



TAM WANTS TO MOVE SCHOOLS FROM HOUSING COMPLEXES
The Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture says that it is a priority to move schools from housing building podiums

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CHOW TAI FOOK NET FALLS 42 PERCENT
The company's profit plunged 42 percent amid weak demand in Hong Kong and Macau

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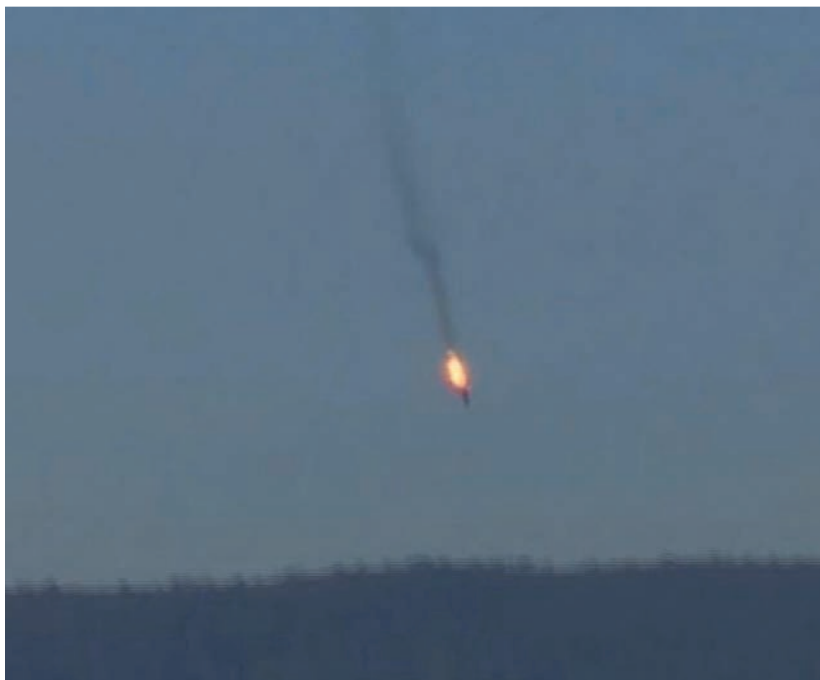
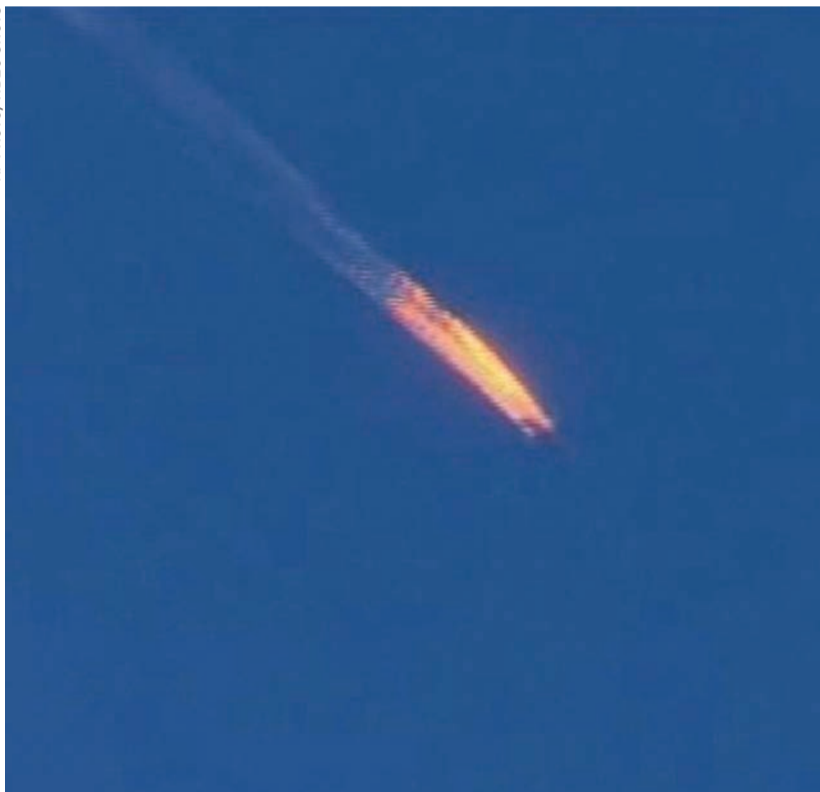
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CCAC renews suicide thesis, worker's widow contests

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AP PHOTO/VIDEO SHOTS



WORLD BRIEFS

NEW ZEALAND A court hearing in New Zealand on whether to extradite Kim Dotcom and three others who helped run the website Megaupload to the United States ends after nine weeks of arguments



MYANMAR A court in Myanmar has declined to drop a charge against a young woman accused of poking fun at Myanmar's army chief on Facebook, highlighting the challenges faced by the former dictatorship as it grapples with a social media explosion and other newfound freedoms of expression.



GERMAN prosecutors say they have widened their investigation of Volkswagen to include suspicion of tax evasion after revelations that some of its cars were emitting more carbon dioxide than officially reported.

