



BACKSTREET BOYS TO PERFORM IN MACAU

The ongoing Backstreet Boys tour has been extended to include Macau, where the best-selling boy group will perform on April 24

P2



CEM: MAINTENANCE STRENGTHENED TO AVOID BLACKOUTS

P5



560 DEAD AMID FEARS OF HUMANITARIAN COLLAPSE IN YEMEN

Aid workers warned yesterday of an unfolding humanitarian crisis, saying at least 560 people, including dozens of children, have been killed

P15

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS

TAIWAN's president says that relations with political and military rival China were moving forward despite widespread public opposition that crested with a student occupation of parliament last year. *More on p10*

CHINA A former mayor of the major eastern Chinese city of Nanjing has been sentenced to 15 years in prison on corruption charges, as President Xi Jinping's anti-graft crackdown continues to gather steam. *More on p10*



PHILIPPINES Family members of a Filipino maid facing the death penalty after being convicted of drug trafficking in Indonesia have made a last-minute appeal for clemency to the country's president. *More on p12*

JAPAN Two years after launching a bazooka of ultra-lavish monetary easing, Bank of Japan Gov. Haruhiko Kuroda has made only fitful progress toward the goal of the 2 percent inflation rate he and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said was needed to jolt the world's No. 3 economy out of its deflationary rut.

INDIA Cooking stoves fired by kerosene and cow dung patties are a major source of pollution in the developing world. Experts are now putting a figure on the costs of that pollution, hoping to persuade governments and donors to subsidize cleaner replacements.

NEPAL Life returned to normal in Nepal yesterday after an opposition alliance cut short a crippling general strike over an impasse about how to approve the Himalayan nation's constitution. *More on p12*

More on backpage

Consumer confidence in local economy slumps

P3 SURVEY



US researchers: Hundreds of NKorea missiles threaten Asia

P12

Maintenance work required on major water pipeline

Macao Water will carry out further maintenance work on one of the water pipelines under the Sai Van Bridge today from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. The maintenance work involves replacing the rubber joints throughout the water pipeline located on the side of Macau under the Sai Van Bridge, near to the Gates of Understanding. The work is being done in order to reinforce the pipeline's shockproof and pressure-resistant strength, thus ensuring greater stability. Macao Water has said that the first part of the maintenance work was completed smoothly on March 1. It is believed that the second part will be completed on schedule, while maintaining a normal water supply service. According to the company, under normal circumstances, this kind of rubber joint needs to be replaced every 10 to 15 years. After having the situation professionally evaluated, Macao Water has decided to carry out the joint replacements before the arrival of the peak season of water consumption during the hot summer months.

MGTO to focus on foreign markets

Over the past five-day Easter and Ching Ming holiday, Macau received a total of over 775,000 visitors, 1.67 percent up year-on-year. According to the director of Macau Government Tourist Office (MGTO), Helena de Senna Fernandes, the growth was mainly attributed to visitors from Hong Kong and Taiwan, while tourists from the mainland recorded a 3.5 percent year-on-year decline. The director said in a TDM radio program yesterday that it's still unable to conclude that the number of mainland visitors to Macau has shown a downward trend. However, she revealed that the MGTO would focus on exploring foreign markets. According to the Public Security Police (PSP), the city's six checkpoints recorded more than 2.37 million border crossings during the past holiday period, which more entries than departures. Opinions indicate that Macau has a difficulty in attracting visitors to stay over night, due to the expensive hotel rates. In response, Ms Fernandes acknowledged that local hotels' occupancy rate has for the first time showed a negative growth during this Chinese New Year.

Ng Kuok Cheong calls for measures against food inflation



In a written interpellation filed yesterday, Ng Kuok Cheong urged the government to hammer out detailed

and concrete policies and measures to curb the rampant inflation in the food sector for the sake of ordinary citizens. Following Secretary for Economy and Finance Lionel Leong's announcement of the import, wholesale and retail prices of local pork (MOP19.9, MOP21.7 and MOP68.9 respectively) during the policy address debate, the lawmaker expressed doubts over whether the government has explicitly acknowledged the huge differences between the import and retail prices. Meanwhile, Ng Kuok Cheong's written inquiry also asked for the government to publicize the specific mechanism that will be used to curb food inflation.

MUSIC

Backstreet Boys to perform in Macau

THE ongoing Backstreet Boys tour has been extended to include Macau, where the best-selling boy group will perform on April 24 at the Venetian's Cotai Arena.

Singapore promoter Live Nation Lushington decided to extend the "In A World Like This Tour" to Macau because "the two Hong Kong shows on April 22 and 23 were sold out within an hour," the Venetian Macao mentioned yesterday in a press release.

Consisting of Brian Littrell, Kevin Richardson, Howie Dorough, A.J. McLean and Nick Carter, the multiple award-winning and Grammy-nominated group has sold 130 million records worldwide.

The Backstreet Boys' first nine albums all debuted in the top 10 on the Billboard Top 100, and they have gone gold and platinum in 46 countries. Backstreet Boys are the only group in Canadian history to have three consecutive diamond albums commemorating sales of over 10 million records, and they hold two diamond awards in the US. The group also made history when their anticipated 11-week, 39-city 1999-2000 North American arena tour sold out within the first hour of ticket sales. The



Backstreet Boys received a star on the legendary Hollywood Walk of Fame in 2013.

The 2013 album release, "In A World Like This," not only celebrated 20 years of Backstreet Boys; it was their first collaboration with founding member Richardson since the group's 2005 album, "Never Gone." It came hot on the heels of their historic global joint tour with New Kids on the Block, "NKO-TBSB," in 2011.

Backstreet Boys have amassed a huge catalogue of hits, including

"I Want It That Way," "As Long As You Love Me," "Show Me the Meaning of Being Lonely," "I'll Never Break Your Heart," "All I Have to Give" and "We've Got it Going."

According to the press release, tickets to the Backstreet Boys concerts in Hong Kong, Singapore, Taipei, Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur "have sold out quickly."

Tickets for the local concert will be available to the public via the Cotai Ticketing box today. Tickets start from MOP/HKD588, with ferry and hotel packages also available.

Tightened standard for green-vehicle tax exemption

Brook Yang

AUTHORITIES yesterday announced a tightened standard for which environmentally friendly vehicles will be eligible for preferential tax. This will rule out nearly half of the 134 car models that have enjoyed an import tax reduction since March 8, 2012.

The new standard, published in the Official Gazette, sees the lower limits on fuel efficiency revised according to different vehicle weights, while it retains the previous environmental emission limits. Furthermore, a new specific list of car models entitled to the tax reduction will be released on the Financial Services Bureau's website, according to the Macau Motor Traders Association president, Patrick Tse.

Macau started implementing preferential tax for those purchasing environmentally friendly vehicles three years ago. Prior to yesterday, a total of 134 car models had enjoyed a tax reduction. Mr Tse told the Times that the new standard is expected to rule out about half of those on the list.

"The new standard is regulating [vehicle eligibility for the preferential tax] in three aspects: emissions of air pollutants; vehicle weights; and fuel consumption. Now that the standard on cars' fuel consumption [in relation] to the cars' weights has been implemented, we estimate it will rule out about half of the previously listed car models," he explained.

In the new standard, minimum gas mileage for cars weighing 2,266 kilogram and above was tightened

from 8.2km/L to 10.5km/L by both the European Union's and China's testing procedures; whereas minimum gas mileage for cars between 1,516 and 1,766 kilograms was increased by 1.9km/L.

Mr Tse said that the tightened standard "will bring a certain hit to the sale of cars," especially to those in lower-middle ranks that sell for between MOP200,000 and MOP250,000.

"The list won't been released until tomorrow [today], but according to the revised standard, traders are already aware which models of what brands will be affected. I think the heavier cars above 2,500km or 3,000km with less fuel efficiency are more likely to be ruled out."

Although the new announcement will take effect quickly, Mr Tse says this was an expected change for the sector. "The sector has been communicating with the government since last year. When the preferential tax was first implemented, we were told [by the government] that it would be reviewed after a certain time. Given that recently the government has been talking about controlling the increase of private cars, we had expected that there would be changes in license plate price and the tax standard following the Policy Address," he said.

The new standard is being implemented with a 180-day buffer period for vehicles that are ruled out in the new list, but which had been purchased before yesterday. Accordingly, related vehicle importers must submit supporting documents to the Transport Bureau within 15 days from today.

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Confidence in local economy and job prospects below standard for first time

Brook Yang

CONSUMER confidence in the local economy fell below the general standard for the first time since the 2008 global financial crisis in the most recent quarter, according to the latest survey conducted by the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST). Meanwhile, locals' confidence in employment also suffered a significant drop from its previous high level.

The survey, reflecting individual consumers' current perceptions and the next quarter's spending expectations, shows that residents' confidence in the local economy, employment and stock investment has dropped, consequently leading to an overall decline in the city's consumer confidence index last quarter.

Consumer confidence in the local economy dropped most substantially, from above to below the benchmark of 100 points. Compared to the figure from one year ago (114.63 points), this particular sub-index has declined by 13.33 percent to stand at 99.35 points, also representing a 8.53 percent drop from the previous quarter (108.61 points).

Scholars in charge of the survey suggested that the reversal in confidence, ending 22 consecutive quarters of consumers "having confidence," was the public's psychological response to the continuous gaming revenue plunge and a negative GDP growth.

"This shows that Macau consumers became relatively pessimistic, as opposed to the previous cautiously optimistic feeling about the local economy's overall performance," said professor Chan Lai Kow, director of the MUST's Institute for Sustainable Development, at a press conference yesterday.

Meanwhile, employment – the highest-scoring indicator of confidence as usual – de-



clined by 8.4 percent over the course of the last year to stand at 116.94 points, down by 6.36 percent from the previous quarter (124.88 points). Despite the new resort projects creating more jobs, local residents' optimistic attitude towards the labor market has substantially weakened. This is because the major workforce, who work in gaming and related industries, is now worried about the local economy's prospects, explain-

ed the survey's coordinator, Antony Chu.

These two major changes caused Macau consumers' overall confidence to decline from 87.35 points by 2.22 percent quarter-on-quarter to stand at 85.41 points, which is also 0.67 percent lower than the confidence level in the first quarter of 2014 (85.99 points).

Regarding residents' worries and lack of confidence, the scholars suggested that consu-

mer confidence in the economy and employment is likely to remain in a downward trend for the remaining quarters this year. This is because "there is a consensus that Macau's gaming revenue has little chance of rebounding soon." "This is really the time to diversify the economy. We've been talking about diversification for years but we haven't really done much," stressed Professor Chan.

The public's confidence in stock investment stopped rising in the first quarter, and decreased by 2.03 percent quarter-on-quarter to 87.46 points. This reflects a considerable drop in local consumers' willingness to invest in the volatile stock market.

Moreover, the survey also shows lower local consumer confidence in purchasing household appliances and cars, which respectively recorded 4.08-percent and 2.49-percent drops quarter-on-quarter to stand at 94.52 and 73.06 points.

Confidence in employment has also suffered a significant drop

The survey collected 1,007 valid responses from local residents above the age of 18 from March 16 to 25, via computer-assisted telephone interviews.

A consistent trend evident throughout all 26 quarterly surveys is for recipients with a higher level of education to possess higher confidence in consumption. Accordingly, the scholars stressed that the city needs to focus more on education and training, as well as encouraging continuous learning and youth entrepreneurship.

