



BROADWAY MUSICAL 'GHOST' IN TOWN

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CITY ROADS CROWDED

The total number of licensed motor vehicles reached 243,966 at the end of June, up by 4.9 percent

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SUU KYI VISITS FLOOD-HIT AREA

The death toll from flooding in Myanmar has climbed to 46, with more than 200,000 people affected

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WORLD BRIEFS

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CHINA Action star Jackie Chan says that he intends to work with his son on a movie and an album as the pair mend their relationship after Jaycee was locked up on a drugs charge. Jaycee Chan was released from a six-month prison sentence in February after allowing others to use marijuana at his Beijing apartment. The Hong Kong actor said he was looking for suitable movie projects for his son and in the meantime Jaycee, 32, would produce one of his records. He also said he hoped his son would duet with him on one of the tracks.

PAKISTAN The death toll from flash floods triggered by seasonal monsoon rains in various parts of Pakistan has risen to 118 and floodwater has inundated vast areas, leaving tens of thousands homeless, authorities said yesterday. The National Disaster Management Authority said the flooding has affected more than 800,000 people in 2,275 villages. About 2,900 houses have collapsed or are partially damaged.

AP PHOTO



AFGHANISTAN The confirmed death of the Taliban's reclusive one-eyed leader Mullah Mohammad Omar has weakened the movement, giving Kabul an opportunity to step up the battle against the insurgency, an Afghan governor and one of the country's most powerful former warlords said yesterday. "Defeating the Taliban is a very real possibility right now and this is the right moment to fight against the Taliban," Atta Mohammad Noor told The Associated Press.

Gaming industry slump eases a fifth month

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BLOOMBERG



Singapore 2.0: Lee seeks smart city revamp as old model ebbs

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SURVEY

Large majority of locals not interested in moving to Hengqin

A survey of local residents conducted by the Macao Youth Federation showed that over eighty percent of respondents had no interest in moving to Hengqing to live or work, neither through purchasing nor renting properties there.

The group successfully interviewed 500 residents over the age of 18 between February 26 and 28, and released the findings during a press conference on Sunday. According to a vice-director of the federation's Macao Youth Politics Training Program Committee, Lei Chi U, only about 9.1 percent of the respondents said they had considered moving to Hengqin or buying homes there, whereas 85 percent said that they had no such intention.

Lei indicated the main reasons attracting those residents to move to Hengqin were the cheaper rent and lower property prices combined with a higher quality of living. However, the survey didn't ask for the reasons why the rest had no interest.

The survey also showed that only about 10 percent of residents were willing to work on the neighboring island, where a free trade zone was established this year with preferential policies for Macau investors and enterprises. Over 80 percent of respondents said that they hadn't considered working there; and



Computerized picture of Hengqin

nearly 70 percent of them believed that the employment conditions in Macau were better than those in Hong Kong and the mainland.

In order to attract young people from Macau and simulate industrial diversification, Hengqin has recently opened an Entrepreneurship Valley for Macau Youth that aims to provide an incubation center for local start-ups. About 30 businesses have moved in after the inauguration, with about 170 applications pending.

According to the survey, 23 percent of respondents said that they planned to start up their own business, or had already done so. Amongst those, one fifth of them intended to set the enterprise up in Hengqin, as they were attracted by Hengqin's development prospect, cheaper rent and the funding from the government. However, over 40 percent of respondents also said that they were unfamiliar with the

entrepreneurial environment in Hengqin.

Regarding Macau residents' "low interest" in participating in the development of the neighboring island, the federation's chairman, Chan Sao Chai, urged the governments from both sides to jointly set up a one-stop platform in Macau to provide information about Hengqin, including about planning, taxation and legal protection, in order to increase public awareness of the area.

Ms Chan suggested that inconvenient transportation and restrictions on Internet access might be the main reasons hindering Macau youths' desire to move there. "They need to show Macau residents which department they can look to for help if they encounter any difficulties when they move to Hengqin in the future, especially after the authorities have allowed vehicles access to Hengqin," she said.

CRIME

Henpecked Korean gambler makes false crime report after loss

A Korean tourist has been arrested and charged with making a bogus robbery report to local police after gambling away all of his money at a casino. According to the Judiciary Police (PJ), he pretended to be the victim of a robbery because he feared the consequences of his wife discovering the gambling losses.

The suspect, aged 30 and surnamed Choi, travelled with his mother to Macau last week. Realizing that his HKD 200,000 loss would infuriate his spouse back home, the man called the police last Friday night, stating that he had been robbed by two unknown assailants at a park in the Zape district.

However, his flawed oral recount raised the suspicions of the police, and he later confided that the entire case was fabricated.

In another case related to gambling, PJ officers put an end to a kidnapping attempt after receiving a telephone report from a local taxi driver who eavesdropped on a loan argument between his passengers in the back of his car.

Last Friday morning, the police received a phone call from a cabbie reporting that two Mandarin-speaking men were taking a mainland woman to a large hotel in the inner harbor, an action which he suspected was linked to kidnapping because of a dispute over money.

The passengers' conversation revealed that the female hostage was in debt after losing HKD 30,000 of loaned money on the gaming tables. Unable to return the money, and needing to pay extra interest of over HKD 10,000, she was forced into the hotel and had all of her documents and baggage withheld by the two suspects. The pair, who have already been apprehended, were found staying next to the victim by the police upon arrival at their hotel room.

In a separate case, a homeless man is facing prosecution following the theft of two vehicle batteries near the Macau Tower last week.

Last Saturday night, the owner of a local auto repair store reported to the police that one of his clients' lorries had lost its battery while awaiting repair at his shop installed inside the goods container. It was said by the police that the loss was discovered after the victim, a local in his forties, saw the homeless man sleeping in the container when he checked the lorry on Saturday morning.

The 48-year-old unemployed suspect confessed the theft, and admitted that he sold the component, worth MOP830, for only MOP30 to a roving vendor in the city's north.

After he was arrested, the Judiciary Police connected him to another theft, where another car owner had a battery worth MOP1500 stolen.

ONE SHOT NEWS



Dozens of parking spaces in the NAPE district have been obstructed for the past three weeks, causing inconvenience to the people that work or live there. A reader sent us this picture showing the plastic bollards used by the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) to seal off the spaces. Contacted by the Times, DSSOPT confirmed that the parking spaces have been closed due to "public safety," as an adjacent building's exterior finish peeled off. The bureau states its building inspection committee is handling the matter following procedures for dangerous, dilapidated buildings. It will re-open the spaces when the inspection report is out and the property owner undertakes temporary protection measures on the structure.

PRISON GUARD ASSAULTED

A PRISON guard was assaulted by an inmate on Sunday, and has sustained minor injuries. According to a statement issued by the Macau Prison, the inmate has been in custody since 2014 and has violent tendencies, having previously assaulted other inmates as well as another guard. On Sunday morning, the guard was escorting one prisoner

back to his cell when the assailant suddenly jumped out and started beating the guard. Other guards managed to subdue the aggressor and took him back to his cell. Disciplinary procedures have been initiated and the prison has increased its vigilance on the troublesome inmate, who was arrested for assault and illegal entry into the territory.

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THE downward spiral of Macau's casino industry is abating, albeit slightly, as a revenue slump eased a fifth straight month in July, the same month the city relaxed rules for Chinese citizens entering the gambling hub.

Gross gaming revenue fell 34.5 percent to 18.6 billion patacas (USD2.3 billion), according to data released by Macau's Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau.

The world's largest gambling hub has seen revenue decline since June 2014, hurt by an economic slowdown in China and Beijing's anti-graft campaign that deterred high-stakes gamblers. Starting July 1, local authorities allowed mainland China passport holders to visit more frequently and stay longer, a surprise easing of entry rules that gave hope it would be the first of more supportive policies.

"We haven't seen a firm stabilization yet," said Tim Craighead, an analyst with Bloomberg Intelligence. "The second half of the year has a good chance to see a revenue inflection, with new resorts coming on stream and Chinese stimulus measures hopefully supporting consumer activities."

Wynn Macau Ltd. tumbled 4.6 percent to HKD15.28 by the close of trading in Hong Kong with MGM China Holdings Ltd. dropping 3.7 percent, and SJM Holdings Ltd. and Galaxy Entertainment Group Ltd. both down 2.8 percent. Sands China Ltd. lost 1.2 percent. The Hang Seng Index fell 0.9 percent.

Gross gaming revenue has fallen 36.7 percent year-to-date, and may fall 30 percent for the whole of 2015, according to the median estimate of 11 analysts surveyed by Bloomberg. The industry is expected to rebound with a 4.5 percent gain in 2016, according to the

Gaming industry slump eases a fifth month as visa rules abate



■ The industry's decline has been easing since February when revenue plunged by a record 48.6 percent

median estimate of 10 analysts.

The industry's decline has been easing since February when revenue plunged by a record 48.6 percent, and sets "a trend we expect to continue through the remainder of the year," Sterne Agee CRT analyst David Bain wrote in a note on July 27.

Casino operators are hoping a wave of new resorts will draw tourists and gambling revenue back to Macau, with Galaxy opening two new gambling resorts

in May, marking the city's first new casino projects since 2012. Melco Crown Entertainment Ltd. is expected to announce an opening date for its \$3.2 billion Studio City resort this week.

Billionaire Steve Wynn said last week he felt "sanguine" about prospects for the new Wynn Palace project, his company's second casino in Macau, setting a March 25 opening date. Sands China's Parisian Macao is scheduled to open in

about 12 months from July, according to Chairman Sheldon Adelson.

Macau's economy has been hit by the gambling downturn, with real gross domestic product falling 0.4 percent last year, the first annual decline since 1999, the Monetary Authority of Macau said in a July report. Output is expected to shrink "at a rate of mid teens" this year, the authority wrote. **Bloomberg**

GAMING REVENUE

Gov't reiterates austerity measures may be implemented

THE government has yet again reiterated that it will implement austerity measures if monthly gaming revenue drops to below the average monthly gross gaming revenue of MOP20 billion, according to a statement issued by the Secretary for Economy and Finance's office.

Data released by the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ) yesterday shows that gross gaming revenue fell by 34.5 percent to MOP18.6 billion in July.

The Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong, said that the gaming revenue is still within the levels estimated by the government for this year's amended Budget Law. Since gaming revenue is still higher than the average monthly gross gaming revenue of MOP20 billion, the government will not be implementing austerity measures at this particular stage, the secretary said.

Nevertheless, he recalled that it is still unclear

how Macau's gaming industry will develop in the coming months. Thus, the government will remain cautious in its spending and will be closely monitoring the industry's performance.

Authorities reiterated that austerity measures would not have an impact on current social welfare policies. As a result, cash handouts and public investment plan (PIDDA) policies for the current year will not be subject to any changes.

The Chief Executive has

said that the region's finances remain stable and the MSAR's financial reserves are strong enough to cope with "unexpected incidents or situations arising from economic fluctuations."

The government has acknowledged that the gaming industry's development will continue to be clouded by unpredictable factors in the near future. They will therefore be closely monitoring gaming operators, especially relating to casino operations within VIP rooms, while



Lionel Leong

urging gaming companies to ensure that employment opportunities remain stable.

Still according to the authorities, the development of other sectors,

such as tourism, MICE, regional trade and young entrepreneurship is satisfying. The local administration has pledged to continue pushing for economic diversification. **CP**

ARTS

Broadway musical brings romantic fantasy to life

Brook Yang

As the backstage technicians are set to roll out compelling illusions and dazzling stage effects, "Ghost" – a Broadway musical that tells a love story that transcends death and mortality – is opening its curtains at the Macau Cultural Center (CCM) this evening on the last stop of its Asian tour.

Based on the 1990 hit romantic thriller by the same screenwriter, Bruce Joel Rubin, the musical closely follows the plot of the film. Nevertheless, the writer, who had never composed lyrics before, carved out a score of twenty songs that enable the show to probe the characters' inner lives, their hearts and souls, in a way the film did not.

Actor Liam Doyle, who plays the leading role, Sam the "ghost," told local media ahead of the stage run that the audience can expect to see a remake of the film, but with a modern touch.



"Everything is there from the film you love, but it's such a beautiful story and it's so well sold onstage, so I think it's irrelevant whether you've seen the film a hundred times like an

enthusiast or have only seen it once like I have," he stressed.

The story begins when Sam is murdered and becomes a ghost trapped between this world and the next. He then discovers that

his girlfriend, Molly, is in danger, and he must find a way to communicate with her. Sam enlists the help of a phony psychic to avenge his death and protect Molly.

"If you've seen the film, there are certain things you would expect from the musical. The questions we always get asked: Did Sam walk through a solid door? Does Molly get to see Sam again by the end of the story? And is it believable that he is a ghost? If we don't include those elements, I think people will be disappointed," said the actress who plays Molly, Lucie Jones.

Complementing the music, a set of cutting-edge technology and stage magic has been designed by the same illustrator as the Harry Potter and Hugo films – Paul Kieve. Amongst all sorts of eye-catching special effects, the show's most eye-popping moment is when Sam walks through a solid door.

"It's absolutely mind-blowing.

I'm just kind of, 'ok, I'm walking through the door now,' I don't really think about it. And then all the audience is like, 'oh my god!' going crazy," Liam Doyle told the media. "It's probably one of my favorite bits about doing the show, because everyone wants to try and perform magic when they are kids, and when you get to do it onstage in front of thousands of people every night, it's incredible."

Ms Jones also acknowledged that the audience's reaction to the illusions is "one of the things [they] love so much about doing the show." "People don't expect it to be so enthralling, because when you watch a film, they can use all sorts of production magic tricks, you don't expect it to be able to happen in real life," she explained.

"The audience know that Sam is a 'ghost': he looks different, he appears in a blue light every time he appears on stage as a ghost. I'm based on a warm, golden light, and I stand next to Sam who instead is in a cold, blue light. It's very clear that he's a 'ghost.' I do get chills occasionally," the actress noted and demonstrated taking a chilled, deep breath. "It's moments, it just gets to you every time, every time, and we can see people in the audience being moved by what we do as well," she said.

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STATISTICS | TRANSPORT

Number of vehicles rises 4.9 percent

THE total number of licensed motor vehicles reached 243,966 at the end of June, up by 4.9 percent year-on-year, according to information from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC). Motorcycles and light private cars accounted for 51.9 percent and 41.4 percent respectively.

The statistics indicate that registrations of new motor vehicles in June decreased significantly by 24.5 percent year-on-year to 1,337. However, the registration of new vehicles in the first half of the year increased by 2.3 percent year-on-year to 10,046.

In the first half of 2015, the number of traffic accidents totaled 7,617, up by 1.3 percent year-on-year, resulting in 2,675 casualties, 9 of which were fatalities. Considering the month of June alone, there were 388 traffic victims, including two deaths.

Cross-border vehicle trips totaled 418,469 in June, up by 2.9 percent year-on-year. In the first half of 2015, cross-border vehicle trips



increased by 4.9 percent year-on-year to 2,530,799. Passenger ferry movements between Macau and Hong Kong and between the MSAR and mainland China totaled 72,677 in the first half of the year, an increase of 3.9 percent year-on-year.

The Macau International Airport registered 4,129 commercial flight movements in June 2015, up by 7.8 percent year-on-year.

According to the data released by the DSEC, during the first half of 2015, commercial flights increased by 8.7 per-

cent year-on-year to 25,480, with movements to and from mainland China, Taiwan and Thailand rising by 4.9 per-

cent, 2.8 percent and 7.2 percent respectively. Meanwhile, helicopter flights in the first half of 2015 decreased by 9.2 percent year-on-year to 7,046.

The gross weight of seaborne containerized cargo increased by 8.3 percent to 133,077 tones in the first half of 2015.

The first half of the year also saw inward air cargo (3,486 tones) and outward air cargo (7,364 tones) increase by 10.1 percent and 3.1 percent respectively year-on-year. Taiwan remained the major origin and destination of air cargo.

MORE MOBILE SUBSCRIBERS, WEB USERS

AT THE end of June 2015, the number of mobile telephone subscribers had increased by 10.5 percent to 1,864,955, of which stored-value GSM card subscribers constituted 64.2 percent. Regarding Internet services, the number of subscribers totaled 316,593 and

the cumulative duration of usage in the first half of 2015 reached 518 million hours, up by 11.2 percent and 12 percent respectively year-on-year. The number of fixed-line telephone subscribers decreased by 3.5 percent year-on-year to 150,640.


Local man receives dual transplant

A local man has received a liver made out of parts of his daughters' livers at Hong Kong's Queen Mary Hospital. The recipient is Cheng Chi-ming, a 59-year-old Macau security guard who suffers from hepatitis B and has been in a coma. It was considered the first ever simultaneous dual transplant of its kind in the world. Doctors said that he may have passed away within a week if a suitable liver was not found.

After being evaluated for possible liver donation, two of Cheng's three daughters were found to be suitable donors. Since their livers were too small to be used alone, the doctors decided to use two-thirds of one daughter's liver and one-third from the other in order to reconstruct a new one for their father.

The Health Bureau stated yesterday that it did not request the transfer of the resident to the Hong Kong hospital. If care cannot be provided in Macau, the bureau sends patients to overseas institutions and pays for all of their expenses. Throughout the past five years there have been 23 patients needing to be sent to hospitals outside of Macau for transplants.

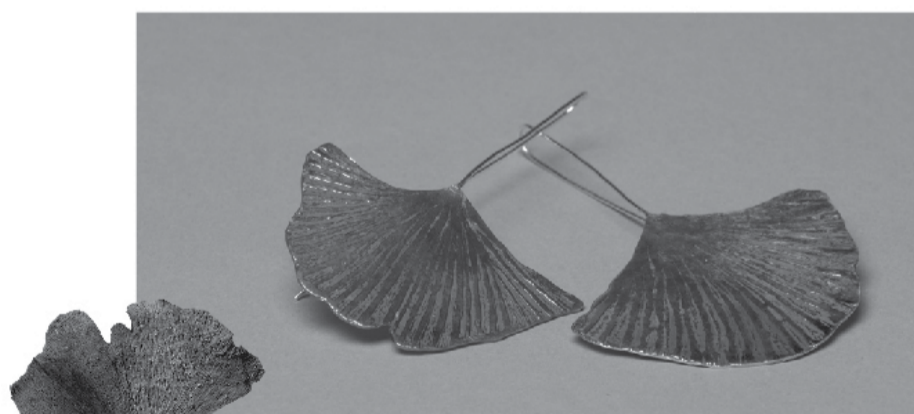
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Local breastfeeding association marks 2nd anniversary

THE Macau Breastfeeding Association marked its second anniversary last weekend by holding a carnival at Luso-Chinese School Sir Robert Ho Tung.

In addition to a photo exhibition of breastfeeding mothers from different walks of life, participants also gathered to share their experiences of nursing and breastfeeding, as well as those of being a working mother.

The association said in a press release that this year's World Breastfeeding Week focused



on working women and breastfeeding, thus revisiting its 1993 campaign theme: "Mother-Friendly Workplace Initiative." The World Breastfeeding campaign aims to empower and support all women, no matter their occupation, by helping them to adequately combine work with childcare, and breastfeeding in particular.

To mark the World Breastfeeding Week, the local association gathered a variety of stories from working mothers, which were then shared during this weekend's carnival. The

association said that it was also providing tailor-made souvenirs in order to promote nursing and childcare to the general public.

The Macau Breastfeeding Association was founded in 2013 and aims to promote the personal, family, social and environmental benefits of nursing. It also campaigns for more education about nursing, and calls for more resources to be allocated to the public for breastfeeding mothers.

A group of breastfeeding moms and advocates annually hold a flash mob campaign to promote acceptance of public breastfeeding by society.

Thousands of mothers around the world will breastfeed together for one minute in public this Saturday to mark World Breastfeeding Week, which runs from August 1 to 7.

EDUCATION

Over 200 students join UM's Portuguese Summer Course

THE 29th edition of the University of Macau's Portuguese Language and Culture Summer Course gathered 274 students this year, the university has revealed in a press release.

The three-week program was held for the first time at UM's new campus in Hengqin. Participants lived with Portuguese teachers on campus, providing them with first-hand experience of life in UM's residential colleges at the same time.

The course's closing ceremony was held last Friday, and saw participants gather to present a song and dance performance, demonstrating their Portuguese language skills.