More on backpage

SYRIAN CONFLICT

Russia confirms its jet shot down near Turkish border

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2016 POLICY ADDRESS

Sonia Chan asked to introduce measures to lift civil servant morale

Aries Un

A letter by the late Commission Against Corruption investigator's wife was brought into the legislature's debate yesterday afternoon by lawmaker José Pereira Coutinho, shining the spotlight on the alleged pressure plaguing civil servants.

As lawmakers debated with the Secretary for Administration and Justice Sonia Chan in the Legislative Assembly over her 2016 action plan for the second and final day, multiple lawmakers inquired whether the senior official would introduce initiatives to improve civil servants' morale, which has allegedly hit a record low.

Coutinho, also president of the Macau Civil Servants Association, claimed that "many officials rushed to retire" due to "lack of welfare support."

He lashed out at the government for failing to implement a mechanism to penalize senior officials for malpractice.

"Usually frontline staff are the only ones to be held accountable, like the pair in the public hospital document leakage earlier. They were fired off more quickly than the



Sonia Chan (center)

racing carts," he stated, indicating that less qualified staff bore the brunt for errors most of the time.

Coutinho highlighted the recent case of a CCAC worker's suicide (see text below), declaring that he was unconvinced by the authorities' findings and demanding an

independent inquiry into the abrupt death, before which the 43-year-old investigator enjoyed a family holiday in Australia.

"Could the truth come to light only after a recognizable task force looks into the incident?" asked the lawmaker when he met journalists on

the sidelines of the debate.

A month has passed with no updates from the authorities, except when the anti-corruption agency's head André

"interfere with how the agency coped with cases" and a "lucid procedure of inquiry would give confidence to the public."

The lawmaker also urged for CCAC's continued presence in the legislative assembly, in order to keep lawmakers better informed of its anti-corruption efforts.

"Instead of investigation and individual cases, they could let us know their working situation, what support they need and the complex issues they have encountered," he said.

Among the 33 lawmakers who received copies of the letter from the legislature's head earlier, Coutinho was the only one to raise the demand in the debate. Given the limited attention on the incident, he believed it would be impossible to force a hearing on the matter in the legislature.

Usually frontline staff are the only ones to be held accountable.

PEREIRA COUTINHO

Cheong downplayed the death two days after the incident, on the sidelines of a function.

The lawmaker generalized it as the government's usual style in response to sensitive issues. He also stressed that it was not their place to

CIVIL SERVANTS REGIME REVIEW CONTINUES

THE ADMINISTRATIVE authorities will continue to review the system next year that decides civil servants' promotion requisites and salary, in order to explore the extent of possible adjustment to the regime, said the secretary in response to low morale among civil servants. She also promised to address civil servants' overtime for better work-life balance.

THE widow of a Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) worker who allegedly committed suicide one month ago sent a letter to the president of the Legislative Assembly, questioning the authorities' investigation and its conclusions.

"In the report, the only persons that were investigated were the ones in contact with my deceased husband during the week prior to his death. (...) Why weren't other persons investigated?" the widow asked, in a letter that Ho Iat Seng shared with lawmakers on request. She added

Widow's letter denounces management, CCAC reiterates suicide thesis

that her husband suffered panic attacks in the days prior to his death, having reportedly told her that he was "under great pressure at work." The widow said she had spoken with CCAC staff members and was told that the workers are "extremely unsatisfied with the [CCAC] management procedures."

CCAC issued a statement yesterday in response to media inquiries,

reiterating that in accordance with the findings of the criminal police in their preliminary investigation, "the case was considered a suicide."

In the reply, CCAC states that it conducted its own probe in tandem with the criminal investigation. A task force was set up to conduct an internal investigation to find the circumstances behind the commission worker's fatal leap off the Dynasty

Plaza building.

Commissioner André Cheong delivered the investigation report to the Chief Executive on November 6, and sent another copy to the deceased's family.

The CCAC acknowledged that it received the widow's letter through the Office of the Chief Executive last week, and will formally answer all questions about the internal investigation report.

RENATO MARQUES



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Alexis Tam says moving schools from housing complexes is priority



Alexis Tam (center) inspects the Caritas School accompanied by Paul Pun (2nd from left)

Renato Marques

THE Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, says that it is a priority to move schools from housing building podiums to specific “open space” locations built specifically for the purpose in a place where the students can “see the blue sky.” Tam gave more details on a plan first presented by the Chief Executive Chui Sai

On during his Policy Address presentation.

Talking to journalists on the sidelines of yesterday’s visit to the Caritas School located in the NAPE district, Mr Tam explained that currently many institutions operate in conditions that he considers “not adequate” for educational purposes, i.e. without a patio or an outdoor area. The secretary also thinks that these institutions that operate in housing buildings

are somehow “disconnected” from other social services and need to be integrated in a wider perspective. The project to move them to facilities deemed appropriate will be done in three phases, namely short, middle and long-term. In the first phase, priority will be given to schools that teach students with special needs.

“I think that in Macau we have enough resources to be able to give the right response to the requirements of

students with special needs so we are going to take the schools out of the building podiums, especially the ones for special education. We are going to give priority to these kind of schools,” said Mr Tam.