Inflation expected to go down

THE scholars recognized that a drop in visitors' consumption in local retail stores has also seen an ease in demand for commodity goods, a change which is reflected in the notable rise in residents' confidence in commodity prices. Over the previous quarter (59.66 points), this particular sub-index surged by 11.53 percent to 66.54 points, which is 20.92 percent higher when compared with that of a year ago.

"The actual inflation hasn't been eased, and people's current perception went down by 2.8 percent. Nevertheless, they felt [the inflation rate] would drop in the future, as the news reports were all over the place about the Chinese economy's slowdown and deflation," said professor Chan, adding that this indicator's rapid rise in recorded confidence also implies a risk of approaching deflation.

Consistent with an increasing confidence in commodity prices, residents' perceptions of living standards have remained stable and showed a slight increase in the year's first quarter. The indicator went up by 0.29 percent to 96.19 points compared with that of 2014's final quarter (95.91 points), indicating that the pressure that inflation has placed on consumers has been further alleviated.

Another sub-index slightly higher than the previous quarter is the one recording confidence in property purchases, which rose by 0.35 percent.

REAL ESTATE

Commercial rents face a new trend

LOCAL retailers with businesses located in the central district say that the high rents they are required to pay are becoming unsustainable, given the slowdown in the region's economy and a consequent drop in sales.

A real estate agent acknowledges that

The landlords dare not ask for higher rents now

HO SIO HANG

the property owners have apparently stopped increasing commercial rents for luxury shops. "The landlords dare not ask for higher rents now. They might not increase the rents. However, it is an unrealistic practice at the moment to ask the landlords to reduce the rent," Ho Sio Hang told TDM.

A shop owner interviewed by the local broadcaster recognized that their store traffic is declining, while another said that he has been forced to relocate his business. "I initially rented another shop in Nam Van, but the rent over there is too expensive, so I moved here," he said.

As a consequence of these difficulties, retailers are becoming less bold in expanding their businesses. "Shop expansion is not as aggressive as before. Maybe there are fewer competitors for shops," Ho Sio Hang commented.

IFT hosts international conferences

Between March 23 and 28, the Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT) hosted international conferences titled "Vernacular Religion, Folk Belief, and Traditions of the Supernatural 2015" and "The Supernatural in Literature and Film." The conferences explored past and present supernatural traditions from across the globe, and addressed a wide range of topics of interest to scholars and students embarking on heritage and cultural studies. Delegates also spoke with local tradition bearers in Macau and visited the city's spiritual and religious sites. The previous conference was held in Scotland, where the series was founded in 2009. The co-host of this year's conference, the Island Dynamics, is responsible for organizing conferences about island studies, aiming to strengthen small island communities through information sharing and cross-sector collaboration.

Perfect Shape opens new service center in Macau

Perfect Shape announced that it has opened a new medical beauty service center in Macau. With the establishment of this service center, the total area of service centers in Macau has increased by 71 percent to 7,200 square feet. According to a press release, the opening aims to capture "the huge market demand."

ARTS

'War Sum Up': Contemporary opera takes center stage at CCM

WAR Sum Up - a contemporary opera mounted by experimental Danish theatre group Hotel Pro Forma - will be staged at the grand auditorium at the Macau Cultural Center (CCM) on June 27. The award-winning Latvian Radio Choir will be performing the opera.

Conceived by director Kirsten Dehlholm, and Willie Flindt, the opera derives inspiration from Japanese manga. Drawings of manga will be projected onto the stage, complete with a score co-written by British art-pop ensemble, The Irrepressibles and Latvian composer Santa Ratniece.

"The piece is described as a pioneering artistic reflection on the brutal, yet fascinating nature of war and has been chosen to be performed on international stages such as the Brooklyn Academy's Next Wave Festival," CCM said.

According to Dehlholm



and Flindt, it "is as simple and as complicated as man itself." "War Sum Up tells of war through three main characters. The soldier is sent home from war. He suffers from PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) and he no longer feels at home in civilian society. He returns to the war and dies in an explosion.

A monument is raised in his memory. His symptoms and fate exist today," they explained on the theatre group's webpage.

Other characters include The Warrior, who was killed in battle and The Spy, who became a superwoman to be able to survive.

"At the heart of this small

creative army's labors is a fundamental notion by Mr. Flindt, which at first blush seems to boil down to a pithy "war is bad" but blooms into something more nuanced and provocative on reflection," wrote Steve Smith in an opera review for The New York Times.

Playing with shadows and contrasts all through a blend of striking light effects, a cast of 12 singers and artists will appear on stage wearing costumes by fashion designer Henrik Vibskov.

Hotel Pro Forma are known for their avant-garde and multi-disciplinary productions since 1985. Dehlholm has even received the highest recognition in the field of visual arts in Denmark. Hotel Pro Forma describe themselves as "an international laboratory of visual music performance and installations." Since 1985, they have produced over 50 shows in more than 30 countries. **CP**

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CEM Cable maintenance strengthened to avoid blackouts

Evacuation projects carried out by third parties constitute 40 percent of the city's total cable failures that lead to power blackouts, Companhia de Electricidade de Macau (CEM) revealed yesterday during a press briefing where the company's maintenance plans were presented.



In response to the growing demand for electricity consumption, the public utility company has planned on investing in electricity network expansion and upgrades. Over the next

three years, CEM is also expected to build: two primary substations for the light railway transit (LRT) system, one each in Taipa and Cotai; two for the city's hospitals; and also three in the district of Ilha Verde.

city's cables are under supervision by the company through some preventive methods, such that one can identify the exact location of the failure.

"We also have online monitoring technology to monitor the health of the cable, for example, if the cable [has issues], like being damaged slightly. This technology principally can provide a picture to us to identify the location, and also identify the remaining line of the cable, so we can prepare ourselves for repair and also replacement," Billy Chan said. According to him, cables found to carry potential risks are closely monitored around the clock. Repair work would be required as appropriate, depending on the

circumstances.

Moreover, all the cables, installed underground, generally undergo routine inspections and "diagnosis," as conducted by the team every five years. However, another CEM representative present at the presentation, Simon Young, said that regular maintenance and reviews were subject to initial inspection, which decided when to carry out the actual maintenance on the cables.

The city's current electricity cables mainly came from Europe, the United States and South

th Korea. In fact, according to two representatives, the cable suppliers claimed that their products could last 30 years without inspection and maintenance. Nevertheless, under different circumstances and affected by various external factors, Simon said that regular works had to be done to prevent any unexpected failure. The pair also said that the current scheme of maintenance was likely to be the most optimal, considering the costs and impacts to the cables involved in the maintenance. **Staff reporter**

ROOM FOR TARIFF REDUCTION

THE COMPANY'S advisor to the executive committee, Iun Iok Meng, revealed that there is room for reduction in tariffs in the coming quarter. "The tariff adjustment index is a mechanism that has been running for many years, [and it] successfully stabilizes the tariff. In the second quarter, there will likely be a reduction," the committee advisor said.

TERMITES CAUSED BORDER GATE BLACKOUT

DURING THE press presentation, CEM responded to media enquiries regarding last week's power outage in the border gate area, claiming that the cables concerned, which were installed in 2009, belonged to a new batch that held no underlying risks. Moreover, no prior record suggests that the particular district has ever suffered from a termite invasion. CEM described the incident as first-time

event. In 2008, when purchasing a new batch of cables, the utility company responsible for installation had already requested for the cable suppliers to provide anti-termite measures, such as the application of pesticides to the cable surfaces. The company also made assurances that his team would take "corresponding measures" in the future to maintain the stability of the electricity supply in that region.

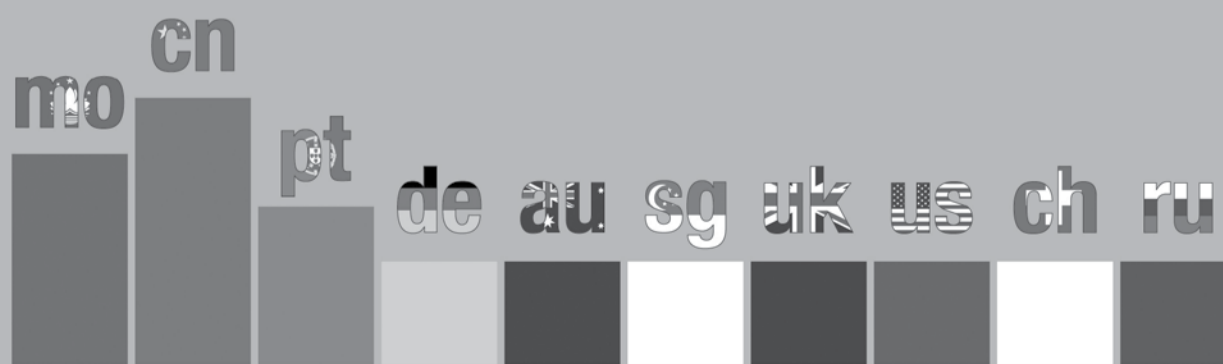
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Mobius says China stocks face 20 pct drop after rising too fast

Kyoungwha Kim

MARK Mobius says Chinese stocks have risen too fast after a world-beating rally sent the benchmark equity gauge to its highest level in seven years.

A 20 percent retreat is "very possible," Mobius, who oversees about USD40 billion as the executive chairman of Templeton Emerging Markets Group, told reporters in Hong Kong. The Shanghai Composite Index rallied 90 percent in the past 12 months, the most among 92 global benchmark measures tracked by Bloomberg.

Mobius said he recently bought some Macau casino stocks

While Mobius says the bull market in Chinese stocks is "intact," he's turning cautious in the short term after investors opened a record number of new stock accounts and increased margin debt to all-time highs. Mainland shares are unlikely to gain entry into MSCI Inc. indexes this year, limiting demand from international investors, he said. "It has gone a little too far and too fast," Mobius said.

Chinese investors opened a



Mark Mobius, executive chairman of Templeton Asset Management's Emerging Markets Group

record 1.7 million accounts to trade equities in the week to March 27, while there is now more than 1 trillion yuan (USD161 billion) of borrowed cash riding on the stock market.

In a margin trade, investors use their own money for just a portion of their stock purchase, borrowing the rest from a brokerage. The loans are backed by the investors' equity holdings, meaning that they may be compelled to sell when prices fall to repay their debt. The Shanghai Composite rose 0.8 percent at close at 3,994.81 after briefly surpassing 4,000.

"Too much credit is not a good thing in the long run," Mobius said. "When the market turns, it could be a problem." He's avoiding buying mainland shares through the Hong Kong

trading link due to "restrictive" rules on share ownership.

"According to Chinese regulations, the titles pass to the custodians in China and our custodian banks refuse to allow that," Mobius said. "That's a problem. I don't see how this can be resolved. The Shanghai connect won't work unless they revise regulations to allow foreign custodians to keep possession."

Foreign funds sold a net 2.2 billion yuan (\$460 million) of mainland equities through the Hong Kong trading link today, poised for the most on record.

China is the biggest weighting in his Asian funds, followed by India and Thailand. Mobius said he favors banks on the outlook for financial reforms as well as auto and technology stocks for their growth prospects.

"The bull market is still intact," he said. "It can go for five years to 10 years."

The ultimate inclusion of Chinese shares in MSCI global benchmarks together with the nation's capital-market liberalization will provide the market with incentives to climb further in the long run, he said.

Templeton also favors Vietnam and Nigeria among frontier markets because of their valuations and growth potential. Mobius said he recently bought some Macau casino stocks, while he's waiting for a correction in Indian shares before increasing holdings there.

Bloomberg

Shell to buy BG Group in USD69.7b takeover

Mike Corder, The Hague

ROYAL Dutch Shell has agreed to buy British gas producer BG Group for 47 billion pounds (USD69.7 billion) in cash and stock, the companies announced yesterday. The move gives oil giant Shell a greater stake in natural gas markets in the wake of tumbling oil prices.