The university reported that from among the participants, an American student said that the course included a variety of interesting activities, such as



Portuguese folk dancing, and visits to local museums, which enhanced their understanding of the Portuguese language and culture, while learning more about Macau's history.

UM said that it has been striving to enhance graduates' proficiency in both Chinese and Portuguese for over two decades. It added that the course achieved fruitful outcomes thanks to the quality of its curriculum, and the university's multi-cultural learning atmosphere.

The course was launched in 1986, and gathers participants from China, Japan, South Korea, India, Vietnam, Malaysia, Ethiopia, the United States, Hong Kong and Macau. The program covers four levels, namely beginners, basic, intermediate, and advanced.

The university said that over the past ten years about 3,000 students have participated in the program. This year's course was supported by the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau.

MACA Music Festival in town in September

THE MACA Music Festival 2015 – Guitar: the Soul of Music – will be held in Macau on September 20. It will be hosted by the Macau Association of Composers, Authors and Publishers (MACA).

The concert, which will be held at the Sands Theatre, is aiming to provide a platform for Macau and Hong Kong guitarists to join forces on stage, organizers stated in a press release. Guest performers include Hong Kong Redline Music band Supper Moment, Sun Entertainment band Zolarwind, singer-songwriter Terence Siufay, Macanese João Gomes, and the Winners of the MACA Song Writers' Quest 2015 Viviana Lo, and Bobo Loi, among others.

A special session will be performed in honor of Lawrence Lee, a former vocalist of local band Special Force, who pas-



sed away in 2013.

The festival will feature a collection of 30 guitars, which will be displayed at the entrance to the theater.

Tickets for the festival are now available for MOP100 (standard price). Discount tickets are also available at MOP50 for members of MACA, children under the age of 12, full time students, and adults aged over 65. Tickets are on sale at the office of MACA or via the Cotai Ticketing website.

The event is sponsored by the Macau Foundation and Sands China.

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Greek stock market reopens with 22 percent plunge



A man carries a closet past an abandoned branch of the National bank in Athens

Derek Gatopoulos, Athens

GREECE'S main stock index plunged over 22 percent as it reopened yesterday after a five-week closure, giving investors their first opportunity since late June to react to the country's latest economic crisis.

Greek bank stocks suffered the most, hitting or nearing the daily trading limit of a 30 percent loss. Markets in the rest of Europe, however, were largely unaffected.

The Athens Stock Exchange and Greek banks were closed on June 29, when the government im-

posed controls on money withdrawals and transfers to keep a run on bank deposits from causing the financial system to collapse. Banks have since reopened, while maintaining strict cash withdrawal limits.

Greece is expected to head back into recession in 2015 — after briefly emerging from a six-year contraction — due to the effects of capital controls and months of uncertainty over the country's future in the euro.

A monthly survey of business and consumer confidence, the Economic Sentiment Indicator, fell for a fifth consecutive month in July to its worst level since

October 2012.

"The negative development is the result of the sharp deterioration in business expectations in all areas, but also a recent and significant decline in consumer confidence," said the Foundation for Economic and Industrial Research, or IOBE, which conducts the survey.

Greece is currently in intense negotiations with bailout lenders in an effort to negotiate the terms of a massive new rescue package in the next two weeks.

The country needs to complete the talks and get more loans before Aug. 20, when it has a repayment to make worth more than 3

billion euros to the European Central Bank.

Deputy Finance Minister Dimitris Mardas did not comment on reports that Athens could seek a short-term loan to tide it over in case the talks have to be extended.

"The (negotiation) timetable is truly pressing ... We are preparing for what has been agreed upon, correcting any gaps that may appear," Mardas told private Skai television.

Negotiators from the European Union and International Monetary Fund are seeking faster cuts in early retirement plans set out by the government, and stricter conditions for a tax arrears payment program.

Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras is facing opposition to the new bailout from within his left-wing Syriza party that could force him to call an early election in the fall.

Syriza dissenters are openly calling for a return to the drachma, but failed last week to force an emergency party conference before the bailout negotiations are completed.

"The government has to choose between a humiliating agreement to sign a third bailout, or abandon the agreements reached in Brussels and seek alternatives for a positive course out of this crisis," former welfare minister and prominent dissenter Dimitris Stratoulis said over the weekend. **AP**

HSBC profit rises 10 pct, bank selling Brazil unit



HSBG Holdings PLC, Europe's biggest bank, said yesterday that strong performance in Asia helped to boost first-half profit by 10 percent. The bank also announced the sale of its Brazil business for USD5.2 billion.

Profit for the six months ending June 30 rose to \$13.6 billion, or 48 cents per share, said the bank which is listed on stock exchanges in Hong Kong and London. Revenue rose 4 percent from a year earlier to \$30.8 billion.

"Strong revenue performance across our Asia businesses helped drive increased profits," said CEO Stuart Gulliver in a statement.

Gulliver cited growth in commercial banking in Hong Kong and Britain and in wealth management in Asia.

Also yesterday, HSBC announced it is selling its business in Brazil to Banco Bradesco SA as part of plans announced in June to simplify its sprawling global operations. HSBC said it would keep an operation in Brazil to serve major corporate customers.

HSBC operates in 70 countries and has about 51 million customers.

The June plans call for the London-based bank to cut about 10 percent of its workforce, or some 25,000 jobs, and reduce annual expenses by \$4.5-\$5 billion.

The bank also has said it plans to sell its operations in Turkey.

HSBC has suffered a series of regulatory fines and crackdowns in Europe and the U.S. and wants to capitalize on Asia's rapidly expanding class of newly wealthy. The region accounted for about 75 percent of the bank's 2014 profit, even though only one-third of its staff are in the region.

Growth initiatives include expanding business in China's Pearl River Delta near Hong Kong and in Southeast Asia and in asset management and insurance. **AP**

corporate bits

FIVE SANDS RESTAURANTS RECEIVE WINE SPECTATOR RESTAURANT AWARDS

Lifestyle magazine Wine Spectator has awarded five restaurants at Sands Resorts Cotai Strip Macao and Sands Macao for their wine lists. Canton, North and Portofino at The Venetian Macao as well as Conrad Macao's Dynasty 8 at Sands Cotai Central received the Best of Award of Excellence, while Sands Macao's Copa Steakhouse received the Award of Excellence. These latest accolades follow awards from the 2015 China Wine List Awards.

"As in previous years, we are thrilled and honored to be recognized by Wine Spectator for the fourth year in a row," said Charles Newland, senior vice president of food and beverage and director of Paiza operations for Sands China Ltd. "We work tirelessly to ensure that every single guest who visits our restaurants has the best possible experience, and that includes offering the most extensive wine list we can. Awards like these reassure us that we are doing a good job for our guests and encourage us to continue working hard to maintain the highest standards."



THE PROMENADE WELCOMES MONCLER TO MACAU

The Promenade is welcoming European quilted jacket brand Moncler to Macau for the very first time. Renowned for its quality down jackets, Moncler is celebrating its arrival with a limited line of Nourry and Serre down jackets for men and women. Just 12 are available for exhibition and sale at The Promenade's Moncler boutique.

According to a Galaxy press release, Moncler garments are designed to live in the city with the spirit of the mountain. A distinctly Italian brand since 1952, Moncler was established in France and is recognized around the world by its cockerel logo.

The Moncler Fall/Winter Collection 2015/16 is on offer at The Promenade starting now. With cozy yet lightweight and luxurious items for both men and women, these collections traverse the changing seasons in comfort and style.



Portugal and Angola to open consulates in Guangzhou

NEXT October Portugal plans to reopen a Consulate General in Guangzhou, according to Portuguese daily newspaper Diário de Todos.

The newspaper reported the joint order of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Finance for opening the consular representation

In the first half of October a diplomat is due to start working on the setting up of the Consulate General

JOSÉ CESÁRIO



Angolan trader Mike (l) bargains with miss Zhou, a Chinese retailer in a wholesale market in Xiaobei Road, a commercial area in Guangzhou

had already been signed.

The Portuguese Secretary of State for the Communities, José Cesário, told the newspaper that, "In the first half of October a diplomat is

due to start working on the setting up of the Consulate General. He must select the facilities and then start recruiting staff."

The Consulate General of

Portugal in the capital of Guangdong province was previously in operation until September 1966, when the Cultural Revolution was unleashed.

The Republic of Angola is also due to open a Consulate General in Guangzhou this month. An order from the Angolan Ministry of Foreign Affairs named the diplomat João Baptista da Costa for the post of Consul General.

Ambassador Baptista da Costa worked at the Central Executive Services of the Foreign Affairs Ministry and previously served as Director General of the Institute of Angolan Communities Abroad and Consular Services.

Located very close to Macau, the city of Guangzhou is China's third largest with over 14 million inhabitants, is one of the most frequent destinations of Angolan citizens who travel to China for business and to study. **MDT/Macauhub**

Angolan diamond sales increase by 35 percent

SALES of Angola's diamonds have increased year on year by nearly 35 percent in the first half of this year, exceeding USD573 million and 4.2 million carats, according to the General Tax Administration cited by Angolan daily newspaper Jornal de Angola.

In the first six months of 2014 Angola sold US\$426 million of diamonds and produced 4.1 million carats. In 2014, it produced 8.6 million carats of diamonds whose sale earned US\$1.274 billion.

Three projects are underway in Angola to increase diamond production in the mid term: Tchizozo, valued at just over US\$200 million with guaranteed annual production of 2.5 million carats, Luaxe, estimated at US\$1 billion with annual production of about 10 million carats and Kimangue, which will offer greater knowledge about the existence of diamond resources in Angola for subsequent production.

Angola is one of the world's seven largest diamond producers. **MDT/Macauhub**

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Mainland's Airbnb valued at more than USD1b after funding

Lulu Yilun Chen and Edwin Chan

TUJIA.COM has raised USD300 million at a valuation of more than \$1 billion, as the Chinese vacation rentals site often compared with Airbnb Inc. pursues financing to bankroll a global expansion.

All-Stars Investment Ltd. led the latest round of financing, the startup said in a statement yesterday. The Chinese investment firm also backs smartphone maker Xiaomi Corp.

