TOP NEWS

Rusal bonds slump, customers review contracts as U.S. sanctions bite
Rusal's dollar bonds slump to record lows, two major customers said they were reviewing their contracts, and the London Metal Exchange distanced itself from the aluminium giant on Tuesday, in the latest aftershocks from U.S. sanctions. The sanctions imposed on Rusal and its boss, metals magnate Oleg Deripaska, mark the first time a major international company has been targeted by Washington in its moves to punish Russia for alleged meddling in the 2016 U.S. election.

EXCLUSIVE—Sinopec USA turns copper buyer to supply China operations -sources
The U.S. unit of China's oil major Sinopec Corp is procuring copper to send to its equipment suppliers in China, two sources familiar with the matter told Reuters, a rare move by a Chinese oil company. Sinopec USA is seeking to buy around 300,000 tonnes of copper and copper concentrates per year to then sell on to its suppliers of copper rods and cables in mainland China, the sources said, speaking on condition of anonymity because the discussions were confidential.

EXCLUSIVE—Rusal triggers Iran-style defence after U.S. sanctions -source
Russian aluminium giant Rusal has activated a contingency plan asking customers to pay in euros instead of dollars to try to skirt round U.S. sanctions, a source close to the matter said. The plan follows the example of Iran, which a few years ago opted to use gold, oil and the Japanese yen to pay for goods that would typically be priced in dollars.

Rio Tinto reviewing Rusal ties, mum on Queensland venture
Rio Tinto Plc is reviewing its dealings with Russian aluminum producer United Co Rusal to ensure compliance with U.S. sanctions, a top executive said on Tuesday, but added it was too soon to discuss the future of its Australian venture with Rusal. "We are reviewing in detail all our trading relationships with Rusal and other counterparties and we will obviously do what we have to do to ensure that we comply with applicable sanctions," Alf Barrios, Rio Tinto Aluminium's chief executive officer, said in an interview.
FEATURE—Colombia pro-mining referendum will not soothe global miners
Jose Alberto Gamboa, whose smile flashes the gold he has spent his life digging from Colombia's frosty Andean mountains, says he will do whatever it takes to protect his town's only industry: mining. "We would get guns and go to war," the grizzled 67-year-old miner said during his break at the Queen of Gold mine, near Vetas, on the steep slopes of Santander province. "How else could we feed our children?"

GRAPHIC—Palladium’s slide from record high hits solid floor
Palladium's 20 percent fall from its January record high has put the metal in bear market territory, but strong chart support and tightness in the underlying market suggest it has hit a solid floor more than 40 percent above its 10-year average. Palladium, the most industrial of the major precious metals, jumped more than 3 percent on Monday, having tumbled to eight-month lows over the previous weeks on concerns over the prospect of a U.S.-China trade war.

S. Africa's east platinum belt hit by over 400 social unrest incidents since 2016
The eastern limb of South Africa's platinum belt has been hit by over 400 incidents of social unrest impacting mining operations since the start of 2016, according to data compiled by Anglo American Platinum (Amplats) and provided to Reuters. The restive region in the country's northeast has been a flashpoint of violence rooted in community grievances over jobs, revenue flows and conflict between rival unions that threatens production in the world's top producer of the precious metal.

Brazil court orders Hydro to set aside $44 mln for cleanup
A Brazilian court ruled that Alunorte, a subsidiary of Norwegian metals company Norsk Hydro ASA, must set aside 150 million reais ($44 million) to potentially compensate for alleged environmental damages. The unresolved legal dispute at the Alunorte alumina plant, the world's largest producer of the raw material for aluminum, will force Hydro to cut aluminum output from its nearby Albras plant by 50 percent, the company said on Tuesday.

Vedanta's request to renew copper smelter operations in India rejected
Vedanta Resources Plc said on Tuesday its application for renewal of consent to operate its copper smelting plant, one of India's biggest, in the South Indian town of Thootukudi was rejected by the state pollution regulator. The rejection comes amid almost daily protests against a proposed expansion of the smelter by the people of Thootukudi, who have thronged the streets and shut shops demanding a closure of the plant.

Algeria agrees steel plant stake sale to UAE firm
Algeria will sell a 49 percent stake in its state steel plant to Dubai-based Emarat Dzayer Group, the prime minister's office said on Tuesday, as the North African country seeks to attract foreign investment and diversify its economy. The deal will include a 160 billion dinar ($1.44 billion) investment to develop the El Hadjar plat, in the eastern province of Annaba, it said in a statement on its website.
MARKET NEWS

Gold prices touched their highest in a week early, as the dollar index hovered near two-week lows and investor jitters about a host of geopolitical tensions stoked demand for the safe-haven metal. London aluminium prices traded higher for a sixth straight session, as the fallout from U.S. sanctions on Russian producer United Company Rusal continues to roil metals markets.

REUTERS TECHNICAL ANALYSIS Q2 OUTLOOK 2018 - WANG TAO

Energy and precious metals are steady on their medium-term uptrends, while base metals and oilseeds may extend their losses in the second quarter. Bitcoin and Rubber are still trending down. Grains may experience deep corrections except corn which has unexpectedly broken the key resistance and could rally more. Cocoa may maintain its bullish momentum while coffee may fall more. To read the full report, click here.

TECHNICAL CHARTS

Aluminum | Copper | Nickel | Lead | Zinc | Tin | Alloy | Nasaac