Consolidations through takeovers and mergers are among the ways energy companies are seeking to reduce costs and become more efficient as oil prices have slumped.

A joint statement said the boards of both companies are recommending that shareholders approve the deal that will create a more competitive, stronger company for both sets of shareholders in today's volatile oil price world.

Shell said the takeover will add 25 percent to its proved oil and gas reserves and 20 percent to production compared with 2014, and boost its position in new oil and gas projects in Australia and Brazil.

"Bold, strategic moves shape our industry," Shell CEO Ben van Beurden said. "BG and Shell are a great fit. This transaction fits with our strategy and our read on the industry landscape around us."

The terms of the offer would result in BG shareholders owning about 19 percent to the new combined business.

Shell said that bringing the two companies together would produce financial gains of about \$2.5 billion a year.

Van Beurden said BG was a good fit for Shell looking to the future.

"The addition of BG's competitive natural gas positions makes strategic sense, ahead of the long-term growth in demand we see for this cleaner-burning fuel," he said.

BG's CEO Helge Lund said his company also would benefit from the takeover.

"BG's deep water positions and strengths in exploration, liquefaction, and LNG shipping and marketing will combine well with Shell's scale, development expertise and financial strength," he said. **AP**



AP PHOTO

corporate bits

MACAO WATER AWARDED FOR CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

Invited by Chinawater.net, Macao Water participated in the Thirteenth Water Industry Strategy Forum 2015, held in Beijing earlier this year. The Forum 2015 provided a platform for participants to discuss and exchange ideas about various water-related topics. These included such talking points as operations, service upgrades, current situations, competition and challenges in the water supply industry. In addition, Macao Water was awarded the title of "2014 Best Enterprise in Delivering Corporate Social Responsibility in China Water Industry" by the organizer as recognition and approval of the company's outstanding achievements. The Forum invited environ-

mental leaders from the political, commercial and academic sectors to attend the event. These leaders conducted in-depth discussions on a series of issues, including China's environmental protection industry developments and future trends, PPP policies and new environmental laws in the country. According to a press release issued by Macao Water, the criteria for the award of "2014 Best Enterprise in Delivering Corporate Social Responsibility in China Water Industry" included specifications regarding a company's technological innovation, management, scale of operation, social responsibility fulfillment, brand image and social reputation.

CHINA SOUTHERN AIRLINES LAUNCHES WUHAN - MACAO FLIGHT



China Southern Airlines' (CZ) inaugural flight from Wuhan to Macau landed at the Macau International Airport on April 3. The airline will be providing three services between Wuhan and Macau per week.

When the inaugural flight arrived, a delegation led by Mr. Eric Fong, director of the Marketing Department of Ma-

cau International Airport Co. Ltd. (CAM), warmly received the crew members at the boarding gate, where they offered cordial greetings and congratulations to the crew on the first successful flight. They also expressed hope that this is the start of further and deeper cooperation between CZ and MIA.

MANULIFE SIGNS USD1.2B DEAL TO DISTRIBUTE PRODUCTS VIA DBS

Manulife Financial Corp., Canada's largest life insurer, will pay DBS Group Holdings Ltd. S\$1.6 billion (USD1.2 billion) to sell its insurance products in Asia.

Manulife will distribute its life and health insurance products through the DBS network in Singapore, Hong Kong, China and Indonesia, Southeast Asia's largest lender said in an exchange statement. The statement indicates that the 15-year agreement will take effect from January 2016.

Global insurers have been seeking distribution tie-ups with lenders that have large Asian branch networks. AIA Group Ltd. has an agreement to distribute its products

through Citigroup Inc. outlets in the Asia-Pacific region, and last year Prudential plc extended its arrangement for selling life-insurance products in the region via Standard Chartered PLC.

The agreement "accelerates our growth in Asia, deepens and diversifies our insurance business, and gives us access to a much wider range of customers," Manulife President and Chief Executive Officer Donald Guioien said in the statement.

Manulife will fund the initial S\$1.6 billion payment with internal resources, according to the statement, with additional variable payments to be made depending on the success of the venture.



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Cape Verde's economy growing

CAPE Verde's domestic demand indicator, after a slowdown in late 2014, showed a slightly faster pace of growth in the first two months of the year, mainly determined by changes in gross fixed capital formation (GFCF), according to the Bank of Cabo Verde.



São Vicente Island, Cape Verde

The investment indicator continued the recovery started in 2014

The investment indicator (GFCF) continued the recovery started in 2014, showing some stabilization in growth since November 2014. The greater dynamism of GFCF was supported by increases in imports of construc-

tion goods and equipment, continuously driven by the public sector and foreign investment.

Internal financing conditions remained negative for the domestic private sector, while externally the indicators of financial markets in the Euro Zone continued to show a trend of slight relaxation of the restrictions.

In a recently released document, the archipelago's central bank also noted that domestic demand continued to support the momentum of economic activity, given that external demand remained unfavorable.

The bank also said the con-

sumption indicator continued the upward trend it had been following since the end of 2014, supported by consumption of durable goods.

According to the document, tourism revenues captured by banks decreased by 19.1 percent, despite an increased supply capacity and prices in the sector.

Structural constraints (infrastructure, taxation and diversification of supply), which limit the capacity of Cape Verdean operators to compete with other markets, may be contributing to these results, the Bank of Cabo Verde said. **MDT/Macauhub**

MOZAMBIQUE

Special Economic Zone of Nacala receives new projects

THE Office for Economic Areas with Accelerated Development (Gazeda) of Mozambique in 2014 reviewed and approved, through its Northern Regional Office, 27 new investment projects, Mozambican daily newspaper Notícias reported.

The newspaper cited the spokesman of the regional delegation, Américo José, as saying that the projects in the industry, trade, services, tourism and construction sectors, would all be located in the Special Economic Zone of Nacala (ZEEN).

José said the approved projects represent a joint investment of USD353 million, an increase of 9.2 percent over the figure recorded in 2013.

The regional delegation spokesman said some of the challenges to growth of the ZEEN included a lack of water for domestic and industrial consumption, the poor quality of electricity, poor inter-institutional coordination, poor quality of roads and a shortage of skilled labour.

He said challenges for this year include improvement of access roads, construction of basic infrastructure, especially for water supply, electricity and telecommunications in the Locone and Munheuhene Duty-Free Zones as well as improvements in conjunction with the different partners operating in the Special Economic Zone of Nacala.

On Monday, the director of Gazeda, Danilo Nalá, told Mozambican newspaper O País there were investors dropping out of projects in the special economic zone, due to the poor quality of electricity, water scarcity and precariousness of local roads. **MDT/Macauhub**

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TAIWAN

President Ma says China relations unshaken by protests



Taiwan's President Ma Ying-jeou

Ralph Jennings, Taipei

TAIWAN'S president said yesterday that relations with political rival China were moving forward despite widespread public opposition that crested with an occupation of parliament last year, and that he hopes to cooperate with Beijing on regional economic development.

When President Ma Ying-jeou took office in 2008, his government accelerated efforts to ease icy relations with China by avoiding politics to instead discuss trade, investment and transportation links.

But Ma's engagement with China hit its strongest wave of resistance at

home last year when tens of thousands of protesters occupied parliament and surrounding streets in Taipei to demand more oversight of relations with Beijing or a cancellation of any future agreements.

Popular opposition to Ma's China policy contributed to steep losses for his Nationalist Party in island-wide local elections in November, analysts said at the time.

"The reason the Nationalists lost the local elections last year actually had no direct relation to cross-strait policies, but was mainly about domestic issues," Ma said at a news conference organized by the Taiwan Foreign Correspondents' Club, refer-

ring to China-Taiwan ties. "Last year, cross-strait relations hit some minor setbacks, but basically they are moving ahead on a course of peaceful development," he said.

After the protests, he noted, Beijing's top Taiwan policymaker visited the island in June and the two sides have continued to negotiate an agreement that could cut tariffs on thousands of imports, a boon to Taiwan's pillar industries, such as high-tech and machinery.

Ma must step down next year due to term limits. His party is expected to run a tough race for the January presidential election against the opposition Democratic Progressive

Party, which advocates a more cautious approach to China relations and picked up seven seats in the local polls last year.

China and Taiwan have been separately ruled since the Chinese civil war of the 1940s, when Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist forces lost to Mao Zedong's Communists and set up a rival government on the island.

China still claims sovereignty over Taiwan. Before Ma took office, Beijing occasionally threatened the use of force if the island moved toward legal independence.

The two sides have signed 21 related agreements since 2008, helping to accelerate Taiwan's half-trillion-dollar economy. China is eager to parlay the economic talks into political dialogue that it hopes will unify the two sides.

Taiwan has applied to join a regional infrastructure investment bank that Beijing plans to launch. Ma said the bank might offer contracts benefiting local builders and project managers.

Taiwan also should go "all out" in efforts to participate in regional economic integration such as the Beijing-backed Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, Ma said. The partnership would merge 3 billion-plus people into a free trade area.

China was Taiwan's top trading partner last year, with imports and exports totaling USD130 billion. Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam were also among its top 10 trading partners, and Taiwan already has a two-way trade pact with Singapore.

Joining regional trade groups may give the Nationalists a modest boost ahead of the election but will not improve Ma's approval rating, said Nathan Liu, international affairs professor at Ming Chuan University in Taiwan. The rating has fallen as low as 9 percent.

"I don't want to sound pessimistic, but I think it's going to remain (low) until the end of his term," Liu said. **AP**

TIGERS & FLIES

Court sentences former mayor to 15 years for graft

A former mayor of the major eastern Chinese city of Nanjing has been sentenced to 15 years in prison on corruption charges as President Xi Jinping's anti-graft crackdown continues to gather steam.

State media reports say Ji Jianye also was fined 2 million yuan (USD323,000) for taking bribes in exchange for doling out public works contracts and arranging job transfers.

Ji's decision not to fight the charges likely resulted in his relatively light sentence.

His former position is equivalent to that of a vice minister, making him one of the highest-ranking officials brought down by the anti-corruption drive launched shortly after Xi was installed as ruling Communist Party chief in 2012.

Xi has vowed to go after officials at all levels, and thousands have been investigated the party's anti-corruption body. **AP**

World Bank: AIIB 'potential ally' in poverty fight



World Bank President Jim Yong Kim

THE head of the World Bank said Tuesday he will do everything he can to work with a new Chinese-led Asian infrastructure bank opposed by Washington.

World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim said the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is a potentially strong ally in combating poverty. But he also echoed U.S. concerns the new bank should adhere to high environmental, labor and procurement standards.

The U.S. has found itself isolated with Japan in its resistance to the new bank, as more than 40 countries, including major allies in Asia and Europe, have signed up. U.S. officials have voiced concern the Beijing-based bank might undercut the Washington-based World Bank and International Monetary Fund, and the Asian Development Bank, which by convention is headed by a Japanese official.

Kim told the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank that, "there's more than enough work to go around." He estimated the developing world will need an additional \$1 trillion to \$1.5 trillion every year for investment in infrastructure like roads, bridges, railways, airports and energy plants.

Kim said he plans to discuss collaborating with the bank when he meets with Chinese and other officials in spring meetings of the IMF and World Bank in Washington next week. **AP**

Australia approves engineering firm sale to Chinese company

Rod McGuirk

THE Australian government yesterday approved the sale of one of the nation's largest construction companies, John Holland Group Pty. Ltd., to state-owned giant China Communications Construction Company International Holding Ltd.