Tujia, which means "home on a journey," is focusing on expanding its services into Asian destinations popular with Chinese travelers, Melissa Yang, the co-founder and chief technology officer, said in an interview. Tujia expects to list 400,000 to 500,000 properties for rent by year's end, from more than 300,000 now, she said.

"We are speeding up our expansion to meet the demands of Chinese tourists," Yang said yesterday by phone. "Southeast Asia is a destination favored by Chinese tourists and so that's an area of focus for us."

Its main target markets include Thailand, Indonesia,



South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong, though the startup already connects homeowners with vacationers as far afield as Paris and Los Angeles.

While the startup is expanding, the Chinese economy

is projected to grow at its slowest pace in a quarter-century. Yang said any slowdown would actually help the business by encouraging homeowners to list their properties in order to earn additional income. Travelers would also tend

to seek cheaper alternatives to hotels, she said.

Regulatory Hurdles

Tujia, which is backed by investors including HomeAway Inc., Ctrip.com International Ltd., Lightspeed Venture Partners and GGV Capital, has

undergone three previous rounds of financing.

The startup often draws comparisons with Airbnb, the service that helped foster what's now referred to as "the sharing economy."

Tujia will be adding a new service that links users directly with homeowners, Yang said, drawing it still closer to its U.S. counterpart. In the past, the majority of the Chinese company's listings had been managed either by itself or third-party companies, instead of homeowners.

Tujia and its peers now face regulatory uncertainty around the world, as local interests consider the effect of on-demand services on traditional industries from taxis to hotels.

Unlike Airbnb, which in the U.S. has drawn the attention of New York enforcement agencies for not paying hotel occupancy taxes, Tujia has so far remained relatively free of regulatory tangles. It collects the money and pays hotel levies as well as taxes on the rental income on behalf of property owners.

It also differs from its American counterpart in that it offers a range of ancillary services, from property management and inspections of listings to cleanups after guests leave.

Yang said the senior Chinese leadership has expressed support for new online businesses, including online vacation rentals. **Bloomberg**

CHINA plans to tighten regulations governing the nation's 270 online-payment firms including Alibaba Group Holding Ltd.'s finance arm, dealing another blow to the booming business of Internet finance.

Under draft rules published on July 31, the central bank will limit the amount an individual can pay online to 5,000 yuan (USD805) per day through third-party payment accounts, unless the customer's identity can be verified by a security token and electronic signature. The People's Bank of China is seeking public feedback by Aug. 28.

The central bank last month imposed stricter rules on the industry, which analysts expected to lead to sweeping changes and failures among online lenders.

Internet finance is posing a rising challenge to China's traditional banks, which have lobbied for more regulation on third-party payments and peer-to-peer lending platforms. Online len-

Gov't curbs online payment in fresh blow to Internet finance



ders helped fuel a stock-market boom that drove the benchmark index up 152 percent in the year to June 12 before crashing.

According to Friday's draft rules, customers with at least five methods of verifications can open a so-called "comprehensive account," which limits annual online or mobile

payments to 200,000 yuan per person. With three to five verification methods, customer can only open a "consumption account," with an annual transaction limit of 100,000 yuan.

The new rules will put an end to the "unfair advantage" of Internet companies in competing with banks as they have

been benefiting from the absence of regulation for capital, liquidity and provision requirements, Ma Kunpeng, a Shanghai-based banking analyst at Sinolink Securities Co., said in a note on Saturday.

The third-party payment industry may consolidate following the new rules, China Inter-

national Capital Corp. analysts Mao Junhua and Sarah Tian wrote in a note published yesterday. "Strict client identification and transaction verification will demand more technological investments and imply more challenges for irregular players."

Third-party payment companies that have

the licenses to operate online lenders such as Alibaba's Zhejiang Ant Small & Micro Financial Services Group Co. and Tencent Holdings Ltd. will have an edge over other players which are not allowed to offer full financial services through third-party payment accounts, the analysts wrote.

Ant Financial's MYbank and Tencent's WeBank are among a wave of new private banks being licensed by the government to target small loans and aim to use facial-recognition software to let users set up accounts.

The rules on third-party payment accounts followed measures imposed last month on the nation's more than 2,000 peer-to-peer websites. Internet finance firms must park all client funds at established banks and must obtain approvals from financial as well as cybersecurity regulators, the PBOC said July 18. The sites must also provide sufficient disclosure and send risk reminders to customers, it said. **Bloomberg**

CHINESE authorities are investigating allegations of misbehavior made online against the controversial abbot of China's famed Shaolin Temple, the Associated Press reported yesterday.

Furthermore according to the Financial Times, the abbot, who turned the temple where kung fu was invented into a sprawling commercial empire, failed to turn up at a Buddhist meeting in Thailand this weekend fuelling speculation that he is under investigation after weeks of lurid allegations.

Shi Yongxin, the round-faced, yellow-robed "CEO monk" who heads the Shaolin Temple, has been accused by a former disciple of fathering several children out of wedlock and embezzling money, the FT reported.

The religious affairs bureau under the Denfeng city government says it was asked by the national body to look into the claims against Master Shi Yongxin.

"Our bureau takes this extremely seriously and will swiftly clarify ... and ensure a correct understanding of the matter," the bureau said in a one-sentence notice was issued late last week and viewed on the city government website yesterday.

The notice didn't specify any of the claims, although media reports say the accusations include that Shi fathered children with at least two women and embezzled temple funds.

A statement posted on the temple website dismissed the claims as "untrue rumors" fabricated by people seeking to harm Zen Buddhism. It said the temple has already contacted legal authorities about bringing

Bureau probing controversial Shaolin Temple abbot

a libel case against those publishing the claims.

"We hope the broad masses will respect the law, respect the reputation of others and uphold the fair and just legal social environment," the statement said.

Shi has been criticized by some for seeking to turn the temple and its famed kung fu fighting monks into a commercial enterprise.

He made an international splash in February when he announced plans for Shaolin to build a USD297 million complex in Australia that would include a temple, a hotel, a kung fu academy and a golf course.

The temple, built in the late fifth century, has defended aggressive commercialization as the best way to defend its heritage and spread its Buddhist message.

Religious activity in China is managed by government bureaucracies, and the revenue-generating potential of popular temples that survived several decades of Communist upheaval is often combined with suspicion over their potential influence.

According to the FT, Abbot Shi enjoyed the blessing of the authorities and was a member of the National People's Congress and vice-chairman of the state-backed Buddhist Association of China.



Shi Yongxin

HONG KONG

Bra protest over 'breast as weapon' conviction

DOZENS of bra-wearing men and women protested over the weekend in Hong Kong after a woman was jailed for assaulting a senior policeman with her breast, the BBC reported yesterday.

According to the news site, Ng Lai-ying, 30, had accused Chief Inspector Chan Ka-po of touching her breast during a protest in March.

But the court had ruled against her, saying she deliberately pushed her breast against him so she could accuse him of assault.

She was sentenced on Thursday to three months and 15 days in prison.

The BBC described how about 200 people joined the Breast Walk protest outside police headquarters in Wan Chai on Sunday - ei-



ther wearing exposed bras or waving them - saying that a breast was "not a weapon".

Ng had been taking part in a protest in Yuen Long against Chinese mainlanders visiting Hong Kong

to buy cheaper and better quality produce, a long-running controversial subject in the territory, the British news site stated.

She said that during scuffles with police, Chief Inspector Chan had tried to

grab her bag, but his hand had landed on her breast.

She accused him of indecent assault, but he in turn accused her of using her breast to assault him.

The Tuen Mun court found her guilty in July, with

magistrate Michael Chan Pik-kiu saying she had tried to damage the policeman's reputation.

She had used "her female identity to trump up the allegation that the officer had molested" her, the South China Morning Post quoted him as saying.

At her sentencing on Thursday, Mr Chan said that if he did not "hand down a deterring sentence, the public might mistakenly think it is a trivial matter to assault police officers during protests".

The magistrate has also said he received personal threats after the verdict.

The court said it had to deliver a deterring sentence.

Those protesting on Sunday said the ruling was "ridiculous".

Retired teacher James

Hon, who noted it was his first time wearing a bra, told AFP news agency: "We have come to this rather odd method to tell the world how ridiculous it is."

"The ruling is absurd. How can breasts be a weapon?" said activist Ng Cheuk-ling, saying she feared it would deter women from taking part in political protest.

"Police must review their guidelines to handle female protesters," she told AFP.

Another man told the SCMP: "The way I dress today looks quite ugly as a male, but it is not as ugly as the judgment, which is like pointing at a deer and calling it a horse."

The Post said the protest was illegal, but those taking part left peacefully before handing over a petition.

SINGAPORE

Lee seeks smart city revamp as old model ebbs

Sharon Chen

ROADS filled with driverless cars, every home linked with fiber-optic cable, gardens in the sky, shining towers of scientists creating the future. Singapore is at it again, trying to plan the next leap up the development ladder.

For 50 years, Singapore has punched above its weight class, thanks to a run of political stability, long-term planning, transparency and openness to investment. Along the way, the tiny Southeast Asian nation turned from a center of colonial administration and trading into a major container port, an oil-refining hub, an electronics manufacturer, and a banking center.

Now as the nation passes the half-century mark on Saturday, Singapore's challenges have evolved. Its founding father, Lee Kuan Yew, died this year, and his son, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, is betting billions of dollars on a "Smart Nation" plan to take the city-state to the next level. His task is to take a nation where more than 45 percent of the resident labor still do non-professional jobs like cleaning and staffing assembly lines, and turn it into a global center for research and innovation.

If he succeeds, the country could become a model for other advanced nations that share similar problems - rapid immigration, reliance on imported low-cost labor, an aging population, lackluster productivity, and rising social and health care costs.

"This is ultimately a long-term vision, there is still a significant proportion of the local labor force that may not have the necessary skill set," said Irvin Seah, a Singapore-based economist at DBS Group Holdings Ltd. who was part of a government-wide economic review in 2001. "We have often been a test-bed for many interesting economic development policies."

A glimpse of that vision can be seen in Jurong Lake District, a 360-hectare development area in the island's west where the government has installed more than 1,000 sensors to monitor and control everything from vehicles to trash cans. The sleepy fringe of the city is being transformed into a second central business district, with shiny waterfront condominiums, a new Science Centre and the terminal for a planned high-speed railway to Kuala Lumpur.