In this first phase, the secretary expects to move fifteen schools that will occupy several land lots in the Taipa (Jardins de Lisboa area) and Coloane areas, namely in the surroundings of Seac Pai Van.

As informed also by Mr Tam, the first two schools involved in this process will be the Caritas School that he visited yesterday and the Women’s General Association school, currently operating in Rua do Campo.

“We plan to move on this first phase a total of 15 schools and we are also studying the possibility of combining that with other social services such as for the elderly, people with handicaps, among other social services,” the secretary said.

Questioned about the recent criticism made in a Audit Commission report regarding the lack of transparency over subsidies attributed to private schools by the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau, Alexis Tam admitted that are still issues that need to be addressed and that there is space for improvement. He stated that the services will work on issuing updated and clearer school guidelines while closely monitoring the subsidies.

Questioned by the Times over Caritas Macau’s most pressing needs regarding its activities, Mr Paul Pun, the institution’s secretary general, stated that it was “manpower, especially carers for the elderly, people with mental illness and the physically disabled,” adding that currently the number of staff working at the school is still adequate to meet their needs.

Regarding the possibility advanced by Mr Tam to move the Caritas School to Taipa, Mr Pun said, “We need to see the final announcement from the government but changes are always good for the development of the school.”

Alexis Tam will present the Policy Address for the areas under his supervision this December 3 and 4.

USJ delegation visits Foreign Affairs Ministry

A delegation of over 60 professors, staff and students from the University of St. Joseph (USJ) visited the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China on Monday. According to a USJ press statement, the delegation was warmly received by senior officials and directors, who delivered presentations on special topics ranging from foreign affairs to international conventions and laws that apply to the SAR. The directors then answered questions on the roles of universities in public diplomacy, international cultural exchange, and making Macau a platform for cooperation between China and Lusophone countries. Among the visiting delegation was Ambassador Carlos Frota, who recalled his pleasant experiences working with the Office as the Consul General of Portugal, after the territory’s handover.

HK lawmakers want ferries like Macau’s



An HKSAR Legislative Council transport panel meeting yesterday heard lawmakers criticize the government for reacting too slowly to the Oct. 23 collision that closed Kap Shui Mun Bridge and left thousands of travelers unable to reach or leave the airport. The government tried to arrange ferries to transport passengers to and from the airport, but was unable to dispatch vessels even after the bridge re-opened. Lawmakers urged the government to arrange for high-speed ferries because of their superior speed and passenger capacity, pointing to those currently serving Macau ports as an example. Federation of Trade Unions lawmaker Wong Kwok-hing declared: “The incident has clearly shown that the government lacks the mindset to react” to such incidents. “The stranded passengers were like ants in a hot pan,” said Civic Party lawmaker Kwok Ka-ki. “It was an international joke.”

Rising star defeats Srikanth in 1st round

Indonesia’s rising star Jonatan Christie defeated the badminton world’s seventh-best player yesterday at the Tap Seac Multisport Pavilion during the first round of the Macau Open. The 18-year-old Indonesian demonstrated good technique and a powerful offense in defeating India’s K. Srikanth, winning the two matches 21-16, 23-21. “It’s a very good result [...] and it’s also one of my biggest upsets so far,” said Jonatan, who is ranked world number 40. “I’ve studied Srikanth’s game through video recordings and I knew how to take him on.” Three other Indonesian youngsters – Hong Kong Open semi-finalist Anthony Ginting, Ihsan Maulana Mustofa and Firman Abdul Kholik – have also made it to the second round.

Extended working hours and more staff for public healthcare

ALEXIS Tam also revealed some of the plans related to health, namely regarding the new Islands Hospital and the expansion of services in the current public hospital.

According to the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, the hospital will need about 2,000 workers, a number that cannot be hired at once. “The staff for the new hospital needs to be hired and trained in advance; this cannot be done from one day to the next. This year we already hired over 500 people to work on the public hospital and other healthcare services,” he mentioned.

Mr Tam said that the new staff hired this year alone allowed, among other things, the extension of some public hospital services that now operate only until 10pm as well as the expansion of the Tap Seac and Taipa healthcare center working hours. “We are working on this, you need to give us some time. This year we already performed several changes that are helping the citizens of

Macau to have better access to health services,” he continued.

“We will fully operate the public hospital and make it work like two hospitals. The public hospital is used to running in the daytime and does not run at night. However, we will expand the working hours and allow residents to access specialty services in an easier way. So the public hospital will have extended working hours, even at night,” he pledged.

Regarding the medical staff that the government intends to hire, the secretary clarified that local healthcare workers will always have recruitment priority. However, in case of shortage, there are protocols being established mainly with four countries and regions, namely Hong Kong, mainland China, Taiwan, and Portugal.

In order to solve the shortage of medical specialists, the government is also planning to set up a specialist medical school in order to train a larger local workforce.