Treasurer Joe Hockey said he approved the sale under foreign investment rules because it was in Australia's national interests.

Leighton Holdings Ltd. entered a binding agreement with CCC, the world's fourth-largest construction company by revenue, in December to sell John Holland for approximately 1.15 billion Australian dollars (USD880 million), subject to adjustments.

The deal required approval of the Foreign Investment Review Board, or FIRB, that ensures that such foreign takeovers are in Australia's interests.

"The government welcomes foreign investment where it is not contrary to our national interest," Hockey said in a statement.

Hockey said he had sought advice on issues including the World Bank debarring CCC from contracts until 2017 over fraudulent practices used in a road-building project in the Philippines in 2009.

"As a result, appropriate arrangements have been put in place to mitigate any concerns in relation to this issue and I am satisfied that this investment is not contrary to our national interest," Hockey said, without elaborating.

CCC is listed on the Hong Kong and Shanghai stock exchanges and has a presence in more than 80 countries.

CCC was surprised by how long the approval process took, having told the Hong Kong stock exchange that the deal would be finalized by the end of March.

Among issues that the FIRB had considered before approving the deal were John Holland's contracts with Australia's Defense Department.

John Holland has more than 5,600 employees in eight countries. **AP**

JAPAN

US defense chief seeks deeper ties in first Asia visit

Ken Moritsugu, Tokyo

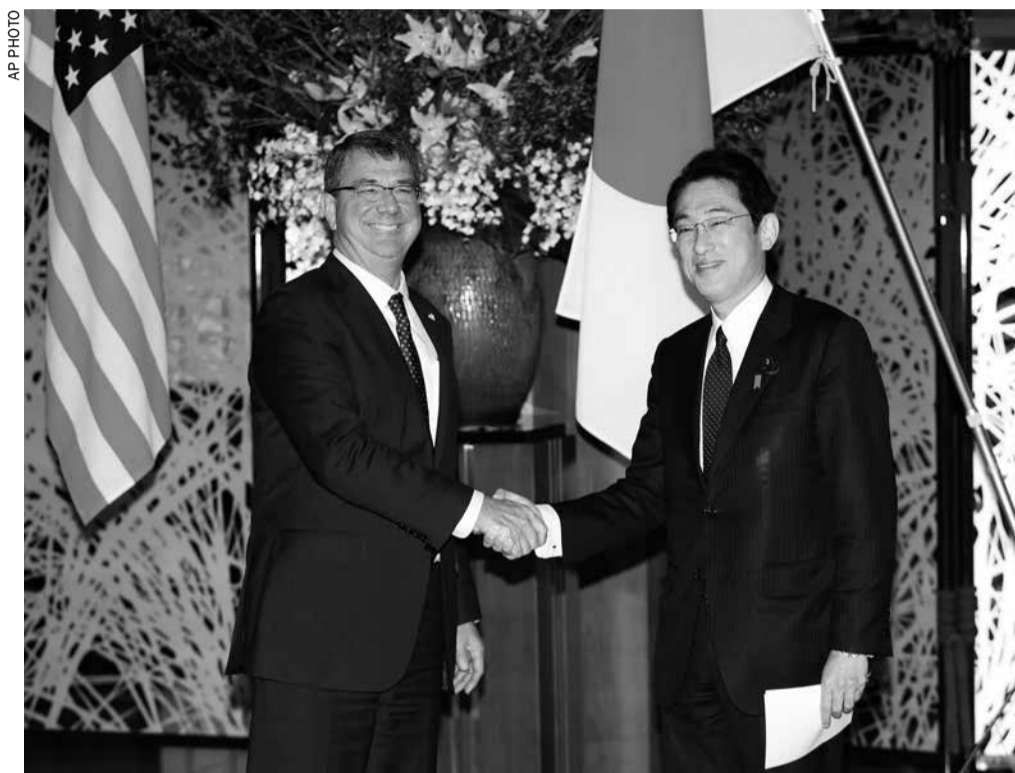
THE first revision of the U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines in 17 years will "transform" the bilateral alliance, U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter said yesterday.

The guidelines, expected to be formally approved in about three weeks, "will help us respond flexibly to the full scope of the challenges we face, both in the Asia-Pacific and around the globe," he said at a news conference after meeting his Japanese counterpart in Tokyo.

Carter, who travels to South Korea later this week, is on his first trip to Asia since becoming defense secretary in February.

Asked about the Mideast, Carter said the chaos in Yemen is making it harder to conduct counterterrorism operations against al-Qaida's branch there. The group, known as al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, is considered a threat to Western targets including the United States.

"That doesn't mean that we don't continue to take steps to protect ourselves,



U.S. Secretary of Defense Ash Carter (L) shakes hands with Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida

we have to do it in a different way, but we do and we are," he said, without offering any specifics.

The al-Qaida group is taking advantage of the disorder to seize territory, he said. He also confirmed that the U.S. is providing intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and logistics information and "some resupply of equipment and munitions"

to Saudi Arabia, which has launched air strikes against the rebels in neighboring Yemen.

Japanese Defense Minister Gen Nakatani said that he and Carter agreed that relocating a U.S. Marine base in Okinawa to another part of the island is the «only solution» to closing Futenma base, which lies in an urban area. Many in Okinawa, including the current governor, oppose the construction of the replacement base in a less populated area, arguing that the facility should be moved off Okinawa entirely.

The defense guidelines are expected to lay out the framework for Japan to play a bigger role in regional security, as the government loosens constitutional restrictions on the use of its military. **AP**

POLL

Americans divided over Japan's military role in Asia



the Atomic Bomb Dome is silhouetted at sunset in Hiroshima

SEVENTY years after the U.S. defeated Japan in World War II, Americans are

divided over Japan playing a more active military role in Asia — and most Japanese are

opposed.

The results of a Pew Research Center poll released yesterday (Macau time) in Washington, D.C., come as the two countries are finalizing a revision of their mutual defense guidelines that is expected to expand the scope of Japan's military activities in the region.

The telephone survey of 1,000 Americans and 1,000 Japanese also found a high degree of trust between the two nations, a shift from the animosity that prevailed in the 1980s and 1990s when the two countries were embroiled in trade disputes.

Some of the findings:

MILITARY DIVISIONS

The U.S. government, stretched by global crises and tighter budgets, would welcome greater burden sharing by Japan

in regional defense. Americans are less sure: 47 percent back a more active Japanese military in the Asia-Pacific, while 43 percent say, given its history, Japan should limit its role.

Likewise in Japan, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is pushing his country to do more, but 68 percent of Japanese respondents favor limiting the military's role, and only 23 percent support expanding it.

A-BOMB DIVIDE

56: Percent of Americans who say the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were justified.

34: Percent who say they were not.

14: Percent of Japanese who say the atomic bombings were justified.

79: Percent who say they were not.

TRADING PLACES

A large majority of Americans viewed Japan as an unfair trader in the 1980s and 1990s. Today, only 24 percent describe Japan's trade policy as unfair in the Pew poll, while 55 percent call it fair. China isn't viewed as badly as Japan was previously, but 48 percent say China is unfair, while 37 percent say it's fair.

WHO IS ABE?

73: Percent of Americans who say they have never heard of Abe.

69: Percent who have never heard of best-selling Japanese novelist Haruki Murakami.

32: Percent who have never heard of Ichiro Suzuki, Japanese baseball star playing in the U.S. major leagues. **AP**

US STUDY REVEALS

Hundreds of NKorea missiles threaten Asia

Matthew Pennington, Washington

NUCLEAR-ARMED North Korea already has hundreds of ballistic missiles that can target its neighbors in Northeast Asia but will need foreign technology to upgrade its arsenal and pose a more direct threat to the United States, U.S. researchers said yesterday.

Those are the latest findings of a research program investigating what secretive North Korea's nuclear weapons capability will be by 2020.

Unlike Iran, the current focus of international nuclear diplomacy, North Korea has conducted atomic test explosions. Its blood-curdling rhetoric and periodic missile tests have set the region on edge and there's no sign of negotiations restarting to coax it into disarming.

For now, the emphasis is on sanctions and military preparedness. Defense Secretary Ash Carter visits Japan and South Korea this week amid speculation the U.S. wants to place a missile defense system in South Korea against North Korean ballistic missiles, which Seoul is reluctant about as it would alie-



nate China. The U.S. has already deployed anti-missile radar in Japan.

U.S. military officials have expressed growing concern about North Korea's capabilities. Navy Adm. William Gortney, commander of U.S. Northern Command and the North American Aerospace Defense Command, told reporters that it is the U.S. assessment that North Korea has the ability to

miniaturize a warhead to put on an intercontinental ballistic missile.

U.S. officials are most concerned about a long-range missile called the KN-08 that has been displayed in military parades. It is said to be capable of being launched from a road-mobile vehicle and would therefore be difficult to monitor via satellite.

But the research published yesterday by the North Korean

Futures Project stresses that for now the principal threat from North Korean missiles is to its neighbors in Asia. The project is conducted by the U.S.-Korea Institute at John Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and National Defense University's Center for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Aerospace engineer John Schilling and a research associate at the institute, Henry Kan, say Pyongyang's current inventory of about 1,000 missiles, based on old Soviet technology, can already reach most targets in South Korea and Japan.

"North Korea has already achieved a level of delivery system development that will allow it to establish itself as a small nuclear power in the coming years," they write in a paper published on the institute's website, 38 North.

Despite the North's 2012 success in launching a rocket into space — the clearest sign yet it has the potential to reach the American mainland — Pyongyang faces greater technical challenges in launching an effective missile across the Pacific at the U.S.

It may already be able to field a limited number of long-range Taepodong missiles in an emergency but they would be unreliable, vulnerable to pre-emptive strike and inaccurate, the analysis says. The KN-08 may achieve "emergency operational status" by 2020, before or with very limited flight testing, it adds.

The analysis says foreign as-

sistance could be critical for overcoming the technological and engineering hurdles North Korea now faces in developing better missiles, including progress on high-performance engines, heat shields, guidance electronics and rocket motors that use solid fuel instead of liquid fuel, it says.

And that's become tougher as North Korea's international isolation has intensified since its first nuclear test explosion in 2006.

That hasn't stopped its nuclear program. According to a recent estimate by the Washington-based Institute for Science and International Security, the North likely has enough fissile material for at least 10 weapons, and that could increase to between 20 and 100 weapons by 2020.

But whereas the basic designs and production infrastructure are now largely in place for the nuclear program, technological progress on the missile front has been slower, the analysis says. North Korea has failed to make the kind of advances that Iran and Pakistan have made, although both countries relied on North Korean assistance for missiles in the 1990s.

Last October, the commander of U.S. forces in South Korea, Army Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti, said North Korea may be capable of fielding a nuclear-armed KN-08 missile that could reach U.S. soil, but because it has not tested such a weapon the odds of it being effective were "pretty darn low." AP

Filipino family appeals to Indonesia to save convicted maid



Cesar and Celia Veloso, parents of convicted drug trafficker Mary Jane Fiesta Veloso

FAMILY members of a Filipino maid facing the death penalty after being convicted of drug trafficking in Indonesia made a last-minute appeal yesterday for clemency to the country's president.

The parents, siblings and two young sons of Mary Jane Veloso delivered an open letter to President Joko Widodo to the Indonesian Embassy and appealed for "mercy and compassion" for the 30-year-old single mother.

The letter said Veloso was

tricked by a compatriot into carrying 2.6 kilograms of heroin in a luggage and says she was a victim of drug syndicates.