"Singapore has changed com-



pletely, the government does things very quickly," said Ho Soon Chye, a 60-year-old security officer who earns S\$7 (USD5) an hour guarding a Chinese temple in the city's financial district. "But things are so much more expensive. It's hard for those who don't earn a lot, and there are more foreigners taking our jobs."

Ho's generation grew up in a nation where people's lives visibly improved under the iron control of a government that made policy for almost every major industry and venture in the state. To make the transition, Lee needs to make the island's workers more efficient and more innovative and that may mean relaxing that control.

"The Singapore growth model will have to move beyond the institutional strength of the government to human capital," said Deyi Tan, a Singapore-based economist at Morgan Stanley. "Although the high level of government involvement has been an important feature of the growth model, it increases the economy's vulnerability to potential policy group think and erroneous sector bets."

Recent attempts that focused on attracting capital, rather than investment, have had mixed results. The nation has become a regional center for wealth management. The opening of two casinos after ending a four-decade ban boosted growth to a record in 2010.

At the same time, the influx of wealthy foreigners helped widen the nation's income gap to among the biggest in developed countries, while casino gaming revenue from high-end players have tumbled after a crackdown on corruption in China.

■ The sleepy fringe of the city is being transformed into a second central business district, with shiny waterfront condominiums and a new Science Centre

Meanwhile, Singapore's traditional pillars of growth are cracking. Electronics exports have repeatedly declined in recent years, labor productivity fell for a fourth quarter in the first three months of the year and the economy contracted the most since 2012 in the quarter ended June 30.

The latest economic restructuring began in 2010 and has fo-

cused on slowing the inflow of cheap foreign labor and urging companies to produce more with fewer workers.

"We will stop talking about productivity and start talking about efficiency," said Wai Ho Leong, a Singapore-based economist at Barclays Plc. "It's about smarter organization of the existing resources. The economy is now diverse enough to support pushing into more interesting areas."

In Singapore, those areas have gleaming tech parks with names that announce their focus - Mediapolis, Biopolis, Fusionopolis - which have lured entrepreneurs from overseas to help turn the city into a cauldron of innovation.

"I was a huge critic of Singapore, I felt there was no freedom of expression and in innovation that's very important," said Sibal Chowdhury, an Indian national who decided not to move to Singapore 16 years ago while working for Hewlett-Packard Co. in the city. "I see the opportunity now and that's the difference Singapore has made."

His startup, Urbanetic, gives city planners in poorer municipalities access to 3D-imaging for urban planning, and is awaiting approval on a S\$500,000 convertible loan from the Singapore government. In many cases, the government is trying to step back and become a facilitator and investor, rather than trying to drive the innovation.

"In the 90s they may have wanted to do the investment themselves," said Kay-Mok Ku, a partner at venture capital firm Gobi Partners who helped manage a S\$500 million interactive digital media fund in 2006. "Today we see them more maturing as an ecosystem builder."

Venture capital deals in the nation increased to \$454 million in 2013 from \$12 million in 2007, according to Morgan Stanley.

Lee's administration committed S\$16.1 billion to research and development from 2011 to 2015, a 20 percent increase over the previous period. Vertex Venture Holdings Ltd., a unit of state-owned investment company Temasek Holdings, has spent more than \$1.2 billion investing in more than 350 startups as well as venture capital and private equity funds globally. Temasek in July announced a joint \$200 million venture debt financing fund with United Overseas Bank Ltd.

"Our future will depend not only on adapting and perfecting what has been done elsewhere, but more and more on creating value in Singapore -- through new skills and technologies, original business solutions and a spirit of experimentation in society," Finance Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam said in a speech last Monday.

Advanced manufacturing, applied health sciences, smart and sustainable urban solutions, logistics and aerospace, as well as Asian and global financial services can help drive the city's growth in the coming years, the Singapore Economic Development Board said in an e-mailed response to questions. Its corporate investment arm, EDBI, is pursuing opportunities in sectors including digital health, energy efficiency, the Internet of Things and Robotics, the unit said.

"We are starting from a position of strength with global leaderships in multiple sectors," the EDB said. "To take us to the next stage, we will have to grow our innovation capacity by leveraging the capabilities of our local small and medium enterprises and forging deeper collaborations between local and international companies."

To bring its Smart City ambitions to fruition, the government partnered with Dassault Systemes as part of a S\$73 million project to create a virtual 3D copy of Singapore so government agencies, citizens and businesses can develop urban technologies. The company is banking on Singapore to prove Smart Cities can be a reality.

"People don't believe, they have to see," Dassault Systemes Chief Executive Bernard Charles told reporters on July 16. "Many countries and cities of the world are looking at Singapore as a great experimentation." **Bloomberg**

AP PHOTO



Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, center, is greeted by flood victims upon arrival at an indoor stadium turned into a temporary shelter, in Bago

MYANMAR

Suu Kyi visits flood-hit area

MYANMAR opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi visited one of the country's many flood-afflicted areas yesterday, raising her profile during a national disaster that could have consequences in this November's general election.

Over the weekend President Thein Sein visited the areas in central Myanmar hit hardest by flooding from almost continuous rains since mid-July. On Friday, he declared four areas of the country disaster zones, but only after he had come under a barrage of criticism in the press and on social media for failing to quickly mobilize relief.

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Re-

settlement announced yesterday that the death toll from flooding has climbed to 46, with more than 200,000 people affected in 11 of the country's 14 states and divisions. In addition to the damage to housing and farmland, infrastructure has been very badly hit, with roads and rail lines in many places cut, and telecommunication links broken.

Some coastal areas took a double beating late last week when a tropical storm whipped through, posing a particular danger to badly built and poorly located camps in Rakhine state for more than 100,000 people displaced in the past few years by ethnic conflicts.

Thein Sein, meeting Sunday with flood vic-

tims in northwestern Sagaing division, said waters were slowly receding and that he hoped people could soon leave evacuation shelters, many of which are located at Buddhist monasteries. He told state television that the government plans to begin reconstruction once evacuated people return to their homes.

Suu Kyi, whose National League for Democracy party is expected to pose a tough challenge to Thein Sein's ruling Union Solidarity and Development Party in the upcoming polls, on Saturday named its nationwide list of candidates. Suu Kyi will run for re-election to Parliament but is barred from becoming president under a constitution that

was drafted under military rule.

A referendum on the constitution was held in 2008 as Myanmar was hit by Cyclone Nargis, which killed about 140,000 people. The military government's inability to mount a useful relief effort, and initial reluctance to accept foreign assistance, did much to discredit its ability to run the country.

Suu Kyi yesterday used a small wooden boat to travel the flooded areas in Bago township, 100 kilometers northeast of Yangon. She visited several shelters for flood victims, where on behalf of a foundation named for her late mother, a former diplomat, she handed over donations of rice and drinking water. **AP**

FLIGHT MH370

Investigators for missing Malaysia flight meet in Paris

AP PHOTO



French and Malaysian investigators are meeting in Paris with a judge after the arrival of a wing fragment many hope will solve the mystery of missing Malaysia Airlines Flight 370. Experts are trying to determine whether the part comes from the plane, which disappeared on March 8, 2014, while en route from Kuala Lumpur to Beijing with 239 people on board. It was found on the French Indian Ocean island of Reunion and returned to the French mainland. Air safety investigators, including one from Boeing, have identified the component as a flaperon from the trailing edge of a Boeing 777 wing, a U.S. official has said. Flight 370 is the only missing 777 and many are convinced the flap comes from the ill-fated jet.

INDIA

Gov't orders telecoms to block more than 850 adult websites

India has ordered Internet service providers to block access to more than 850 adult websites in what the government describes as a way to protect social decency. N.N. Kaul, a spokesman for India's department of telecom, said yesterday the government was controlling easy access to pornography following a directive from the country's top court. Kaul said that while Internet service providers in India will have to bar access, users may still view the sites through virtual private networks and proxy servers. He said the move would protect children. The leaked government order asks service providers to block access to the 857 sites on grounds of morality and decency. The order has caused a furor with many in the country accusing the government of moral policing and infringing on personal freedoms.

INDIA

Monsoon rains kill more than 100 people

AP PHOTO



Heavy monsoon rains have killed more than 100 people in India in the past week and forced tens of thousands of people to take shelter in state-run relief camps, India's Home Ministry said Sunday. A cyclone struck the worst-hit state of West Bengal, where 48 people have been killed and nearly 215,000 villagers have been taken to relief camps after heavy rains triggered flooding, the ministry statement said. More than 200 medical teams using 120 boats have reached the area. Authorities said they have so far distributed over 400,000 drinking water pouches, in an effort to prevent the outbreak of water-borne diseases. Another 28 deaths were reported from western Rajasthan state. Rescue workers evacuated nearly 1,000 people to higher ground there. On Saturday, at least 20 people were swept away by a landslide that flattened up to 10 homes in Jurnol, a tiny village in the northeastern Manipur state, a spokesman for the National Disaster Response Force said Sunday.

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Bassem Mroue, Beirut

SYRIA

Gov't warplane crashes killing at least 17 people

GOVERNMENT air raids in a northwestern town in Syria and a subsequent crash by a Syrian warplane that slammed into a residential area there killed at least 17 people yesterday, activists said.

The raids on the town of Ariha came amid intense clashes between government forces and insurgents in the northwestern province of Idlib and the central region of Hama. The town, once a government stronghold, was captured by opposition fighters and Islamic militants in May. Government forces have suffered setbacks in Idlib province since March, including the loss of the provincial capital of the same name.

An activist group known as the Local Coordination Committees said the warplane crashed in a busy market, adding that it was not immediately clear whether it was shot down. The LCC said 27 people were killed and many others were wounded.

Rami Abdurrahman, who heads another activist group, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, said the plane crashed in the town center, destroying several homes and killing at least



Syrian citizens look for survivors under the wreckage of a destroyed building that was damaged after a government warplane crashed in the center of the town of Ariha, in the northwestern province of Idlib

17 people. He said some 70 people were also wounded.

The Ariha Today Facebook page posted a photo showing at least seven buildings reduced to rubble on a narrow street. It said 27 people were killed but that 12 of them have not been identified yet. The group also listed 55 wounded, including nine women.

The Observatory and the LCC said that at the time of the crash, the town was under attack by Syrian President Bashar Assad's air force.

