

Spain borrowing cost rise as it passes bond test

Spain demonstrated that it could still borrow on the international credit markets — and what was more at an affordable, though rising, rate of interest



Men talk in front of information screens at the Madrid stock exchange

As efforts continue for a European rescue of its debt-stricken banks, Madrid sold 2.1bn Euros

worth of government bonds with strong demand from investors. The interest rate was a fraction

over six percent on bonds that have to be repaid in 10 years time; up from 5.74 percent last month.

The success of the auction comes on talk of a rescue for Spanish banks and it eases the worries about how Madrid will finance its budget deficit, which is the third largest in the Eurozone. It also showed Treasury Minister Cristobal Montoro was wrong when he said that Spain was being shut out of the credit markets because of the huge debts of the country's banks. Alessandro Giansanti, bond strategist with ING bank in Amsterdam, said, "There is a better environment over the last few days for Spanish bonds. Talk of a rescue for Spanish banks is the thing that is reducing risk aversion in the markets."

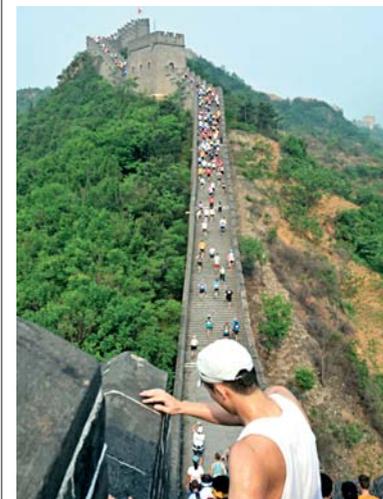
European officials are said to be considering a limited bailout programme for Spain although Madrid has not yet requested assistance. Germany's Angela Merkel is looking for a way to enable Spain's reluctant Premier Mariano Rajoy to access Eurozone rescue funds while not having to impose new economic reforms. Meanwhile the European Central Bank, by leaving interest rates unchanged is still putting the onus on politicians to deal with the Eurozone debt crisis.

China's Great Wall is 'longer than previously thought'

The Great Wall of China has been officially declared even longer than previously thought

The wall measures 21,196.18km (13,170.6956 miles) long based on the latest state survey results. A preliminary study released in 2009 estimated the wall to be 8,850km long. The world's largest man-made structure was built to protect China's northern border. This is the first time such a definitive figure has been released.

The State Administration of Cultural Heritage released the results based on an archaeological survey done since 2007. Previous estimates of the wall's length were mainly based on historical records.



Great Wall runners marathon

Tong Mingkang, Deputy Chief, said that the survey revealed a total of 43,721 heritage sites that included stretches of the Great Wall. Known to the Chinese as the 'Long Wall of 10,000 Li', the Great Wall is a series of walls and earthen works begun in 500BC and first linked up under Qin Shi Huang in about 220BC.

Does Greece have a future in the euro?

It is the currency many Europeans love to hate, and few really love. Now a decade old, the Euro has been blamed by many for higher prices and hard times

Killing jobs and forcing deep austerity cuts to comply with strict fiscal rules. It was not supposed to be that way, the Euro was intended to create a truly single market in Europe, facil-

itating the free flow of people, goods and services across the European Union, stimulating competition, business activity and job creation.

Some say the crisis now is part of the 'growing-pains' needed to modernise Europe's economy. Others say the austerity remedy is killing the patient, and could destroy the currency itself. Some say it's high time for the EU to issue Euro-bonds.

Brussels abuzz over bee decline



Brussels and bees — two words you don't always hear together, but on World Environment Day the future of our furry friends is of increasing concern to beelovers and MEPs

That's because over the last few years honeybee colonies in some parts of Europe have collapsed — bad news when they are so vital for pollinating crops. Scientists think multiple factors maybe behind the

decline.

Some MEPs are demanding more research to find out what is actually happening. "We'd like to know more precisely how many bee hives there are in Europe and their interaction with the rest of the environment. Nearly 90 percent of hives are privately owned and so we don't always have exact figures," said Gaston Franco MEP.

Competition from other parts of the world is also being blamed for the recent decline. Those in the industry say cheap honey imports from China are putting Europe's beekeepers out of business.

With bees so crucial to our own well-being and food supply campaigners have called on the authorities to tap into funds from the Common Agricultural Policy.

Enterprise ferried down New York Hudson to museum



Lifting of Space Shuttle Enterprise on the Intrepid Sea deck

A former WWII aircraft carrier has found a more futuristic purpose as the new home of the space shuttle Enterprise

Crowds gathered to cheer and wave as a barge carried the Enterprise down New York's Hudson River. Then a crane placed it on top the old aircraft carrier — which will now be a floating museum. "It is a great day for New York City. We at NASA have been transporting shuttles for quite a while but this is something new

the city is doing and it's a unique challenge of a water delivery," said NASA Deputy Administrator Lori Garver.

In April, it was watched by many as it flew over New York attached to a Boeing 747 plane. The shuttle, which was the first one made by NASA, has never actually been flown in space. Someone in the New York crowd shouted 'Beam me up Scotty!' at Enterprise, which is named after a spaceship on the television show *Star Trek*.

Antique bible turns up in Turkey

Turkish authorities have confirmed that an ancient bible thought to be 1,500 years old is being kept safe after being seized from a gang of smugglers

The document is in Aramaic, the language of Jesus Christ, written in gold Syriac characters on leather pages loosely bound together with string. It was part of a haul recovered 12 years ago by police targeting traffickers in ancient artefacts in southern Turkey.

After the case went before a judge it is thought the bible languished in a safe at the courthouse in Ankara and was only recently transferred to a museum in the city. The pages are reported to have retained many original traces of the period though Turkey's Minister of Culture said it will now undergo restoration work. It is believed the bible might be worth up to 20m Euros.