Indonesia's highest court last month rejected a judicial review petition by Veloso, who is among 10 foreigner drug smugglers facing death by a firing squad.

"We are begging for mercy beloved President (Widodo), don't impose the death penalty on my daughter, said Veloso's mother, Celia Veloso.

Veloso's sons, aged 6 and

12, held a placard that read "Mercy and compassion for Mary Jane and family." About a dozen activists from Migrant International held up a large picture of Veloso behind bars and a banner saying "Save the life of Mary Jane Veloso."

Veloso traveled to Indonesia in 2010 where her god-sister reportedly told her a job as domestic worker awaited her. Her godsister allegedly provided the suitcase where the drugs were discovered when Veloso arrived at an airport in Java, Indonesia.

Migrant International, which works to protect the rights of overseas workers from the Philippines, called on the Philippine government to arrest Veloso's god-sister, who remains at large.

Migrant chapters in Hong Kong, Europe, Canada and Australia are scheduled to march to Indonesian embassies today to appeal for clemency for Veloso. AP

NEPAL

Opposition cuts short crippling general strike

LIFE returned to normal in Nepal yesterday after an opposition alliance cut short a crippling general strike over an impasse about how to approve the Himalayan nation's constitution.

Schools and markets opened and vehicles were back on the streets, a day after police clashed with protesters on the first day of the strike.

A meeting of the opposition late Tuesday decided to cut short the three-day protest action, citing inconveniences to the public.

Police said protesters attacked and vandalized 23 vehicles that defied the strike, and officers detained 55 protesters. Police fired tear gas in Kathmandu and protesters retaliated by throwing stones.

The alliance of 30 opposition parties is demanding a constitutional draft be passed by an agreement involving all political parties inside and outside parliament. The ruling coalition has been attempting to get the draft approved through a vote in parliament after negotiations with the opposition failed.

Nepal's constitution was supposed



Nepalese people gather around the wreckage of a car burned by demonstrators during a general strike called by the alliance of 30 opposition parties

to have been written by the Constituent Assembly that was elected in 2008, following the end of a 10-year Maoist insurgency and the overthrow of the centuries-old monarchy. But the assembly was riven by infighting and never finished its work.

The current assembly was chosen in 2013, but has faced the same problem. AP

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USA

Fewer White House state dinner invites under Obama

Darlene Superville, Washington

AN invitation to a White House state dinner has always been one of Washington's most sought-after tickets. There's the elegant setting, VIP guests in tuxedos and designer gowns and a four-course meal served up by America's most famous kitchen.

But don't get your hopes up. President Barack Obama has held the fewest number of state dinners since Harry S. Truman, who left office 62 years ago.

In his first six years, Obama held just seven state dinners. He'll hold at least two more this year, for the leaders of Japan, on April 28, and China, later in the year.

Truman, who became president in 1945, held six dinners during nearly eight years in office.

Shrouded in pageantry, a White House state dinner is the highest diplomatic honor the U.S. reserves for allies and other countries. It's also one of the most lavish affairs the government puts on. The State Department pays the entire tab, which averaged about USD500,000 each for Obama's seven dinners, said White House spokesman Patrick Ventrell.

Ventrell and others said cost was a concern when Obama took office in January 2009 amid the worst economic slide since the 1930s. Officials were



President Barack Obama, center, offers a toast on stage to French President Francois Hollande at the State Dinner on the South Lawn of the White House

sensitive to the economic distress blanketing the country and were looking for other ways the president could cement relationships with foreign leaders without spending hundreds of thousands of public dollars on an opulent black-tie dinner.

Obama held his first state dinner toward the end of his first year in office, honoring then-Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Later dinners were for the leaders of Mexico, China, Germany, South Korea, Britain and France.

Aides say Obama's overall level of engagement with foreign counterparts and the different ways he interacts with them is more important than the number of state dinners penciled on

his calendar. "State dinners are one tool of diplomacy that can be used and used effectively, and sometimes we use them," Ventrell said.

Obama has met hundreds of times with his counterparts and other foreign officials in settings as formal as the Oval Office and as casual as a Hawaiian golf course. They also speak by phone.

"There's no concern that should be raised by the number of state dinners," said Capricia Marshall, who led the State Department team that oversees visits by foreign dignitaries until she stepped down in 2013.

Lyndon B. Johnson topped the 11 presidents who followed Truman, cramming 54 state

Obama held just 7 state dinners. He'll hold 2 more this year, for the leaders of Japan and China

dinners into his 62-month tenure in the Oval Office, White House Historical Association data show.

Ronald Reagan, the actor-turned-politician who knew a thing or two about entertaining, held 52 dinners during two terms.

Even Jimmy Carter, who liked to project an image of frugality, managed 28 state dinners in four years as president.

A state dinner for a foreign leader marks the finale of a state visit, which opens with herald trumpets and cannon salutes on the South Lawn of the White House, followed by meetings, a joint news conference with the U.S. president and an elaborate State Department luncheon.

Then comes the state dinner, where a tuxedo-clad president raises a glass and toasts relations between the countries in front of hundreds of invited

guests, ranging from Cabinet secretaries and other senior administration officials to members of Congress, business leaders, celebrities and others, as well as the working media.

Obama and recent presidents have used multiple formats and settings apart from a state dinner to forge ties with their counterparts.

In 2013, Obama met Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Sunnylands retreat in Southern California. Obama returned there the following year to consult with Jordan's King Abdullah II.

Obama also took German Chancellor Angela Merkel to dinner at the upscale 1789 restaurant in Georgetown; French President Francois Hollande to the Virginia estate of Thomas Jefferson, a former president and former U.S. ambassador to France; and British Prime Minister David Cameron to an NCAA college basketball championship tournament game in Ohio.

On Hawaii vacations, Obama has shared his golf game with Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak and New Zealand Prime Minister John Key.

George W. Bush welcomed more than a dozen foreign leaders to his Texas ranch, which became a popular venue for Bush's brand of casual diplomacy. He even treated then-Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to a tour of Grace-land, the Memphis, Tennessee, home of Elvis Presley, one of Koizumi's musical idols.

Reagan welcomed Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip to his Santa Barbara, California, ranch. Richard Nixon received Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev at his home in San Clemente, California. **AP**

WIDESPREAD power outages affected the White House, the Capitol, museums, train stations and other sites across Washington and its suburbs yesterday (Macau time) — all because of an explosion at a power plant in the adjoining state of Maryland, an official said.

Many of the outages were brief, but some were longer and forced evacuations. Officials said they did not suspect terrorism in the outages or the explosion that prompted them.

At the White House, backup generators kicked on when the power went out, so the interruption lasted only a few seconds. The complex quickly went back onto regular power. Electricity in the press briefing room dipped around lunchtime, briefly darkening cubicles and blackening

Officials: No link to terrorism in Washington power outages

TV screens.

White House press secretary Josh Earnest said he understands that Homeland Security has "indicated they don't currently see a nexus to terrorism or anything like that" in the power outages.

Earnest also said he was with President Barack Obama in the Oval Office when the power blip occurred at the White House, and they didn't notice anything unusual — possibly because the room is lit by so many windows.

Power also went out at the State Department during the daily press briefing, forcing spokeswoman Marie Harf to finish her

comments in the dark.

Power in the U.S. Capitol building twice shut down briefly, then came back on by way of a generator.

Admiral William Gortney — commander of the U.S. Northern Command, which is tasked with homeland defense — was visiting the Pentagon when the outage hit. He said it was important to assess how well backup systems work during such events.

"Are the backup systems that we put in place, do they work? At the moment, that's what I've been told is that they all kicked in and they're all working, everybody was back up on backup power, which is



A security guard turn visitors away from the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum

why we do it. We build redundancy into this critical infrastructure."

But some effects of the outages were still apparent later in the day.

Some traffic lights were out, and Metro, the public transport operator, said 14

of its 91 public transit stations were affected. Power to the trains remained on and trains were moving systemwide, Metro spokesman Dan Stessel said, but the affected stations were on emergency power, with dimmer light-

ing and nonworking elevators and escalators.

University of Maryland officials said their entire campus was affected.

Some Smithsonian museums also were evacuated and closed to the public, a spokeswoman said.

Jenni Swan, who was visiting from Savannah, Georgia, with her husband and two children, said they were eating in the atrium of the Air and Space Museum around 1 p.m. when security officers said the building was being evacuated. Almost an hour later, they were not yet let back in.

"Honestly I think my kids are excited because of all the fire trucks and people leaving the building quickly," she said. "I think Daddy's a little annoyed."

About 8,000 customers in Washington were affected, Johnson said. **AP**

YEMEN

560 dead amid fears of humanitarian collapse

Ahmed Al-Haj, Sanaa

AS tons of desperately needed medical supplies await clearance to be flown into Yemen, aid workers warned yesterday of an unfolding humanitarian crisis, saying at least 560 people, including dozens of children, have been killed, mostly in a Saudi-led air campaign and battles between Shiite rebels and forces loyal to the embattled president.

More than 1,700 people have been wounded and another 100,000 have fled their homes as fighting intensified over the past three weeks, the World Health Organization said.

The Red Cross shipment would be the first to reach Yemen since the start of the Saudi-imposed air blockade. Sitara Jabeen, a Geneva-based spokeswoman for the International Committee of the Red Cross, said a cargo plane with 17 tons of medical supplies was in the Jordanian capital, Amman, awaiting the go-ahead from coalition forces to land in Sanaa, hopefully today. Another 35 tons of supplies were also ready for shipment, she said. "If these medical supplies do not reach Yemen, then unfortunately we are afraid many more people will die," Jabeen said.

She said a surgical team was also awaiting clearance to dock in the embattled Yemeni port of Aden, where heavy fighting Monday left streets littered with bodies. The fighting pits allies of Yemen's president, Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi, against Iranian-backed Shiite rebels, known as Houthis, and allied military units loyal to ousted President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

The Saudi-led air campaign, which supports Hadi, now in its 13th day, so far has failed to stop the Houthis' advance on Aden, Yemen's second-largest city, which was declared the provisional capital by Hadi before he fled the country for Saudi Arabia as the rebels closed in two weeks ago.

WHO said Tuesday that at least 560 people have been killed and 1,768 wounded — many of them civilians — since the rebels and their allies launched an intensified land grab on March 19. Among the fatalities are at least 293 people killed since the March 26 start of the Saudi-led air campaign in support of Hadi.

The dead include at least 74 children killed since the start of the airstrikes, the U.N. children's agency said. At least 44 children have been wounded.

Comprehensive casualty figures are difficult to collect and

verify because of the ongoing violence, and aid agencies warned the overall death toll is likely far higher.

The Saudi campaign has turned Yemen into a new proxy war between the kingdom and Iran, which has backed the Houthis, though Tehran denies aiding the rebels militarily. Civilians have paid a heavy toll for the violence that mushroomed from an internal power struggle into a regional war.

Children have been especially vulnerable, said UNICEF's Yemen representative, Julien Harneis. "They are being killed, maimed and forced to flee their homes, their health threatened and their education interrupted," Harneis said in a statement, released Monday. Warring factions have also increased their recruitment of children under the age of 18.

Humanitarian groups say they are running out of supplies and have called for a temporary halt to the fighting to allow medical teams and fresh medical supplies to arrive in the country and for residents to identify and bury their dead.

UNICEF said the violence has disrupted water supplies in areas of southern Yemen and that sewage is overflowing in some locations, raising the risk of outbreaks of disease. Water systems have been repeated-



Saudi pilots sits in the cockpit of a fighter jet as part of U.S.-led coalition airstrikes on Islamic State militants and other targets

dly damaged in Aden and two other areas, UNICEF said, adding that it is providing fuel for water pumps.