Int'l clean energy forum this Dec

The International Forum for Clean Energy (IFCE) will host its fourth session in Macau from Dec. 15 to Dec. 17. Scientists from the Chinese Academy of Engineering, Chinese Academy of Sciences and related think-tanks will discuss China's energy strategy. According to Xinhua, they will debate topics such as "innovation of and clean technology of coal-fired power generation." The Macau-based IFCE is a non-profit international organization established in April 2012 which aims at policy research for clean energy development.

Halved profits for Sa Sa

Sa Sa International Holdings Ltd. declared a net profit of HKD153 million for the six months prior to Sept. 30, down 54.96 percent from a year earlier, representing HKD0.054 per share. The retail value in Hong Kong and Macau declined 11.1 percent from HKD3.386 billion to HKD3.01 billion, while the company's profitability slid from 44.6 percent to 43 percent. The company attributes the latter to the discontinuation of its discount promotion amid slowing market development. Its turnover declined 10.6 percent from HKD4.226 billion to HKD3.7779 billion.

Chow Tai Fook net falls 42 percent as China slowdown hurts luxury

Daniela Wei and Annie Lee

CHOW Tai Fook Jewellery Group Ltd., the world's largest publicly traded jewelry chain, reported first-half profit plunged 42 percent amid weak demand in Hong Kong and Macau as China's economic slowdown hurt sales of luxury retailers.

Net income fell to HKD1.56 billion (USD201 million) for the six months ended September from HK\$2.69 billion a year earlier, the jeweler said in a statement Tuesday. The company warned Nov. 10 its profit will plunge as much as 50 percent mainly due to weakness in the two cities, increased sales of lower-margin gold products and unrealized hedging losses.

Chow Tai Fook and other high-end retailers will continue to shut down unprofitable shops in Hong Kong, as the market grapples with the impact of China's crackdown on corruption, economic slowdown and stock market volatility, said Michael Cheng, re-



A customer looks at gold jewelry, center, as employees work inside a Chow Tai Fook store

tail and consumer leader for the Asia-Pacific region at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP.

In contrast to the fast-paced expansion plans of retailers during the peak growth period from 2009 to 2012, "they now need to reduce shops to optimize their operations," Cheng said via telephone before the result announcement. Luk Fook Holdings International Ltd., another Hong Kong-based jewelry chain, also warned this month of a 40 percent year-on-year slump in profit.

U.K. luxury retailer Burberry Group Plc said earlier this month it's scaling back its big-

gest store in Hong Kong, while Louis Vuitton, part of France's LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton SE, is reviewing eight of its stores in China's second-tier cities, according to a person familiar with the situation.

Chow Tai Fook shares fell 1.2 percent to HK\$5.88 at the close in Hong Kong. The shares have plunged 43 percent year to date, against the 4.3 percent decline in the benchmark Hang Seng Index.

The company reported sales in the six months ended September fell 4.1 percent to HK\$28.1 billion, while same

store sales, referring to outlets open at least a year, slumped 18 percent in Hong Kong and Macau. Same store sales in mainland China rose 0.1 percent.

It declared an interim dividend of 8 Hong Kong cents per share and a special dividend of 42 Hong Kong cents per share.

Hong Kong, once seen as a shopping paradise for mainland Chinese visitors, has seen retail sales slump as visitor numbers declined. Chow Tai Fook plans to close a few more shops in the city the second half of this year, Chairman Henry Cheng said in a briefing in September. It was seeking a 20 percent reduction in rent for some of its stores in the city when contracts come up for renewal this year, Managing Director Kent Wong had said in an interview in May.

Chow Tai Fook's retail network expanded to 2,286 points of sales as of end-September, with a net addition of 29 during the period, it said yesterday. **Bloomberg**

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European Chamber of Commerce to steer away from just trading

THE Macau European Chamber of Commerce (MECC) will begin a “new phase of cooperation between China-Macau-EU, giving more importance to a Legal Cooperation Program and step up cooperation in research and innovation,” Mr Vincent Piket revealed this week at a ceremony celebrating the chamber’s second anniversary.

The head of office at the European Union (EU) to Hong Kong and Macau mentioned that “bilateral trade between the EU and Macau is strong, showing that European products and companies continue to be in high demand in Macau. However, we must look beyond trade and build a strong and diverse economic partnership for the long term.”

According to Mr Piket, the plans for the Legal Cooperation Program are part of the upcoming third phase of the cooperation scheme, which is

determined by local officials who identify potential areas of development.

MECC will provide the legal expertise to develop those areas. “It is not a new program. We had it for quite a while – almost a decade already – but now we are reaching the third phase of it and we are very happy to arrive at this phase,” Mr Piket said.

MECC intends to play an important role in fields such as the training of interpreters, as requested by the Macau government. The EU office has seconded this need.

“This is another example of a very practical hands-on activity of cooperation between the



EU and Macau,” explained Mr Piket. “The Macau government needs these interpreters and we [need them too] in Brussels for all the member states whenever we meet with China, which is very often. So we are coope-

rating in the training of these interpreters, and we also just signed a new phase of this program earlier this month.”

“We are finding ways to build around the big core gaming industry in Macau. We are trying

to support the government in developing new ideas and models building on that core, and in the specificities of the European business interests in Macau and Europe,” the EU office head added.