An amateur video posted online by activists showed several damaged buildings, as well as parts of the plane that crashed. The video appeared genuine and corresponded to other Associated Press reporting of the events.

Syria's civil war began in March 2011. U.N. chief Ban Ki-moon said last week that at least 250,000 Syrians have been killed in the conflict so far. **AP**

FRANCE

Saudi king leaves Riviera after controversial beach closure

THE Saudi king's visit to his family's French Riviera mansion is over after weeks of controversy surrounding the closure of a public beach during his stay, the top state official in the area said yesterday.

Sub-prefect Philippe Castanet said that the small, isolated beach was reopened after the departure Sunday of King Salman following an eight-day stay.

Castanet said in an email to The Associated Press that the king had left as planned.

"There is nothing abnormal about his departure after eight days," Castanet said.

Workers were seen yesterday dismantling a temporary elevator leading from the beach to the mansion overlooking the Mediterranean. Among the conditions for ins-



Workers dismantle a temporary elevator on the public beach called "La Mirandole" located below a mansion owned by the Saudi royal family in Golfe Juan Vallauris, southeastern France

talling the elevator was that it would be dismantled once the king left.

The king arrived with an entourage of more than 500. Reports put his staff at 1,000, a number not of-

ficially confirmed. Despite complaints about the closure of the beach, the presence of so many Saudis was seen as a boon to the region, including nearby Cannes, where many stayed.

Jean-Noel Falcou, a town councilor in Vallauris who had mounted a petition against the closure of the beach, said in a blog post yesterday that King Salman had left for Morocco.

"All that for just eight days of vacation for the Saudi king," Falcou wrote.

Beachgoers had briefly won a halt to the preparations for his arrival, delaying the elevator construction and closure of the beach.

Falcou's group had planned to deliver a petition against the closure today, the anniversary of the 1789 abolition of feudalism in France. **AP**

QATAR

Kerry pushes Iran nuke deal with wary Arabs

Matthew Lee, Diplomatic Writer, Doha

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry brought the Obama administration's case for the Iran nuclear deal to wary Arab officials in Qatar yesterday.

Kerry was meeting with the foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the six-member bloc of Sunni-ruled Gulf Arab nations that fear Shiite Iran's increasing assertiveness in the region and the implications of the agreement. In addition to Iran, the ongoing conflicts in Syria, Iraq and Yemen were high on the agenda.

Opening the meeting, Qatari Foreign Minister Khalid al-Attiya said the gathering was being held in "very exceptional circumstances and challenges that have been unprecedented."

"We are facing many challenges in our communities and we are aiming to achieve peace and security and stability with the help of the United States," he said. He stressed the importance of keeping the region free "of any threats of nuclear weapons" and "the importance of the use of nuclear energy and technology for peaceful purposes" only.

U.S. officials rejected suggestions that Kerry was not visiting Israel this week because the administration has given up hope on convincing Netanyahu of the merits of the agreement. Kerry's main goal, however, is to follow up on a May meeting that President Barack Obama hosted for Arab leaders at Camp David. At that meeting, Obama promised Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates enhanced security cooperation and expedited defense sales to guard against a potential Iranian threat.

Just last week, the State Department authorized the sale to Saudi Arabia of USD5.4 billion in Patriot missiles and related equipment along with \$500 million in ammunition. Saudi Arabia is the largest and most influential member of the council and has been publicly supportive of the Iran deal, albeit with reservations.

Kerry has acknowledged concerns about Iran's behavior in the Middle East but says it would be easier to deal with if Iran does not develop a nuclear weapon. He said the agreement struck by world powers with Iran in Vienna last month is the best way to do that. **AP**

what's ON

'CREATION FOR MIND PERFECTION'
- CERAMIC ART BY DAI YU XIANG

TIME: 12pm-7pm (Mondays to Saturdays, Closed on Sunday and Public Holiday)

UNTIL: August 8, 2015

VENUE: AFA Macau, Estrada da Areia Preta No. 52, Edifício da Fabrica de Baterias N.E. National, 3rd Floor, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6064

MACAU HANDOVER HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS
DONATED BY LAU SIN PENG

TIME: 10am-7pm

(Closed on Mondays, No admission after 6:30 pm)

UNTIL: December 31, 2015

VENUE: Multi-function Hall,

Handover Gifts Museum of Macao

ADMISSION: MOP5

(Free on Sundays and public holidays)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

PHOTOGRAPHS OF MACAU OLD SHOPS

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

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(Tourism Activities Centre-CAT)

ADMISSION: Free

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Offbeat

HITCHHIKING ROBOT'S CROSS-COUNTRY TRIP IN US ENDS IN PHILLY



A hitchhiking robot that captured the hearts of fans worldwide met its demise in the U.S.

The Canadian researchers who created hitchBOT as a social experiment told The Associated Press that someone in Philadelphia damaged the robot beyond repair early Saturday, ending its first American tour after about two weeks.

"Sadly, sadly it's come to an end," said Frauke Zeller, one of its co-creators.

The kid-size robot set out to travel cross-country after successfully hitchhiking across Canada in 26 days last year and parts of Europe. It's immobile on its own, relying on the kindness of strangers. Those who picked it up often passed it to other travelers or left it where others might notice it.

It started in Marblehead, Massachusetts, on July 17 with its thumb raised skyward, a grin on its digital face and tape wrapped around its cylindrical head that read "San Francisco or bust."

The robot bounced around the Boston area and was briefly taken to sea. One day, it took in a Red Sox game, checking off one of the items on the bucket list created for it. But hitchBOT never made it off the East Coast.

The creators were sent an image of the vandalized robot Saturday but couldn't track its location because the battery is dead. They said they don't know who destroyed it or why.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
17:40	The Illusionist (Repeated)
18:30	TDM Sports
19:40	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Non-Daily Portuguese News
21:40	Documentary Series
22:10	The Illusionist
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

cinema

CINETEATRO

30 Jul - 5 Aug



MISSION IMPOSSIBLE ROGUE NATION

ROOM 1

2.15, 4.45, 7.15, 9.45 pm

Director: Christopher McQuarrie

Starring: Tom Cruise, Jeremy Renner, Simon Pegg,

Rebecca Ferguson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 131min

ANT-MAN

ROOM 2

(2D) 2.30, 7.15 pm

Director: Peyton Reed

Starring: Paul Rudd, Michael Douglas

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 117min

(1-2 AUG) TO THE FORE

ROOM 2

4.45 pm

Director: Dante Lam

Starring: Eddie Peng, Siwon Choi

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 117min

INSIDIOUS: CHAPTER 3

ROOM 2

4.45, 9.30 pm

Director: Leigh Whannell

Starring: Dermot Mulroney, Stefanie Scott,

Angus Sampson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 97min

INSIDE OUT

ROOM 3

(2D) 2.15, 5.45, 7.30 pm

Director: Pete Docter

Language: Cantonese (Chinese)

Duration: 94min

MINIONS

ROOM 3

4.00, 9.30 pm

Director: Pierre Coffin, Kyle Balda

Language: Cantonese (Chinese/English)

Duration: 91min

MACAU TOWER

30 Jul - 5 Aug

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE ROGUE NATION

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: Christopher McQuarrie

Starring: Tom Cruise, Jeremy Renner, Simon Pegg,

Rebecca Ferguson

Language: English (Chinese)

this day in history

1964 THREE CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVISTS
FOUND DEAD

The bodies of three civil rights workers missing for six weeks have been found buried in a partially constructed dam near Philadelphia, Mississippi.

Agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation found the three young men - two white and one black man - about six miles from the town in a wooded area near where they were last seen on the night of 21 June.

They were Michael Schwerner, aged 24, Andrew Goodman, 20, both from New York and James Chaney, 22, from Meridian, Mississippi. All were members of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) dedicated to non-violent direct action against racial discrimination.

As soon as the men were reported missing, the case was made top priority and codenamed Miburn (Mississippi burning). FBI agents headed by Major Case Inspector Joseph Sullivan were sent down to Mississippi to investigate the matter.

After a tip-off they found the men's burnt-out car two days after their disappearance.

The bodies have been taken to Jackson, Mississippi, for further examination into the cause of death. It is believed all three had been shot and the finger of blame is pointing at the Ku Klux Klan white supremacist group.

The three young men had left the CORE office in Meridian six weeks ago to investigate the destruction of a black congregation church in Longdale, Neshoba County because it was used as the site for a "freedom school".

The school was set up by Mr Schwerner as part of a wider civil rights campaign in Mississippi teaching black children, among other things, black history and the philosophy of the civil rights movement.

The Mount Zion Church was burned down on 16 June by members of the KKK searching for Mr Schwerner.

His wife, Rita, made an emotional statement to newspapers today.

She said: "My husband, Michael Schwerner, did not die in vain. If he and Andrew Goodman had been negroes, the world would have taken little notice of their deaths."

"After all, the slaying of a negro in Mississippi is not news. It is only because my husband and Andrew Goodman were white that the national alarm had been sounded."

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

On 13 October 1964 James Jordan, a member of the Ku Klux Klan, told FBI agents he had witnessed the murder and was willing to testify. A total of 19 men were arrested and charged. On 24 February 1967 Judge William Cox dismissed 17 of the 19 indictments but he was overruled by the Supreme Court and the so-called Mississippi Burning trial took place in October 1967.

It emerged that the three young men had been arrested by Deputy Sheriff Cecil Price on 21 June, then released from Neshoba jail in the middle of the night and attacked and killed by the KKK as they drove out of town.

Among those convicted were Deputy Sheriff Price, who got six years in jail. Ku Klux Klan leader Sam Bowers and KKK member Wayne Roberts were sentenced to 10 years each.

A film based on the FBI investigation was made in 1988 called Mississippi Burning.

In June 2005 Edgar Ray Killen, 80, was convicted of recruiting the killers. Killen was sentenced to 60 years in jail for the three manslaughters.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
You need to explore your world — your fierce, fiery energy demands it! See if you can push yourself out into new places and make new discoveries. A romantic partner may cross paths with you.

Taurus
April 20-May 20
Pay attention to finances today — things are a little troubling, maybe, but you can see yourself through this time if you are attentive. The situation hasn't reached its limit quite yet!