Hospitals are struggling to treat large numbers of wounded with insufficient supplies and some medical facilities have come under attack, the agency said.

Yesterday, Saudi-led coalition jets bombed a rebel-allied military installation in southern Yemen as local tribes battled the Shiite fighters and their allies in the area, seizing a makeshift camp and weapons, Yemeni military officials said.

A medical volunteer in southern

Ibb province said the airstrikes hit a Republican Guard camp, wounding at least 25 Saleh loyalists. Residents say the camp was close to a school, and the rebel television station, al-Masirah, said three children were killed in the airstrike. The medical volunteer, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals, could not confirm the children's deaths.

About 50 kilometers south of the camp, local tribes battled with Houthis who had set up a makeshift camp in the area, driving the rebels away and seizing their weapons, a local resident said. **AP**

AP PHOTO



Federal police stand next to a bullet riddled and burned car after a criminal gang ambushed a police convoy near the town of Soyatlan

AN ambush that killed 15 state police officers in western Mexico appears to be a drug cartel's revenge attack and could herald a military-style offensive against government authorities.

The assault on a Jalisco state police convoy earlier this week on a rural

road between the Pacific coast resort of Puerto Vallarta and Guadalajara, the state capital, followed arrests earlier in the day and over the weekend of suspected members of the Jalisco New Generation cartel. It also came a week after a failed attempt to kill sta-

MEXICO

Ambush that killed 15 police a rarity

te Security Commissioner Alejandro Solorio.

The assassination attempt "was the first response by organized crime to the clash in which state security forces killed the criminal Heriberto Acevedo Cardenas, nicknamed 'El Gringo,'" Solorio said at a news conference yesterday. He said four suspects in that attack were turned over to federal authorities on Saturday and 11 more on Monday.

Monday night's ambush was a response to those arrests, Solorio said. He gave no details on how it was carried out, but local media said a vehicle was hijacked, parked across the two-lane road and set on fire to force the con-

voy to stop.

"The serious thing about this attack was that it was very well planned and orchestrated, with a military-style strategy," said Raul Benitez, a security expert at Mexico's National Autonomous University. "This was planned. A lot of gunmen were involved. They blocked the highway to surround them (police) and attack with military superiority."

Ambushes of state-level security officials and Mexican army patrols have been relatively rare, and the Jalisco attacks suggest the conflict in the western state is reaching a new level.

The cartel has been violent since it was founded in 2010 following the

death of Jalisco-based Sinaloa cartel leader Ignacio "Nacho" Coronel.

But it was the first time a cartel appeared to be mounting a direct, head-on challenge to authorities, Benitez said. Gunmen from other cartels have been known to open fire on police and soldiers, but it is usually because they are being pursued and want to escape capture.

The cartel has been fighting the Knights Templar carter for territory in neighboring Michoacan state, which the Knights Templar once controlled, building an economic empire based on extortion, drug trafficking and illegal mining until police and vigilantes largely

dismantled the gang in 2013 and 2014.

"It appears that the Jalisco cartel is getting stronger and wants to take over the role that the Knights Templar had," Benitez said.

In November 2013, Jalisco state authorities linked Jalisco New Generation to dozens of bodies discovered in mass graves in the community of La Barca near Lake Chapala, which is popular with Canadian and U.S. expatriates and tourists.

Officials believe the cartel was behind the dumping of 35 bodies on a busy street in the Gulf coast city of Veracruz in 2011, during a turf battle with the Zetas drug gang. **AP**

what's ON



'CLASSIC RECURRENCE – CENTENNIAL EVOLUTION' — EXHIBITION OF WOMEN'S FASHION

TIME: 10am-8pm (Closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: May 10, 2015

ADDRESS: Macau Fashion Gallery / No. 47, Rua de S. Roque, Macau

Free Admission

ENQUIRIES: (853)2835 3341

MACAU GRAND PRIX MUSEUM & WINE MUSEUM

TIME: 10am-8pm (Closed on Tuesdays)

VENUE: Rua Luis Gonzaga Gomes, 431, basement (Tourism Activities Centre-CAT)

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8798 4108 / 2833 3000

19TH AND 20TH CENTURY PORTRAIT OIL PAINTINGS – MAM COLLECTION

TIME: 10am-7pm (Closed on Mondays, No admission after 6:30 pm)

UNTIL: December 31, 2015

VENUE: Macau Museum of Art, Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE

ADMISSION: MOP5 (Free on Sundays and public holidays)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

NEW YEAR TRADITIONS OF TIANJIN AND CHONGQING MUNICIPALITIES

TIME: 9am-9pm

UNTIL: April 12, 2015

VENUE: Temporary Exhibitions Gallery of the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau / Avenida de Almeida Ribeiro No.163

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4100

INSTALLATION 'VALKYRIE OCTOPUS' BY JOANA VASCONCELOS

TIME: 24 hours

UNTIL: October 31, 2015

VENUE: MGM MACAU, Av. Dr. Sun Yat Sen, NAPE

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8802 8888

LIVING LIFE OF LEI I FAN CERAMIC ART EXHIBITION

TIME: 10:30am-6:30pm (Closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: April 30, 2015

VENUE: 10 Fantasia -A Creative Industries Incubator, 10, Calçada da Igreja de S.Lázaro, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 4582

Offbeat

SELENA'S ESTATE SUES RECORD LABEL OVER DIGITAL ROYALTIES



The estate of the late Texas pop star Selena is suing a record label it says owes it money from digital royalties.

The lawsuit was filed by Selena Quintanilla's estate against UMG Recordings in U.S. District Court in New York on March 31, the 20th anniversary of the singer's death. UMG declined comment.

The lawsuit says two 1993 agreements say the estate should get 50 percent of UMG's net receipts from licensing or selling her music to third-party digital content

providers. The lawsuit says an audit of documents from July 2009 to present found UMG miscalculated royalties and "grossly underpaid" the estate.

Quintanilla was killed in Corpus Christi on March 31, 1995, by Yolanda Saldivar, the president of her fan club. Saldivar is serving a life sentence.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
18:10	Brazil Avenue (Repeated)
19:00	Montra do Lilau (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:30	Criminal Minds S8
22:10	Brazil Avenue
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:20	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

cinema

CINETEATRO

09 APR - 15 APR



FAST AND FURIOUS 7_

ROOM 1

(2D) 2:15, 4.45, 9.45 pm

(3D) 7.15 pm

Director: James Wan

Starring: Vin Diesel, Paul Walker, Dwayne Johnson

Language: E

nglish (Chinese)

Duration: 137min

TWO THUMBS UP_

ROOM 2

2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Lau Ho-leung

Starring: Francis Ng, Simon Yam, Leo Ku, Patrick Tam, Cheng Ho-nam

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 103min

SPONGEBOB MOVIE: SPONGE OUT OF WATER_

ROOM 3

(2D) 4.00 pm

(3D) 9.30 pm

Director: Paul Tibbitt

Language: Chinese (English)

Duration: 92min



HOME_

ROOM 3

2.15, 5.45, 7.30 pm

Director: Tim Johnson

Language: Chinese (English)

Duration: 94min

MACAU TOWER

09 APR - 22 APR

FURIOUS 7_

ROOM 3

2.00, 4.30, 7.00, 9.30 pm

Director: James Wan

Starring: Vin Diesel, Paul Walker, Dwayne Johnson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 137min

this day in history



1976 YOUNG LIBERAL LEADER CLEARED OF ROBBERY

The president of the Young Liberals, Peter Hain, has been acquitted of stealing £490 from a branch of Barclays bank last October.

Supporters in the public gallery at the Old Bailey in London clapped and cheered as the verdict was announced.

The case is certain to raise new doubts about the validity of eye-witness identification.

The only evidence presented against Mr Hain, a postgraduate student at Sussex university, was his identification by three schoolboys and a bank cashier.

The schoolboys, who chased the thief, only saw him from a distance and a fourth boy said it was not Mr Hain.

The cashier was the only person from a number of bank staff and customers to pick Mr Hain, 26, from a police identity parade staged three days after the robbery.

During the trial members of Peter Hain's family testified he had not left his home in time to commit the robbery.

The thief was also said to have been wearing different clothing from that of Mr Hain on the day of the robbery.

Speaking to reporters after his acquittal, Mr Hain said he planned a campaign for other victims of mistaken identity.

He said it was possible South African agents may have used a "double" to frame him because of his anti-apartheid activities.

"I think there is plenty of reason to suspect that there might have been a frame-up but it is nothing substantial," he said.

Peter Hain's family left South Africa ten years ago because of their opposition to apartheid.

Mr Hain has since been prominent in anti-apartheid activities in the UK.

Four years ago he was sent a letter bomb that failed to explode because of faulty wiring.

In the House of Commons six MPs, led by Liberal David Steel, called for the resignation of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Sir Norman Skelhorn, over the Hain case.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

At the time of Peter Hain's acquittal there had already been several well-publicised cases of mistaken identity.

In 1974 the government had set up a committee, chaired by Lord Devlin, to examine the law and procedures relating to identification evidence.

A critical report by Lord Devlin published in 1977 recommended statutory safeguards but the government took no action.

However, the Court of Appeal laid down detailed guidelines for trial judges in cases depending largely on eye-witness evidence.

Peter Hain later wrote a book about his ordeal, the Putney Plot.

He left the Liberals in 1977 and joined the Labour party.

He has been the MP for Neath in south Wales since 1991 and a government minister since shortly after Labour's election win in 1997.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Life is sweet today! You can make all kinds of progress toward work goals, personal milestones or practically anything else without too much effort. It's all thanks to smooth talking and fun people.

Taurus April 20-May 20 You feel somewhat out of sorts today - so much so that you're drawing attention to yourself! It's a good time for you to kick back and let things happen, even if you want to scream.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Try not to worry about the future - today's good times and good energy are all that really matter. Things are looking up, but you are almost certain to leave some loose threads for later days.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 You need to deal with a big issue that's internal to your spiritual core. That means you need to handle it on your own, though you may find some old advice from a friend to be of great help.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 A friend comes to you with a dream - though it may be something bigger than the two of you can pull off. Still, it's exciting, and your social energy helps propel you toward something bigger and better.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You can get to the heart of almost any issue today, so make sure that your left brain is fully engaged with the problems that matter the most to you. Answers pop up quickly, too!

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Your energy levels are through the roof today! That could mean that you're running around taking care of business all day long or that you're intensely focused on one big project, but go for it!

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Try to pay closer attention to your business dealings - at least one person merits careful consideration. That doesn't mean they want to stab you in the back. It could be they need a promotion!

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 You're close to a breakthrough mentally - but you're not quite there! Keep pushing, as today's energy is perfect for philosophizing. Just don't expect the epiphany to come quite yet.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You need to speak more clearly today - and that's pretty easy for you. It's a good time to communicate using whatever media is at hand. Things are looking up for you and yours!

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You spark a new romance - or maybe rekindle an old one. It's easier than you would have imagined, and your great energy helps keep things glowing longer than you would have dreamed.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 You're starting to get creeped out by how much is piled on your desk - and then one more task gets added, and you're overwhelmed. Get help! There's no shame in delegating responsibility.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzles categorized by difficulty: Easy, Easy+, Medium, and Hard. Each category contains a 9x9 grid with some numbers pre-filled.