The new president and vice president of the MECC Board of Directors were introduced at the ceremony: Pedro Cardoso, the CEO of Banco Nacional Ultramarino, and Professor Kevin Thompson, College Master of Moon Chun Memorial College at the University of Macau, respectively. As the Times reported, both were elected last October 15, after the expiry of the previous incumbents’ two-year mandate.

Union Gaming says casinos ‘unlikely’ to offer Alipay

UNION Gaming analyst, Grant Govertsen, has said that although Alipay, an affiliate of Alibaba Group, is now legal for use in Macau, casino operators are unlikely to offer it.

“We would not expect them [casino operators] to offer Alipay Wallet in-person payments on casino floors given how contentious that would be – not to mention potential legal ramifications,” said Govertsen.

Third-party payment service Alipay is now reportedly available in 107 stores in Macau, with more than 51 local brands using the service’s QR code payment system. The company has over 550 million registered users, and facilitates over 8.5 million online transactions exceeding RMB2 billion dai-



ly. The Monetary Authority of Macau confirmed the institution’s local operating permit on Friday.

Govertsen said that they believe, “most merchants accepting Alipay are establishments such as restaurants and cafes; although Macau’s largest department store and some electronics retailers are also on board.”

“We do not believe any pawn shops have begun to offer Alipay [yet]. We would, however, expect pawn shops to ex-

plore the Alipay option over time, especially if any further UnionPay restrictions are put in place,” he added.

The MSAR government has limited overseas cash withdrawals from China’s Union Pay service to a total of RMB 50,000 until the end of this year. The limit will increase to RMB100,000 per year in January 2016.

On the other hand, Alipay Express can approve up to RMB 5,000 per transaction and a total of RMB50,000 per month.

Meanwhile, Standard & Poor published a new report on Macau’s gaming sector, concluding that a “meaningful rebound in gaming revenue” is unlikely to occur in 2015.

“A newly introduced cap on overseas cash withdrawals through China UnionPay [...] may further undermine demand in the Macau gaming industry,” the financial services firm said. **Staff reporter**

Price for alcohol and tobacco up 35pct from last year

THE Composite Consumer Price Index (CPI), which records changes in prices as a measure of inflation, was 106.94 for October 2015, based on information released by the Statistics and Census Service. This caused year-on-year growth to slow to 4.16 percent. Compared with October 2014, a notable increase of 34.29 percent was observed in the price index of Alcoholic Beverages & Tobacco. The price indices of Education and Household Goods & Furnishings increased by 8.96 percent and 6.96 percent respectively, while Clothing & Footwear and Communication saw marginal decreases of 1.89 percent and 0.16 percent.

Compared with the previous month, the Composite CPI for

October 2015 was up by 0.42 percent. Through a monthly comparison, it can be observed that the price indexes of Transport, Clothing & Footwear and Household Goods & Furnishings rose by 1.72 percent, 1.5 percent and 1.11 percent respectively. The price index of Food & Non-Alcoholic Beverages increased by 0.27 percent month-to-month, while that of Alcoholic Beverages & Tobacco decreased by 3.84 percent.

The average Composite CPI for the first ten months of 2015 is up 4.73 percent when compared to the first ten months of 2014. Furthermore, in the 12 months ending in October 2015, the average Composite CPI increased by 4.91 percent, compared to the same 12 month period last year.

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MGM Resorts, Las Vegas Sands wager on Georgia to lift fortunes

Steve Matthews and
Christopher Palmeri

MGM Resorts International expects to find out any day whether its investment in 16 lobbyists to push legalized gambling into Georgia might pay off.

MGM Resorts, Las Vegas Sands Corp. and other big U.S. casino companies see Atlanta as one of the biggest potential growth markets in an industry suffering from overcapacity. The operators and their lobbyists have spent the fall meeting with state lawmakers to extol the potential economic benefits - specifically, how an estimated USD288 million in taxes could shore up Georgia's Hope scholarships, a merit-based education program funded by a statewide lottery.

The committee for the Hope program is expected to report its

Atlanta has all the makings to support a top regional gaming property - population, wealth, propensity to gamble.

CHAD BEYNON
MACQUARIE BANK LTD, NEW YORK



conclusions by Dec. 1 and, if encouraging, the legislature could send the issue to voters for approval next year. MGM Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Jim Murren, who testified last month at a joint Georgia Senate and House hearing on the Hope fund, said the company could consider building a \$1 billion-plus casino in the state. Sheldon Adelson, the billionaire chairman and CEO of Las Vegas Sands, has also had meetings with Georgia officials and is interested, according to his spokesman Ron Reese. Opponents in Georgia are working to counter the bright promises, by pointing to the rising unemployment from closed casinos in the faded gambling hub of Atlantic City, New Jersey.

"It didn't turn out to be the goose that laid the golden egg," said Cyndy Hartman, who grew

up on New Jersey's coast and testified this month before Georgia legislators. "There has been a horrible decline."

An analysis on the Georgia potential for MGM Resorts by industry consultants Marquette Advisors concluded casinos could generate \$2.4 billion in annual revenue and more than 30,000 permanent jobs.