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21
You can't just sit around all day — you need to step up and do something fun! Your energy is perfect for parties, social engagements and anything that involves taking action in some way.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Even if it makes you feel like a jerk, you need to take care of your own needs first today. That might not be as easy as it sounds, actually, so if you have to work at it, don't worry too much.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You can't believe how ridiculous your peers are being. It could be friends, colleagues or even just strangers on the train, but the pettiness that surrounds you cannot be believed. Rise above it all!

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22
Your daredevil side comes out today and shows the world what you are capable of. You may find that you can pull off stunts that others would shy away from — even you, on any other day!

Libra
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
You need to do more than just hang out doing the same old thing — it's time for you to expand your world! Your great social energy should help you to make cool discoveries and meet new people.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
An impulse buy may seem inadvisable right now — but that just means that you need to ignore your advisers! You can't help yourself, but you may be able to at least get a good deal.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
You get some happy news early today that should keep a smile on your face at least through tonight. With energy like yours, it could come from almost any aspect of your life, so prepare for anything.

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You may almost lose faith today, but see if you can keep pushing even if all looks lost. Your energy demands focus and commitment, and when you deliver, you can snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Things are definitely on the upswing today, and you may be able to expand into new territory or find a new way to make the most of your assets. It's a great time to make new moves!

Pisces
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
You're feeling pretty sure of yourself right now — so much so that you might just need to get a reality check! One of your closest friends or oldest coworkers can set you straight if you need realignment.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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	7		9	4	2			
	2	4	6	7				
3	5	7		1				
			2			3		
1		9	6					
7	9	5						

Easy+

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5	6	1	2					
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	2		1				6	
6		8	4				1	
8			6			3		
		3	8	1				
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	8	2						3

Medium

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	8			1		4		
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1					9	8		

Hard

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					7	5		
					3			
	6		2				8	
7				3				
								1
			1	6				
5		2						
3						4		

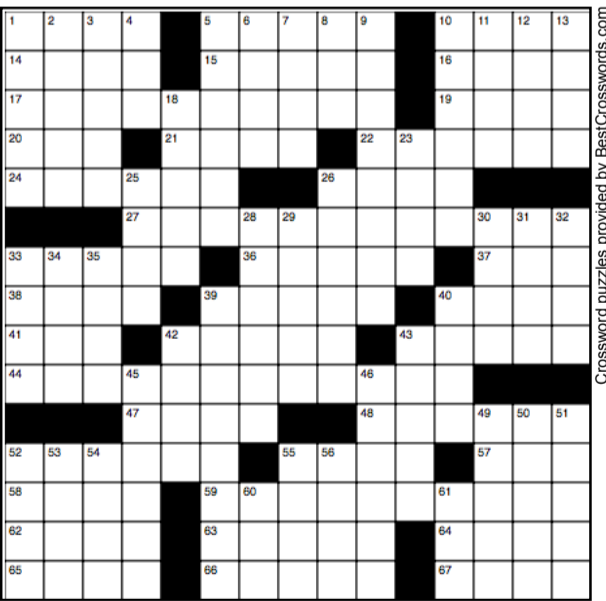
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	21	32	overcast
Harbin	22	28	shower/cloudy
Tianjin	24	30	moderate rain
Urumqi	28	38	clear
Xi'an	22	34	drizzle
Lhasa	11	25	overcast/cloudy
Chengdu	23	34	thundershower
Chongqing	23	33	clear/cloudy
Kunming	18	25	shower
Nanjing	25	31	clear
Shanghai	26	31	clear
Wuhan	24	30	clear
Hangzhou	25	32	clear
Taipei	26	30	clear/cloudy
Guangzhou	25	30	clear
Hong Kong	26	29	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	16	25	drizzle
Frankfurt	17	29	drizzle
Paris	16	28	cloudy
London	11	22	clear/cloudy
New York	19	30	clear/cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Nick and Nora's pooch; 5- Lost in Paris?; 10- Like ___ out of hell; 14- Queens stadium; 15- Actor Delon; 16- Choir attire; 17- Sweetheart; 19- Latin love; 20- Some MIT grads; 21- Met highlight; 22- Typewriter tape; 24- Tight swimsuit; 26- Actress Petty; 27- Capital of Utah; 33- Tiny amounts; 36- Conceals; 37- Corp. honcho; 38- In ___ of (replacing); 39- Arrested; 40- Floe; 41- Land in la mer; 42- Greased; 43- Gymnast Comaneci; 44- Murders; 47- Rick's love in "Casablanca"; 48- Greek goddess of the hearth; 52- Bad luck; 55- Desertlike; 57- Prince Valiant's son; 58- Longfellow's bell town; 59- Wound; 62- Comparison word; 63- Merits; 64- Part of A.D.; 65- Album unit; 66- Article of bedding; 67- ___-bitsy;

DOWN: 1- Remains of a fire; 2- Ovis aries; 3- Mock, annoy; 4- Swiss river; 5- Security round; 6- K-12; 7- ___ avis; 8- God, in Italy; 9- Intact; 10- Semitic language; 11- Explosive weapon; 12- Peek follower; 13- Small gull; 18- Triumphant cries; 23- Angers; 25- Biblical birthright seller; 26- Pretentious; 28- Muse of comedy; 29- Fabric woven from flax yarns; 30- Chilled; 31- Actress Hatcher; 32- Hindu discipline; 33- Bones found in the hip; 34- Lubricates; 35- Golf pegs, northern English river; 39- Meat-balls; 40- Low in pitch; 42- Scandinavian capital; 43- ___ lift?; 45- Assisting; 46- Need for liquid; 49- Spoil; 50- Removes wrinkles; 51- Harass; 52- Panama and bowler; 53- Roman emperor after Galba; 54- Algerian seaport; 55- Land measure; 56- Actor Auberjonois; 60- Exclamation of relief; 61- Skater Babilonia;



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PJ (Open line) 993	Telephone - Report 1000
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PSP 28 573 333	Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944	
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Dan Gelston, Long Pond, Pa.

NASCAR

Matt Kenseth stretches his fuel and steals a win at Pocono

JOEY Logano was the first leader to fade, his tank empty with three laps left.

Martin Truex Jr. struck E with two laps to go.

Kyle Busch knew his Toyota was about out, too, his shot at a fourth straight win tapped out on the last lap.

One by one, fuel woes cost the contenders. But the pain at the pump for drivers pushing toward the finish line was the break Matt Kenseth needed to coast past them all in the final thrilling laps Sunday (yesterday, Macau time) to win the NASCAR Sprint Cup race at Pocono Raceway.

The 400-mile race came down to fuel and which cars had it — and which ones didn't.

"I couldn't catch them anyway but I just wanted to get as close as I could in case they ran out," Kenseth said.

Once they ran out, Kenseth not only had enough left in the tank to win, he pulled off a celebratory burnout.

Kenseth's win continued the sensational summer run for Joe Gibbs Racing, making it five wins in the last six races. Busch, who had the other victories, failed in his bid to become the ninth driver since 1972 and the first since Jimmie Johnson in 2007 to win four straight Cup races.

Busch had won three straight Cup races and four of five, swept the Xfinity and Cup races last weekend at Indianapolis and won the Truck Series event Saturday at Pocono. Busch remained outside the top 30 in points, the second marker he needs to hit to qualify for the Chase.

"I wish I had saved a little more," Busch said. "I wish I had known (Logano) was that far from making it. It's a shame we couldn't get it done."

With a win, Busch would have



Matt Kenseth (20) spins in Turn 4 as Joey Logano (22), Tony Stewart (14), Kyle Larson (42) and Landon Cassill try to avoid him during a NASCAR Sprint Cup

had the points needed to at least crack the top 30, though he'd have to stay there for the final five races before the 16-driver field is set for the Chase for the Sprint Cup championship.

"We got greedy," Busch said. "But that's the position we're in."

Truex was 19th, Logano 20th, and Busch 21st.

"I was saving fuel just to cushion it," Logano said. "I thought I was going to be good and then I started running out and knew we weren't going to make it. We were so close. You

are counting down the laps in your head thinking you are going to make it but just didn't do it."

Brad Keselowski was second, followed by Jeff Gordon, Dale Earnhardt Jr. and Greg Biffle.

Kenseth had the only position that mattered, winning for the second time this season and for the first time ever at Pocono.

"I never thought I'd win at Pocono," he said.

Kenseth won the fuel gamble and survived a race that resembled a demolition derby: Cars,

crews, walls, equipment, all took beatings over 400 miles.

Kasey Kahne kicked off a race stuffed with carnage when his No. 5 got loose, found the opening to pit road and slammed the inside pit road wall. Kahne's hit buckled the wall, sent helmets flying and crew members scurrying for safety.

"I saw the people and I thought to myself that those guys need to take off running and get out of the way," Kahne said.

The race was red-flagged for about 15 minutes while the wall

was repaired. No one was hurt.

Pit road proved a dangerous place.

Keselowski slid through his pit stall and took out three members of his crew. His tire changer and tire carrier both jumped on the hood and the team jackman was clipped by the left side of No. 2 Ford. One tire got free and rolled down pit road before it came to a dead stop.

"If we could have, quite honestly, not had that issue during the race, I feel like we probably would have won today," Keselowski said. "That one is on me, so I feel really guilty for my team on that."

Kevin Harvick's No. 4 suffered engine failure only 20 laps into the race. Ricky Stenhouse's No. 17 was a crumpled mess after he slammed into Sam Hornish Jr. Kurt Busch spun, tried to save his car and was plowed into by Hornish. Trevor Bayne was knocked out of the race when a pipe went through his radiator. There were seven cautions in the first 70 laps.

The cautions slowed — or stopped — the race to such a crawl that it took an hour to complete the first 30 laps on the 2 1/2-mile track.

Gordon's farewell to Pocono has him the track's career leader in wins with six and laps led. He had his 32nd top-10 finish in 46 races at the track.

He's still looking for the elusive win that will clinch a Chase berth instead of hoping he can make the field on points.

"We're not in a safe position," Gordon said. **AP**

FOOTBALL

Russian club slams 'bigotry' by rival fans

RUSSIAN Premier League football team Anzhi Makhachkala has called for an end to "bigotry" in domestic football after its fans were abused by CSKA Moscow supporters.