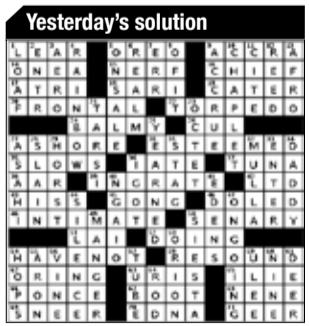
WEATHER

Weather forecast table with columns for MIN, MAX, and CONDITION. It lists weather for various cities in CHINA and the WORLD.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Fundamental; 6- Does in; 10- Gyro meat; 14- Do penance; 15- Sheltered, nautically; 16- A long way off; 17- Senator Specter; 18- Tribute; 19- Singer Amos; 20- Deceives; 22- Charged; 24- Numero ___; 26- Coarse sieve; 27- Worker; 31- Rocky hilltop; 32- Diary bit; 33- Early Mexican; 36- "The Wizard of Oz" studio; 39- Dagger of yore; 40- Audibly; 41- Lanai neighbor; 42- ___ Quentin; 43- Influential person; 44- Works hard; 45- For each; 46- Creatures; 48- Planks; 51- Melancholic; 52- Capital of Liberia; 54- Resembling a miter; 59- Not tricked by; 60- Get in a hand; 62- Currency unit in Nigeria; 63- Hydroxyl compound; 64- Some DVD players; 65- Soviet labor camp; 66- Class; 67- Game of chance; 68- Stalks;

DOWN: 1- Ancient Semitic for "Lord"; 2- Longfellow's bell town; 3- Boot bottom; 4- Supermodel Sastre; 5- 100 years; 6- Muesli bit; 7- Floating ice; 8- Chops down; 9- Chosen; 10- Second of two; 11- Preceding, poetically; 12- Sausalito's county; 13- ___-a-brac; 21- Any person; 23- Gator's cousin; 25- Toothbrush brand; 27- To a smaller extent; 28- Editor Wintour; 29- Bingo call; 30- Bauxite, e.g.; 34- Animal park; 35- Big brass; 36- Mother of Hermes; 37- Aquatic bird; 38- Fail to hit; 40- Large burrowing African mammal; 41- May honoree; 43- Fiddling emperor; 44- News; 45- Conditional release; 47- Where some vets served; 48- Attractive; 49- Dominant; 50- Subsequently; 52- Champagne name; 53- ___ impasse; 55- Tense; 56- Irritate; 57- Composer Khachaturian; 58- Falls behind; 61- That, in Tijuana;



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222
Water Supply - Report 1990 992
PJ (Open line) 993
Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333
Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944
S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
IACM 28 387 333
Tourism 28 333 000
Airport 59 888 88



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卓雅物業 (JML Property) logo and contact information, including 'Since 1994'.

BOXING

Wladimir Klitschko looking forward to fight at MSG

WLADIMIR Klitschko has reached rare territory among heavyweight champions.

Now, in his ninth year as champion, Klitschko is approaching Joe Louis and Larry Holmes in successful defenses.

When Klitschko faces Bryant Jennings April 25 at New York's Madison Square Garden, he will risk his heavyweight belt for the 18th time.

A win over Jennings will place Klitschko within one successful defense of Holmes, but he would still need six additional wins to match Louis' record of 25.

"With all respect to Louis and Larry Holmes, they're icons for me, I don't want to be compared with them because they are fighters I always have looked up to," Klitschko said before a workout Tuesday afternoon.

"As an outsider (media) can observe the fights and title defenses, you keep track. I'm an insider."

Nonetheless, Klitschko has made deep inroads during his second heavyweight stint that began with a seventh-round technical knockout win over Chris Byrd for a sanctioning body title in April 2006. Rocky Marciano, Muhammad Ali or Mike Tyson never enjoyed a title run as long as the native of Ukraine and part-time Hollywood, Florida resident.



Heavyweight champion Wladimir Klitschko

"My mind is in a tunnel; I'm getting ready for the next bout," Klitschko said. "And I'm excited about the challenge. I do not compare myself with the records of those guys — Joe Louis and Larry Holmes. I just enjoy my game."

Klitschko (63-3, 53 KOs) built the impressive streak of title defenses at a time when American heavyweights have faded from contention. Until Deontay Wilder's victory over Bernard Stiverne on Jan. 17, no American held a piece of the heavyweight

title since 2006.

Wilder looks for a lengthy reign while Jennings, of Philadelphia, seeks to tilt the division's power more toward to its once-dominant base.

"Every opponent is different and we will see how Bryant Jennings can hold the pressure," Klitschko said. "As my former coach, Emmanuel Steward said, 'on fight night, when you step into the ring, welcome to big time boxing.'"

"How is Bryant Jennings going to hold to big-time boxing and

get along with that? We'll see."

Jennings (19-0, 10 KOs) earned the opportunity to face Klitschko after his split-decision victory over fellow contender Mike Perez last July.

"Bryant Jennings is going to bring a lot of excitement and a lot of energy into the ring," Klitschko said. "This fight is going to be nothing but exciting."

Klitschko believes boxing is enjoying a revival. Attention toward the sport has increased with the buildup to the mega-fight between welterweight

champions Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Manny Pacquiao on May 2 in Las Vegas. And Klitschko also predicts a future unification bout between him and Wilder would be appealing to fight fans that distanced themselves from the heavyweight division after Tyson's retirement.

"The demand is shifting back and forth and during the time when boxing was less popular in the heavyweight division, be-

I do not compare myself with the records of those guys — Joe Louis and Larry Holmes. I just enjoy my game

WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO

cause of the lack of good (American) prospects, it shifted to Europe," said Klitschko, who will make his first U.S. appearance in seven years.

"You cannot say boxing was dead or unpopular. The attention shifted to different continents. And now the demand for boxing is big and I'm really excited to be back in the States.

"I believe Deontay is an extremely talented athlete. We've sparred enough that we know each other well. I believe a unification fight is something the public wants." AP

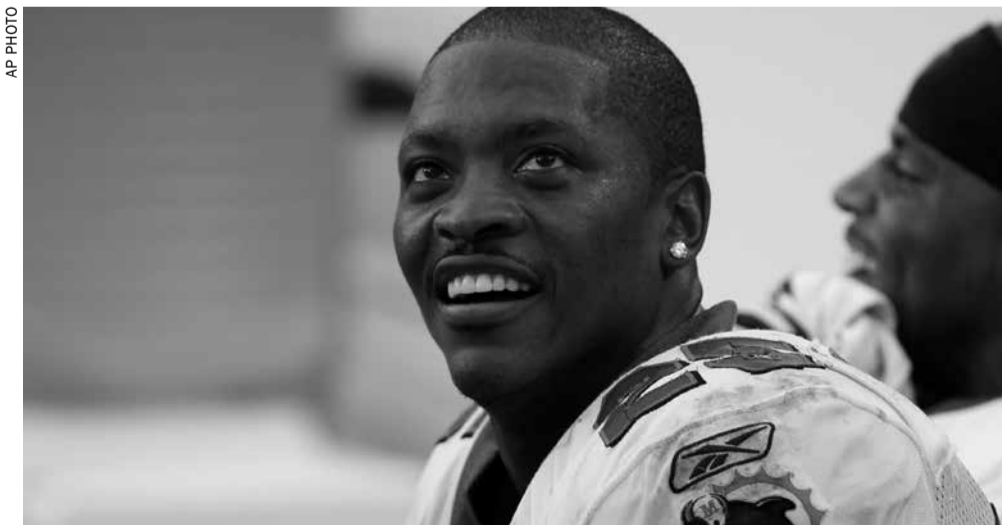
Marcy Gordon, Washington

FEDERAL regulators have filed civil fraud charges against former NFL cornerback Will Allen and his business partner. They're accused of reaping more than USD31 million in a Ponzi scheme that promised high returns to investors from funding loans to cash-strapped pro athletes.

The Securities and Exchange Commission announced the charges Tuesday against William D. Allen, Susan Daub and their Capital Financial Partners investment firms.

The SEC said Allen and Daub paid about \$20 million to investors but received only around \$13 million in loan repayments from athletes. To make up the gap they paid investors with other investors' money rather than actual profits on the

SEC files fraud charges against ex-NFL player, partner



Will Allen

investments, in a classic Ponzi scheme, the agency said. The conduct allegedly continued from July 2012 through February of this year.

The telephone wasn't answered at a listing for Will D. Allen in Davie, Florida, where Allen is said to live. A person answering the phone at

Daub's home said there was no comment. They are not represented in the case by attorneys, according to the SEC.

Allen, 36, was a cor-

nerback in the NFL from 2001 to 2012, playing for the New York Giants and the Miami Dolphins. He was signed by the New England Patriots in March 2012 but was placed on injured reserve the following August, and he left football in March 2013.

Daub, 54, is a financial professional who also lives in Florida, according to the SEC.

The SEC said Allen and Daub misled investors about the terms and even the existence of some of the loans, telling them they could receive interest on the loans of up to 18 percent from the athletes. The pair used some funds from investors to

cover personal charges at casinos and nightclubs and to finance other business ventures, the agency alleged.

The SEC said its lawsuit against Allen and Daub was filed under seal in federal court in Boston last week and unsealed on Monday. The agency won an asset freeze against them from the court last week. Two of their firms are based in Boston.

The SEC is seeking an injunction against Allen and Daub and the firms, as well as unspecified penalties and restitution of allegedly ill-gotten gains.

The agency didn't name in its lawsuit the athletes who were said to have received loans.

"As in any Ponzi scheme, the appearance of a successful investment was only an illusion sustained by lies," Paul Levenson, director of the SEC's regional office in Boston, said in a statement. AP

Justin Bergman, Shanghai

AS the Formula One circuit heads to Shanghai for the Chinese Grand Prix, it's no longer a safe bet that Mercedes will top the podium by the end of the weekend.

After a jubilant Sebastian Vettel emerged as the surprise winner for Ferrari at the Malaysian Grand Prix two weeks ago, a season once expected to be dominated by the silver cars of Mercedes could be shaping up to be far more competitive.

Mercedes came into the 2015 season as the team to beat following a dominant campaign last year that saw Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg sweep to victory in 16 of 19 races. The only suspense was generated by the fight between the Mercedes teammates for the drivers' championship, which Hamilton eventually captured.

The conditions in Shanghai should cause less tire degradation compared to Malaysia

But Vettel showed in Malaysia that the rest of the field wasn't prepared to move aside.

The four-time world champion, in just his second race for Ferrari after leaving Red Bull, benefited from a blisteringly hot track that caused Mercedes' tires to degrade quickly, but Vettel's Ferrari car also showed improved pace over last year.

Mercedes team principal Toto Wolff said after the race it was the "wake-up call that we needed."

"Malaysia was a tough

F1

Mercedes looking to rebound at Chinese GP



Lewis Hamilton leads the pack at the start of the Malaysian Formula One Grand Prix at Sepang International Circuit in Sepang, Sunday, March 29

weekend," Hamilton said ahead of Sunday's Chinese GP. "I think ultimately we made the best choices we could, but there is always room for improvement and we've been working hard to analyze everything for the next race."

Hamilton, who captured the season-opening race in Australia and was second in Malaysia, will be hoping for a boost on a track where he's enjoyed considerable success. He's won the Chinese Grand Prix three times — more than any other driver — and finished on the podium six times overall.

"Shanghai is one of my favorite locations," Hamilton said. "The circuit itself is a different challenge to Albert Park (in Australia) and Sepang (Malaysia), but it's one I really enjoy and it suits my driving style quite well."

Mercedes technical chief Paddy Lowe said the team has spent the past two weeks trying to make improvements to the car, citing its most significant weakness as tire management during long runs. He said the team also addressed the car's aerodynamics.

"It is now clearer than ever that there is serious competition for this world championship, so we will continue to work flat out for performance gains," Lowe said.

