

Asia M&A bonanza fuelled by Southeast Asia, private equity deals.

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- Asian first half M&A at second-highest level of \$707.7 bln
- Southeast Asia deals hit record \$124.8 bln
- Private equity-backed deals at \$102 bln, also a record
- Bankers see de-spac transactions materialising in second half

HONG KONG/SINGAPORE, July 1 (Reuters) - Asian merger and acquisition activity surged to its second-highest level ever for a first half as Southeast Asian and private-equity deals hit records, and bankers expect the strong momentum to be maintained for the rest of the year.

Announced deals involving Asian companies came to \$707.7 billion in January-June, up 75% from the same period a year earlier and not far off the record of \$758.6 billion logged in the first half of 2018, Refinitiv data showed.

Southeast Asia deals jumped 83% to a record \$124.8 billion driven by blockbuster transactions including ride-hailing giant Grab's \$40 billion merger with U.S. special-purpose acquisition company (SPAC) Altimeter Growth Corp