Throughout CSKA's 1-0 home win over Anzhi on Saturday, CSKA fans shouted derogatory slogans about the Caucasus region. They also displayed a banner bearing the words "animal planet" with a modified Anzhi crest featuring an apparent anti-gay slur.

Anzhi fans typically hail from ethnic minority



Ghanaian soccer player Emmanuel Frimpong

groups in the Caucasus.

In a statement issued late Sunday, which was headed "we demand football is protected from

bigotry," Anzhi's general director Sergei Korablev asked law enforcement and football authorities to investigate the incidents.

"The CSKA fans' chants included insults directed at our club and fans, expressions which provoke hostility on the basis of ethnicity," he said.

"Unpunished aggression from fans will inevitably lead to a rise in the number of such incidents."

Some CSKA fans said they were also abused by Anzhi supporters with sexist chants directed at ethnic Russian women.

The Russian Football Union's disciplinary committee is due to meet Wednesday. It's not clear whether it will consider pu-

nishment for any incidents during the CSKA-Anzhi match. Previously, incidents of fan racism in Russian domestic football have been punished with partial or full stadium closures for the team concerned.

Last season, CSKA played all three of its Champions League group stage games behind closed doors as UEFA punishment for a string of racist and violent incidents involving the club's fans.

Tensions in Russian society often run high between ethnic Russians and ethnic minority

groups, including both foreign migrant workers and Russian citizens from the Caucasus region.

Ahead of Russia hosting the 2018 World Cup, anti-discrimination group FARE produced a report in February listing over 200 cases of racist or discriminatory behavior in Russian football over the previous two seasons.

Of those, the report described 22 cases of "anti-Caucasus displays" and 15 attacks on people from ethnic groups hailing from the region.

Black players have also faced abuse, with Zenit St. Petersburg striker Hulk saying last month that racism was present at "almost every game" in Russia. **AP**

opinion

World Views

Pankaj Mishra

CAN SINGAPORE SAVE DEMOCRACY?

Next Sunday, Singapore celebrates the 50th anniversary of its independence. There's much to celebrate - for some at least. The city-state is indeed "exceptional" (as its leaders like to say) as a global hub for finance, trade, travel, and shipping. Its mix of languages, which include English and Mandarin, has made it the perfect gateway to an economically resurgent Asia.

At the same time, inequality is rising. A Malay minority continues to lag behind Chinese and Indians. Antediluvian laws against gay sex and chewing gum remain in place.

Most damagingly, Singapore has a democratic deficit. The same party has ruled it for 50 years. The media is compliant. Politicians have long used defamation suits to bully dissenters and even intimidate the foreign press.

But it is complacent, and even dishonest, to judge the place without also asking what democracy really means today - and what it could mean for a small city-state like Singapore. The moral high ground should not be so easily accessible to citizens of present-day democracies.

Democracy has not been much in evidence in the workings of the European Union's technocrats, or indeed among the radicals of Syriza. Feckless wars, special-interest lobbyists, and political dysfunction have made the U.S. resemble late Byzantium rather than the small-town civic haven witnessed by Tocqueville. The runaway candidacy of Donald Trump exposes a growing constituency for demagogues in the world's oldest democracy.

India, routinely described as the world's "largest democracy," has been undergoing its own disturbing mutations. During the decades that Lee Kuan Yew pulled Singapore out of economic backwaters, many in the Indian middle class longed for a leader like him: an authoritarian technocrat who could make big decisions about economic development without going through parliamentary democracy's messy and arduous processes of deliberation, debate and consensus.

Modi is unlikely to match Lee Kuan Yew's achievements as an economic modernizer. In prosecuting his opponents, however, he has already surpassed the Singapore patriarch.

Any criticism of Singapore's democratic deficit should begin by acknowledging that there's hardly any resemblance between the original idea of democracy and its current incarnations in India, Europe and the United States.

In its classical Athenian form, democracy was a political regime where the equality of citizens was taken deeply seriously. The idea of citizenship itself was restrictive: It excluded women and slaves. But citizens in the Athenian city-state enjoyed a degree of control over their lives and protection from harm that their modern counterparts can only dream of.

The demos, the people, held actual power in the absence of such mediating institutions as a professional bureaucracy, executive, and legislature. By contrast, today's democratic states concentrate too much power in a few institutions and individuals.

The "traditional" media, mostly owned by corporate interests allied with political elites, and prone to sensationalism, was always a poor substitute for the Athenian assembly of free citizens that facilitated open discussion and debate. Social media seems more suited to self-promotion and slander than democratic symposium. As for routine elections, they increasingly validate Rousseau's sneer that the English were free once every seven years.

Rule by and for the people seems to have been replaced in many formal democracies with rule by and for the rich and powerful. It's clear now, after decades of rhetoric about democracy, that its original ideal - a community where human beings live together without holding power over another - can only be realized, imperfectly if at all, in small states.

Here, Singapore has a huge advantage over centralized and dysfunctional democracies. It's actually a functional city-state with a relatively small (5.5 million) and highly literate population, and it has no enemies.

Astute management appears to have assured Singapore's economic future. It can weather the shocks that make both haves and have-nots elsewhere crave the sweeping broom of authoritarianism.

The conditions certainly exist for Singapore to move from being a showcase of efficient authoritarianism to an exemplar of that much-invoked but nearly extinct thing: democracy. Its insecure leaders may feel no sense of urgency to change the status quo. But it's never too late for a 50-year-old nation-state to grow up.

THE BUZZ ISRAEL: THOUSANDS OF RARE HEBREW TEXTS SOON AVAILABLE ONLINE

The National Library of Israel will soon make one of the world's oldest surviving Hebrew bibles, dating back more than 1,000 years, available online.

Aviad Stollman, the library's chief of collections, said yesterday the Gaster Bible would go online as part of a project to digitize all of the 3,200 rare Hebrew manuscripts currently at the British Library. The National Library of Israel agreed with the

British Library in London to digitize its entire Hebrew manuscript collection, considered one of the largest and most significant in the world.

Most of the manuscripts date back to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance era and include rare texts of Hebrew literature, prayer books, bibles, Talmud or biblical commentary, as well as texts on the Kabbalah, or Jewish mysticism.

Walt Disney experts rebut dogged anti-Semitic allegations

WALT Disney was a complex figure, both celebrated and condemned, but allegations that he was a rabid anti-Semite are unproven, Disney experts said.

Talking to TV critics over the weekend about PBS' "American Experience" September documentary on Disney, composer Richard Sherman (Disney's "Mary Poppins," "The Jungle Book") dismissed such lingering criticism outright.

It's "absolutely preposterous to call him anti-Semitic," said Sherman, the son of Jewish immigrants. He and his brother Robert, his writing partner, were treated like sons by Disney, he said.

Historian and social critic Neal Gabler, author of "An Empire of Their Own: How the Jews Invented Hollywood," said he exhaustively researched Disney for the 2006 book "Walt Disney: The Triumph of the American Imagination."

"I saw no evidence other than the casual anti-Semitism that" was common to non-Jews during Disney's 20th-century era, Gabler said.

Sarah Colt, producer and director of the four-hour film



Walt Disney poses for a photo with an Irish setter

airing Sept. 14 and 15, said a documentary she made about Henry Ford, who she described as a "virulent anti-Semite," gave significant attention to his views.

But there wasn't any evidence that Disney held such attitudes, she said, although the label has been attached to the man who launched a still-expanding film, TV and theme park empire on the back of the Mickey Mouse cartoon character.

The panelists' agreement on that topic was in contrast with their differing views on other aspects of Disney's life and accomplishments.

"Everyone was terrified" of Disney as a boss, Gabler said, calling him a stern taskmaster who demanded adherence to his creative visions. More than panelist said that Disney didn't hesitate in firing workers he thought were falling short, labeling them "deadwood."

Sherman, who began working for Disney in 1960, said he never feared him and believed the entertainment titan may have relaxed and mellowed by that point after decades of achievement.

But others said that Disney was driven to the end, and that on his deathbed in 1966 he was filling in his brother, Roy, on his plans for the Epcot theme park at the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida.

Disney treated his employees like family, one panelist said, while another dismissed his kindness as a cynical ploy to get the most out of his workforce.

Sherman was steadfast in his defense of his former boss.

"He was a great soul, he really was. And he had his flaws, of course. Who doesn't? But the main thing is he was driven to do good things," he said. AP

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

AP Photo/Kirsty Wigglesworth



Rex and the kid. A massive bronze fibre glass model of a Tyrannosaurus Rex on display during a press preview at Christie's auction rooms in London, yesterday. The dinosaur estimated to sell for USD14,000-\$21,000 will be auctioned in the "Out of the Ordinary" sale on Sept. 10 in London.

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	10-30 Good	
High Density Residential Area	15-35 Good	
Ambient	20-40 Good	

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

ZIMBABWE A Zimbabwean safari operator accused of facilitating an illegal lion hunt for an American citizen in April denies the bow and arrow kill was unlawful and says his client acted in "good faith." Landowner Headman Sibanda said yesterday in a telephone interview with The Associated Press that his client, Jan Casimir Seski of Murrysville, Pennsylvania, didn't break any law during his Zimbabwean hunt. Sibanda says the relevant paperwork was in place for Seski's hunt.



SPAIN A Moroccan man died from suffocation while being smuggled into Spain by his brother inside a suitcase that was in the trunk of a car on a ferry crossing, authorities said yesterday. Francisco Jerez, spokesman for the Interior Ministry's office in Almeria, said the 27-year-old man was found late Sunday when his brother sought medical help for him just before the ferry arrived in the southern Spanish port. Jerez added that the brother, a Moroccan with a French passport, was arrested.

UK A British judge sentenced a former Citibank and UBS trader to 14 years in prison yesterday after a jury found him guilty of masterminding the manipulation of a key interest rate, the London Interbank Lending Rate, or Libor.

USA A hearse is carrying the body of Bobbi Kristina Brown to her final resting place. The car left a funeral home in Newark yesterday followed by two SUVs carrying relatives, including cousin Dionne Warwick. This is the same funeral home that handled arrangements three years ago for her mother, Whitney Houston. The funeral home declined to comment about Brown's expected burial next to her mother in Fairview Cemetery in Westfield. Police have closed the road leading to the cemetery.