The conditions in Shanghai should cause less tire degradation compared to Malaysia, with temperatures only expected to reach about 21 degrees Celsius (70 Fahrenheit) for the race on Sunday.

The other top teams will be looking to play catch-up after difficult starts to the year.

McLaren has struggled with a host of issues with its Honda

engines and managed just one finish in the first two F1 races — Jenson Button's 11th place result in Melbourne. The team has acknowledged that the long straights in Shanghai will also make it tough to close the gap.

Still, new McLaren driver Fernando Alonso sounded upbeat about the car's progress since the start of the season.

"The steps we took between Australia and Malaysia were extremely impressive — it was a great feeling to be able to mix it with other cars and drivers, and I hope we can do more of the same in China," he said.

Red Bull has faced even more questions as French automaker Renault, which supplies engines to the team, has threatened to pull out of the sport if it doesn't see improvements on the track.

In an interview with Formula1.com on Monday, Helmut Marko, Red Bull's senior advisor, called the start of the season "a catastrophe." The team's best finish has been Daniel Ricciardo's sixth place in Melbourne.

"We are significantly behind Mercedes. They clearly dominate," Marko said.

As for whether Renault could pull out, Marko said the carmaker is "spending a lot of money on this power unit — not as much as Mercedes but a significant amount — and (is) confronted with the same issues that we have: their F1 involvement has to pay off."

Red Bull won the drivers' and teams' championships from 2010-13 with Renault before the sport switched to V6 hybrid engines last year. **AP**

NBA player, wife stabbed outside Manhattan nightclub

The NYPD says an NBA player, his wife and another woman were stabbed and injured outside a Manhattan nightclub. Police say they sustained minor injuries and were hospitalized. Their names weren't immediately released. It happened just before 4 a.m. yesterday outside the 1Oak Club on West 17th Street. The stabber was taken into custody. Two other people were arrested on charges of obstructing governmental administration. Police say the NBA player was stabbed in the abdomen. His wife was stabbed in the arm and slashed across the breast and buttocks. Police say the two were arguing outside the club when a group — including the other injured woman — interfered. They say a verbal dispute ensued with one man pulling out a knife.

Kings' Bhullar first Indian to play in NBA game



Sacramento Kings backup center Sim Bhullar made history Tuesday night when he became the first player of Indian descent to play in an NBA game. Bhullar, who was born in Ontario, Canada and played in college at New Mexico State, checked in with 16.1 seconds remaining in the Kings' 116-111 victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves. A crowd of 16,770 gave the 7-foot-5 Bhullar a standing ovation when he replaced Jason Thompson and lined up along the key while teammate Ray McCallum took the second of two free throw attempts. Signed to a 10-day contract on April 2, Bhullar did not attempt a shot.

Keane faces trial on road-rage charge

Former Manchester United captain Roy Keane will stand trial in June after denying being aggressive toward a taxi driver during an alleged road-rage incident. The 43-year-old Irishman did not attend a brief hearing at Trafford Magistrates' Court in Manchester yesterday but a not guilty plea was entered on his behalf by his lawyer. Keane, who is assistant manager of the Ireland team, is accused of causing harassment, alarm or distress to taxi driver Fateh Kerar in January. Kerar says an altercation took place after he and his passenger noticed Keane, who was driving a Range Rover. Keane's trial at Manchester Magistrates' Court is due to start on June 19.

FOOTBALL

Gabon chosen as host of 2017 African Cup

GABON will host the 2017 African Cup of Nations in place of war-torn Libya. Gabon, which co-hosted the tournament in 2012, was chosen again yesterday in a vote by the Confederation of African Football's executive committee in Cairo.

Gabon was selected over rival bids from Algeria and Ghana.

It means the African Cup will again return quickly to familiar territory.

Equatorial Guinea, which shared the African Cup with Gabon in 2012, hosted on its own this year. Neighbor Gabon will now also get the chance to do that in two years.

Libya was initially meant to host in 2013, but swapped that tournament with South Africa to give it more time to be ready. But the North African nation conceded

last August that it still wouldn't be able to hold the 16-team event in 2017 because of security concerns, forcing CAF to restart the bidding process.

Egypt was among the contenders for 2017 but withdrew to support its fellow North African bid from Algeria.

African Cup hosting has been problematic for CAF in recent years after Libya first asked for a change in 2013.

This year's edition in January and February was meant to be in Morocco, but Moroccan authorities asked for it to be postponed because of fears over the spread of the Ebola virus from West Africa.

CAF refused to change the dates and stripped Morocco of the tournament, handing it instead with just two months' notice to Equatorial Guinea. Morocco was

banned from the 2017 and 2019 tournaments because of its failure to host this year, but recently had that decision overturned by the Court of Arbitration for Sport and has been reinstated.

The three African Cups after 2017 have already been decided and five successive tournaments will now be in West or Central Africa.

Long-time CAF President Issa Hayatou's home country of Cameroon will stage in 2019, current champion Ivory Coast will be the host in 2021, and Guinea — which is still recovering from the Ebola outbreak — will get the tournament in 2023.

Qualifying for 2017 will begin in June with 52 of CAF's 54 member countries listed to take part. Somalia and Eritrea did not enter the qualifiers. **AP**

opinion

World Views

The Editors, Bloomberg

HOW NOT TO DEAL WITH CHINA

China's creation of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the bungled U.S. response have given Beijing a nice diplomatic win. Not hugely consequential in itself, the episode is a case study in how not to deal with the world's biggest emerging power. Before it happens again, the U.S. and its friends ought to pause and reflect.

China's Pain Points

China has two goals in building this new international lender. First, it wants an additional conduit for its surplus of savings -- a way to lend abroad that deflects resistance from borrowers worried about being under China's thumb. (Lately, Chinese-led construction projects have prompted protests from Sri Lanka to Zambia.) Second, China's rulers crave the respect of other nations and seek the global standing they believe should come with their growing economic strength.

Neither goal is unreasonable. Neither needs to be resisted by the West as a strategic imperative - and there'd be little prospect of long-term success in that effort anyway. The worst thing, though, is to oppose China's plans and then fail, especially in a way that divides the West against itself. That is what just happened.

The U.S. asked its friends in Europe not to become members of the AIIB. With an eye to business opportunity, and apparently more eager to ingratiate themselves with China than with the U.S., they competed to sign up as founding members. So China's leaders not only get their AIIB, they have also split the U.S. from its allies, boosting China's standing more than they had dared hope.

The West can't expect, and shouldn't want, to slow China's growth and suffocate all its leadership ambitions. It should aim instead to give China and other big developing countries their fair share of power in global governance - through institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank - while insisting that China remains bound by global rules even as it plays a larger part in making them.

Foot-dragging by the U.S. and European Union on reform of the multilateral institutions encouraged China to build the AIIB to begin with, and that was a mistake. Failure to coordinate their response to China's new plans compounded the error. The U.S. miscalculated, to be sure, but Europe is also much at fault. Bringing China into a fully functioning system of global cooperation - ensuring that China is a good citizen and not merely an increasingly powerful one - calls for a united West. Europe, unwilling and unable to lead, expects the U.S. to take on that role, and within reason must therefore let it.

By embarrassing the U.S. over the AIIB, Europe's leaders have weakened themselves. Their scramble for national advantage can only encourage China to press further. Divide and rule worked well this time, Beijing will note: Where else might it work?

The best course now is to make the most of the new institution. It could be valuable. A little competition might spur the World Bank and Asian Development Bank to do better. (Both are rightly criticized for becoming top-heavy and sluggish.) China's success should also push the U.S. and Japan to clear the remaining roadblocks to the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal, reminding China's neighbors that close economic ties with the U.S. are still worth a lot. At the same time, though, the U.S. should be clear that China's unilateral efforts to redraw the map of the South China Sea or limit the airspace above the East Sea are unacceptable: They undermine the security of the U.S. and its allies. Cyber-attacks designed to impede the free flow of information on the Internet are equally inconsistent with the kind of partnership China says it wants.

A more confident China isn't necessarily a threat. But it isn't necessarily benign, either. The U.S. and Europe need to know the difference and start acting like allies.

THE BUZZ STATUE OF FILIPINO REVOLUTIONARY TO BE UNVEILED IN GUAM

A statue honoring Filipino revolutionary Apolinario Mabini will be unveiled later this year with the opening of a planned playground in a Guam village.

The statue was supposed to be unveiled this month at its future home in the village of Asan, but the ceremony was delayed. Asan-Maina Mayor Joana Margaret Blas says organizers did not want to present the statue without the rest

of the park.

She says organizers are waiting for materials for the playground to arrive for construction. According to Blas, the playground should be completed by early June.

Mabini is considered a hero by Filipinos for his revolt against U.S. occupation in the Philippines. In 1901, he was among Filipinos exiled to Guam, where he lived in Asan.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	30-50 Good
High Density Residential Area	30-50 Good
Ambient	30-50 Good

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS

US Global warming isn't just affecting the weather, it's harming Americans' health, President Obama says as he announces steps government and businesses will take to better understand and deal with the problem.

GREECE Authorities say two policemen were injured and nine people were arrested during a night of clashes between rioting youths and police in central Athens after a demonstration by hundreds of anarchists calling for the closure of a maximum-security prison. Police said yesterday the arrests were made on charges including attempted grievous bodily harm, arson and vandalism.

TURKEY A Dutch journalist has gone on trial in Turkey on charges of engaging in propaganda on behalf of the banned Kurdish rebel group on social media. Freelance journalist Frederike Geerdink Geerdink said on Twitter that the prosecutor recommended her acquittal at the opening hearing of her trial in the mainly Kurdish city of Diyarbakir.



FRANCE Air traffic controllers went on strike Wednesday, prompting the cancellation of 40 percent of flights across France. The powerful SNCTA union called the two-day strike in a quarrel over working and retirement conditions, saying in a statement that "disruption is expected over the whole country."

KENYA Seven hours elapsed before police commandoes flew to the scene of the university attack, a delay which may have contributed to the high death toll and which points to deeper problems in the force.

IRAQI forensic teams in the newly recaptured city of Tikrit have started exhuming bodies from mass graves believed to contain some of the hundreds of soldiers killed by Islamic State militants last year.

UK

Tony Blair warns of dangers of second term for Conservatives

Danica Kirka, London

FORMER British leader Tony Blair waded into Britain's general election campaign yesterday, warning of economic chaos should Prime Minister David Cameron's Conservative Party win the race.

Blair, an adept communicator known for his ability to cook down complicated matters into understandable concepts, will be seeking to offer that splash of charisma that helped him win three elections as Labour leader. But his entrance into the campaign is also a gamble for Labour, as his legacy has been tainted by his hugely unpopular decision to intervene in Iraq.

Returning to his former constituency in Sedgefield, Blair argued that Cameron's efforts to appease the rightwing members of his party and to stamp out a challenge from the U.K. Independence Party by holding a referendum on the European Union will create job insecurity and unpredictability in the British economy. Blair urged voters to look at the bigger picture and consider the consequences and risks



Tony Blair

such a referendum poses. "I believe passionately that leaving Europe would leave Britain diminished in the world, do significant damage to our economy and, less obviously but just

I believe passionately that leaving Europe would leave Britain diminished in the world

TONY BLAIR

THE DECISIVE MOMENT



AP Photo/Dmitry Lovetsky

In this file pic, British Museum director Neil MacGregor attends the opening of an exhibition on Greek art in Russia, with the marble sculpture of the river god Ilissos in the background. The museum said yesterday Neil MacGregor will leave in December after 13 years.