"Among the largest urban metro markets in the U.S., Atlanta would be a standout," said Adam Trivison, analyst with Gabelli & Co. in Rye, New York.

Gabelli funds are investors in both MGM Resorts and Las Vegas Sands. Other Wall Street analysts agree.

"Atlanta has all the makings to support a top regional gaming property - population, wealth, propensity to gamble," said Chad Beynon with Macquarie Bank

Ltd. in New York.

A referendum could go to Georgia voters next November. The legislature could allow individual localities to decide, similar to the way the state handled the question of liquor sales on Sunday, said state Representative Ron Stephens of Savannah, who has led the push for gambling.

"Times are changing," and the need to raise money for education is paramount, Stephens said. "The only way to fund Hope scholarships is through gambling."

Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed is not ready to back the effort, noting the city has 5.5 percent unemployment and is succeeding at luring relocations, including the North American headquarters of Mercedes-Benz. A recent visit to a downtown Detroit casino wasn't encouraging, he said.

"I am really uncomfortable with it," Reed, a Democrat, said in an interview. "What I see in the casinos is people getting off work from Ford and Chrysler with their ID badges on." Even so, "I've got to remain open and continue to listen."

Governor Nathan Deal, a Republican, opposed a gambling proposal that would have collected a 12 percent tax for education, though he told the Atlanta Journal-Constitution that 24 percent or more "will be a totally different proposition."

The U.S. casino industry, at roughly \$37 billion a year, has struggled to recover from the financial crisis of 2008, which prompted many consumers to tighten their discretionary spending. Young people aren't playing slot machines like their parents did and betting per trip has only recently resumed its rise.

Mississippi casino revenue fell 26 percent to \$247 million in 2014 from 2007, before rising to \$250 million in fiscal 2015. Gambling revenue at Harrah's in New Orleans dropped to \$340 million last year from \$367 million in 2009. Florida, which already has Indian casinos, has rejected expansion.

Sluggish national growth hasn't stopped states from expanding their gambling options as a way of raising tax revenue. New York, Ohio, Massachusetts and Illinois are just some of the states that have either legalized casino gambling or sharply increased the availability of slot machines in recent years. New casinos in Pennsylvania and New York have taken business from Atlantic City, which saw four of its 12 casinos close last year. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

5TH MACAU SHOPPING FESTIVAL AT SANDS SHOPPES



The Macau Shopping Festival returns for the fifth year from Dec. 5-31 and promises savings across a huge range of brands. Sands Shoppes is once again supporting the fes-

tival of fashion by opening up its 650 duty-free shops across three interconnected malls to be part of the event.

Luxury travel retailer DFS Group (DFS) will launch the

seventh annual DFS Masters of Time exhibition on December 5, with a gala event at T Galleria by DFS, Macau in partnership with the Shoppes at Four Seasons. The collection of over 400 watches and jewelry pieces from 28 brands will allow shoppers to experience a range of watches and jewelry all in one place. The curated collection will be exhibited in store at T Galleria by DFS, Macau, Shoppes at Four Seasons and available for sale until February 29, 2016.

A "Lucky Draw on Arrival" will also offer prizes including a shopping experience with a complimentary night at The Venetian Macao plus Sands Shoppes shopping vouchers worth MOP 1,000, a stay at the Holiday Inn Macao, Cotai Central and gondola ride vouchers.

WYNN SUPPORTS WALK FOR A MILLION



As part of its commitment to the community, Wynn continues to support the annual "Walk for a Million" charity event. Yesterday, a

donation of MOP 500,000 was once again made to the Charity Fund from the Readers of Macao Daily News. A cheque presentation

ceremony was held yesterday at Wynn Macau, where a delegation from the Charity Fund including Mr. Vong Kok Seng, President of the Directive Council, Mr. Chui Ka Wing, Mr. Hoi Kin Chong, Mr. Lei Kuong Chi, Mr. Garrick Wong, Vice Presidents of the Directive Council, and Mr. Ricardo Silva, Director, received the cheque from Mr. Ian Michael Coughlan, President of Wynn Macau, Ms. Linda Chen, Executive Director of Wynn Resorts (Macau) S.A. and Ms. Katharine Liu, Wynn Macau's Vice President of Communications.

In addition to the donation, employees of Wynn Macau and Wynn Palace will participate in the charity walk on Sunday, December 13.

ADVERTORIAL



Hong Kong / Macao / Mongolia /
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“Rotary Club of Hou Kuong” was established on 29th November 1978, led by Charter President Kenneth Chow and 21 Rotarians, and it is the second most senior Rotary Clubs in Macau.

