are in China only for labour-intensive assembly and testing.

Collateral damage

China's opening blows will hit agricultural products that largely come from states which voted for Mr Trump. But as a trade war escalates, the pain becomes more indiscriminate. In 2017 America imported \$505bn of goods from China. If tariffs are expanded to cover Chinese imports worth \$250bn, let alone \$450bn, avoiding consumer products such as clothes and electronics will become impossible. Products with few alternative suppliers will be hit. American importers will find it harder to avoid passing on rising costs to consumers. A trade war, says Dmitry Grozoubski of the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, a think-tank, involves "blowing up your own cities and wafting the resulting smoke across the border in the hopes it will sting their eyes." ▶▶



Scientific journals

Publish and don't be damned

Some journals that claim to screen academic papers with rigorous peer review do not do so

WHETHER to get a promotion or merely a foot in the door, academics have long known that they must publish papers, typically the more the better. Tallying scholarly publications to evaluate their authors has been common since the invention of scientific journals in the 17th century. So, too, has the practice of journal editors asking independent, usually anonymous, experts to scrutinise manuscripts and reject those deemed flawed—a quality-control process now known as peer review. Of late, however, this habit of according importance to papers labelled as “peer reviewed” has become something of a gamble. A rising number of journals that claim to review submissions in this way do not bother to do so. Not coincidentally, this seems to be leading some academics to inflate their publication lists with papers that might not pass such scrutiny.

Experts debate how many journals falsely claim to engage in peer review. Cabells, an analytics firm in Texas, has compiled a blacklist of those which it believes are guilty. According to Kathleen Berryman, who is in charge of this list, the firm employs 65 criteria to determine whether a journal should go on it—though she is reluctant to go into details. Cabells’ list now totals around 8,700 journals, up from a bit over 4,000 a year ago. Another list, which grew to around 12,000 journals, was compiled until recently by Jeffrey Beall, a librarian at the University of Colorado. Using Mr Beall’s list, Bo-Christer Björk, an informa-

tion scientist at the Hanken School of Economics, in Helsinki, estimates that the number of articles published in questionable journals has ballooned from about 53,000 a year in 2010 to more than 400,000 today. He estimates that 6% of academic papers by researchers in America appear in such journals.

Behind all this is a change in the way a lot of journals make their money. Over the past decade, many have stopped selling subscriptions. Instead, they charge authors a publication fee and permit people to read the result for nothing. This “open access” business model has the advantage of increasing the dissemination of knowledge, but it also risks corrupting the knowledge thus disseminated.

Trouble with lichen

The truth of this was shown as far back as 2013, in an experiment conducted by John Bohannon, a journalist with a doctorate in molecular biology. Dr Bohannon set up a sting operation by writing versions of a paper falsely claiming that a molecule found in lichens inhibits cancer. The papers featured, he says, “laughably bad” methodology and a shocking conclusion that the molecule is “a promising new drug” despite an absence of clinical trials. He attributed the papers to fictional biologists at made-up African medical institutes and then submitted them to open-access journals. Of 121 chosen from a blacklist, 69% offered to publish the paper for a fee, and

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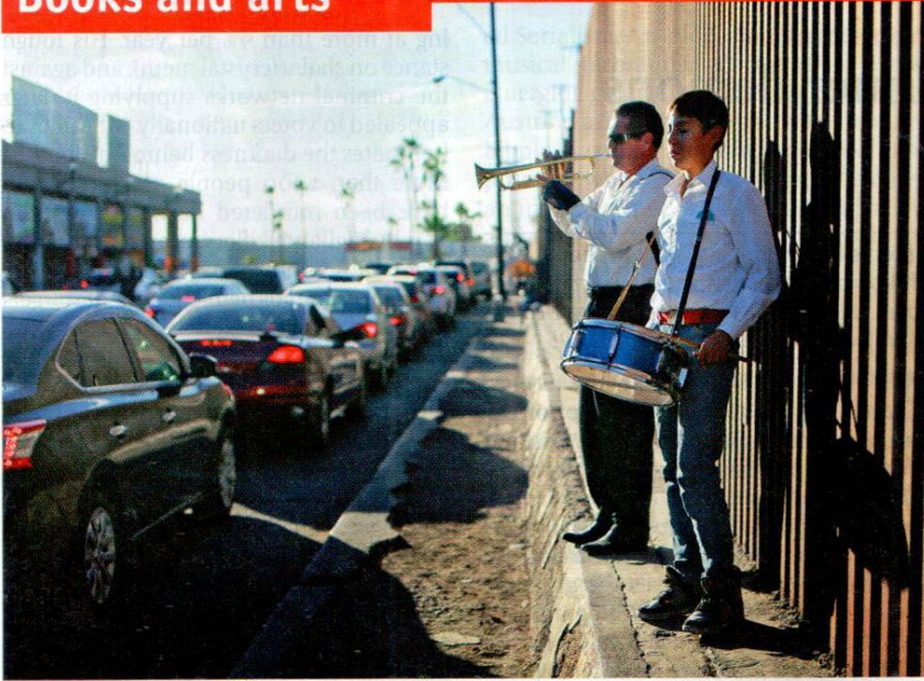
even when he turned to journals on a whitelist of supposedly trustworthy open-access journals, 38% of the 167 he approached fell into the trap.