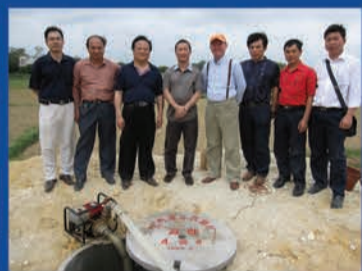
Services

Since it was chartered, we have made servicing the community as part of our responsibilities. Each year, we will host a variety and different sizes of activities, benefiting all categories from the society. One of our more long-term projects is with Rotary Club of Kowloon Golden Mile of Hong Kong. Together, we have been holding “Free Medical Check Up” for the Elders in Macau where professional doctors from both Hong Kong and Macau participated to provide free health check for over hundreds of local elderlies. Another annual event is our Mid-Autumn festival visits where we have been collaborating with Concordia School for Special Education and Fuhong Society of Macau by paying visits to their school and centers, to share moon cakes, happiness and fun with their students and end users respectively. Others will include a joint project “Clothes Collection Activities” with the Macau Salvation Army where we collect unwanted clothes for those under privileged communities.



In the category of Vocational Service and on regular basis, we invite professional speakers to share their knowledge during our weekly meetings, such as knowledge on Insurance, wine, health, etc. Once in a while, vocational visits will be arranged for our members, like recent visit to the Macau International Airport.

In respect of the International Service and Rotary Foundation, all our members contributed funds towards The Rotary Foundation in support of eradicating polio and was awarded by the Rotary International as the first club in Macau to be 100% Paul Harris Fellow Club and 100% Polio Plus Club. In addition, two of our Past Presidents, Mr. Luis Lui & Mr. Paul Iec of each donated US\$250,000 to the Rotary Foundation as an “Arch C. Klumph Society Member”, hoping to help more people in less privileged areas of the world. In recognition of their contributions, Immediate Past President of Rotary International, Mr. Gary Huang made a trip to Macau to recognize the two donors during their charity ball. In the year 2008, we did a joint project with Rotary District 3490, one of the Districts in Taiwan, “Lend A Hand to Make Home Building Dreams Real”. This project helped the villagers to rebuild their homes after serious damages by typhoon.



As for International Service projects to the Mainland China, over the past few years, we funded a total of RMB280,000 for the construction of 28 wells, solving the agricultural problems faced by over 2000 families in Tai Peng Village, Guangxi Beihai. After completing the construction of the wells, the harvests in the village doubled and the life of the farmers were improved drastically. Moreover, to further promote the relationship between Macau and Guangxi, in 2011 we held “Love to our Elderlies, Cantonese Opera –

Guangxi” where over 700 local elderlies attended. They were all very happy and the event was very meaningful.

We also sponsor our Rotaract Club of Hou Kuong which is community based club formed by a group of young university fresh graduates or who just began their career. The aim is to share with them the ideal of Rotary and our motto of “Service above Self”. We also hope to prepare them with an in-depth understanding of servicing different sections of the society, to share their love and concern to the underprivileged so that service to mankind can be continued and be sustainable.



Audi evolves from Chinese bureaucrat's ride to women's favorite

ZHANG Hang is about as far as it gets from the old stereotype of an Audi buyer in China: She's in her early 30s, a woman, and neither a government official nor a rich businessman.

“Audi drivers are the progressive, white-collar workers and it's an image I identify with,” said the 32-year-old furniture designer, who's deciding between an A4L sedan and the Q5 SUV. “I work hard and want to make sure my money is well spent.”

It's a description that would have sounded unusual in the late 1980s, when Audi was the de facto ride of high-ranking government officials and privileged businessmen in the decade following the adoption of market reforms. Back then, the German brand accounted for about 70 percent of the government and state-owned company fleets, a proportion that has declined steadily over the years. Today, women make up about a third of Audi's buyers in China, even higher in the more prosperous eastern regions.

“Women are getting more important in China as a buying group than in other regions,” Joachim Wedler, head of Audi in China, said at the Guangzhou auto show in southern China last week. “There are a lot of young and successful women in China.”

With slowing growth in

luxury sales, premium car-makers have to spread their bets and appeal to as many demographic groups as possible. Audi's sales in China have declined 0.6 percent this year through October as the economy moderates and a stock-market rout dented consumer sentiment.

“It's good that they're making their cars younger and sportier, which is more attractive for female buyers,” said Yale Zhang, Shanghai-based managing director at researcher Autoforesight Shanghai Co. “Studies show that about 50 percent of buyers for entry-level premium brands are women, so Audi should try to capture that.”

Chinese women favor models such as the A3 compact vehicle, the TT sports car and the Q3 and Q5 sport-utility vehicles, said Sandra Goeres, vice president of marketing at FAW-Volkswagen Automotive Co. Audi is also making sure it gives women buyers the features they want, such as automated self parking, she said.

The company is also expanding the choice of colors and finishes to cater to women, offering lighter or dual tones for the interior, Goeres said. To reach women, the carmaker also worked with fashion magazines like Elle and Marie Claire, and showcased its cars at art events, she said. **Bloomberg**

MOZAMBIQUE

Nacala Airport to start receiving int'l traffic in March 2016

AIRLINES operating to Mozambique are expected to start using the Nacala International Airport between March and April 2016, said the chairman of state airport management company AdM.

Emanuel Chaves also told Mozambican weekly newspaper Domingo that in December the airport was expected to receive its certification to operate as an international airport and "from that date the companies operating in the north of the country are expected to start using the airport infrastructure."

The chairman of AdM added that his company had been in direct contact with companies that carry passengers involved in exploration of natural gas deposits discovered in the Rovuma basin "for us to ensure that Nacala will become their airport of entry into Mozambique."