Dr Bohannon’s experiment did lack a true control—submission to journals that still charge subscriptions. Nevertheless, his findings were worrying and since then, he says, “things have only gotten darker”.

One aspect of that darkness is that compiling a blacklist has itself become risky. Mr Beall stopped adding to his last year and left his job at the University of Colorado in March. He claims to have been subjected to pressure from a superior, to a research-misconduct investigation by the university and to threats of lawsuits by publishers. The university, for its part, says that no pressure was put on him to take down the list. As far as it is aware that decision was his, and his job was never in jeopardy because of his work researching open-access journals. It cannot, however, disclose whether or not there was a research-misconduct investigation. Disclosure happens only after a finding has been made in such an investigation. Mr Beall’s list has been taken up by another researcher who has since appended 690 new journals to it. But this new custodian refuses to be named.

Meanwhile, at Cabells, Ms Berryman reckons the publishers of bogus journals are getting ever cannier. She has seen cases of journals she regards as suspect claiming to be on whitelists, fabricating citation scores for papers, stating plausible time frames for peer review (claims of rapid review are often associated with questionable journals) and brazenly listing as sitting on their editorial boards scholars who are not in fact doing so.

Ms Berryman says, too, that some websites copy wording and graphics used by legitimate journals. Other sites go further, assuming a name that is confusingly similar to that of a reputable journal. And ac- ▶▶



Mexico and America

Love thy neighbour

TIJUANA

Despite the recent surge in nativism, the relationship between Mexico and America is likely to deepen

ON THE Mexican-American border in Tijuana stands a building that resembles the hull of a ship. In 2004 authorities discovered a tunnel that gangsters had dug inside it, to smuggle drugs beneath the border wall. Officials jammed the tunnel with concrete; the building was taken over by a cross-border arts council, which aims to promote cultural integration between Mexico and America. These days La Casa del Túnel hosts exhibitions and workshops for aspiring artists. Among the paintings that adorn the walls is a diptych of Adolf Hitler and Donald Trump.

Up on the roof, with its view across the border and into southern California, Tito Arveola is building the gallery's café. Walls have sprung up throughout his life, Mr Arveola observes, yet the two countries have only grown closer. As a child in the 1970s he would cross the border without papers to carry bags for Mexicans buying groceries in American stores. Later he spent three decades in America legally, cleaning cars for a living. His current place of work embodies a neighbourly bond that is tightening even as politics becomes more vituperative. This process is the subject of new books by Alfredo Corchado, a Mexican-American journalist, and Andrew Selee, president of the Migration Policy Institute, a think-tank in Washington.

Mr Trump wants the wall to rise higher and stretch farther across the 3,145km frontier. He won the White House by telling

Vanishing Frontiers: The Forces Driving Mexico and the United States Together.

By Andrew Selee. *PublicAffairs*; 336 pages; \$28 and £20

Homelands: Four Friends, Two Countries and the Fate of the Great Mexican-American Migration.

By Alfredo Corchado. *Bloomsbury Publishing*; 304 pages; \$27 and £18.99

voters that Mexico was sending its “worst” people, and that trade between the two countries was unfair to American workers. Many expected his victory to lead to a fundamental change in relations. Yet in 2017 bilateral trade increased. Security co-operation continues. In “Vanishing Frontiers”, Mr Selee argues that the relationship will deepen further.

Homes are where the heart is

Beginning with the sister cities of Tijuana and San Diego, “Vanishing Frontiers” is an account of the people and places at the forefront of this integration. As Mr Selee reports, the two cities plan their futures together; their mayors talk of governing a single urban region. A new privately funded bridge, which crosses the wall and allows San Diegans to walk straight into Tijuana Airport, is a striking symbol of collaboration. The practical difficulties of sharing a border persist, but the underlying eco-

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conomic forces binding the countries together are irresistible.

American companies in search of cheap, diligent labour attract poor Mexican migrants or erect factories in Mexico. Products are increasingly made in both countries, with some zipping across the border several times along the way. In Tijuana the benefits are mutual: once a hub for factories with unskilled labourers, it now boasts many educated workers with sophisticated jobs. Meanwhile, security agencies work together to counter a drug racket that subsists on American demand and respects no boundaries.

Mr Selee's book shows that what Mr Trump characterises as a zero-sum game is in fact a win-win arrangement. At La Casa del Túnel, that is Mr Arveola's conclusion, too. He thinks Mexicans change when they cross the border. The same people who drop litter on the streets of Tijuana refrain from doing so in San Diego, he says. Though Americans come to Tijuana for beaches and bars at weekends, on weekdays the roads are full of Mexicans heading north for jobs. “You can tell it is a good thing to work in America, the cars are all nice models,” Mr Arveola notes.

In this tale of strengthening ties, the border-hoppers are the main protagonists. The number in America grew from 3m in 1962 to 36m today. Whereas Mexican men once went north for seasonal farm work before returning home, now whole families arrive and put down roots. The remittances they send home enrich some of Mexico's poorest places. At the same time their dispersal beyond the border states means that much of America has become familiar with Mexican culture. But their visibility has also fuelled the nativist backlash that helped elect Mr Trump.

Mr Corchado, a journalist at the *Dallas Morning News*, has lived this story. In ▶▶