Chaves said AdM had delivered a request that the Nacala airport is the only one in the north of the country to process international flights, "national

authorities (...) as well as the basis (for the request)." The aviation market in Mozambique is currently limited to 1.7 million passengers per year.

Designed and built by Odebrecht Infra-estrutura - África, Emirados Árabes e Portugal, of Brazilian construction group Odebrecht, in partnership with AdM, Nacala International Airport opened in December 2014 and has modern architecture and equipment and capacity to serve 500,000 passengers and receive 5,000 tons of cargo per year.

Airport facilities occupy an area of 30,000 square meters, including a passenger terminal area of 15,000 square meters, a control tower and a 3,100-metre runway, dimensions that allow large aircraft, such as the Boeing 747, to use the facility.

The airport started operating with commercial flights by Mozambican airline LAM and is managed by AdM, which is responsible for the management of all airport infrastructure in Mozambique. **MDT/Macauhub**

PAULO BARBOSA



A street market in N'dalatando, the capital of Kwanza Norte Province, Angola

ANGOLA

Shadow economy accounts for 60 pct of the total

ANGOLA remains one of the sub-Saharan African countries with higher levels of economic informality, with the informal, or shadow, economy accounting for around 60 percent of the total, said the Secretary of State for Finance on Monday in Luanda.

Citing the latest data from the Ministry of Finance, Secretary of State Valentina Filipe said that the level of economic informality was worrying the Angolan authorities and required "urgent intervention," according to Angolan news agency Angop.

This, said the Secretary of State

during a conference organized by consulting firm McKinsey and Company, does not mean the efforts of the General Tax Administration (AGT) should not be recognized as it has an important role to play in the formalization of the Angolan economy.

Filipe pointed out the number of taxpayers registered by the AGT, which between 2014 and 2014 increased by 198 percent, "which shows that we are moving in the right direction."

The introduction of a simple, but effective, tax system and swift and efficient tax justice

were also mentioned by Filipe as essential for the State's revenue collection.

The Secretary of State stressed that non-oil tax revenue already accounts for 44 percent of total state revenue and that this trend should continue in 2016. "It could be said that the weight of non-oil revenue increased because the price of oil is down," said Filipe, but added that based on the fact that non-oil tax revenues increased by 80 percent between 2010 and 2014 "leads us to conclude that this trend will continue in 2016." **MDT/Macauhub**

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ANALYSIS

Beijing pulled further into Syria crisis amid terrorism threat



A Chinese national is brought to safety following Friday's siege in Mali

Ting Shi

THE violence swirling out from Syria in recent weeks is pressuring China to step off the sidelines and take a more active role in international efforts to stem the conflict.

The execution of a Chinese captive announced by Islamic State last Wednesday - the first such killing - showed the country isn't beyond the reach of a group that has claimed responsibility for recent attacks in Beirut, Paris and Egypt's Sinai peninsula. Moreover, Russia's decision to launch airstrikes to support the Syrian government has left China increasingly alone in opposing military intervention in a civil war that has fueled Islamic State's rise.

"It appears that events are dragging China further into the Syrian crisis," said Michael Clarke, an associate professor at the Australian National University's National Security College. "On one level, Russian intervention and the Paris attacks have raised the stakes and made Beijing's preferred option of a political resolution much less likely. The killing of a Chinese national will certainly inject a new variable into Beijing's calculations about its position on the

conflict."

While China's projection of power abroad typically focuses on safeguarding its growing business interests - and it has pledged not to interfere in the affairs of other nations - doing nothing about Syria carries its own risks. It could hurt the country's credibility as a rising power on the world stage or even make its leaders look weak at home. President Xi Jinping has often spoken of his desire to convert China's economic clout into geopolitical power, a goal demonstrated by its creation of international programs and initiatives.

Since Syria's internal strife spilled into the streets of Paris on Nov. 13, French President Francois Hollande has pressed Russia and the U.S. to merge their parallel bombing campaigns into an international effort to wipe out Islamic State. The U.K., which has bombed the group in Iraq, is thinking about joining the fray in Syria. That has left China as the sole veto-wielding member of the United Nations Security Council still advocating for a political solution.

That's an uncomfortable position considering the country has only twice cast a veto without Russia. The pair have

vetoed four resolutions on Syria, most recently blocking a U.S.-backed proposal to refer war-crime allegations against President Bashar al-Assad's regime to the International Criminal Court.

Any cost-benefit analysis on Syrian action would probably lead Party leaders in Beijing to keep a limited, low key role

Officials in Beijing have signaled no big shifts since Islamic State announced the execution of the Chinese national. At a regular briefing Thursday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei reaffirmed China's desire to let the "UN fulfill its coordinating role" in fighting terrorism. China has said that negotiations including all parties under a UN framework would provide the only acceptable venue for solving the Syrian crisis.

China on Friday backed a Security Council resolution that condemned Islamic State as "a global and unprecedented threat to international peace and security" and called for efforts to "eradicate" its safe havens in Iraq and Syria.

But while the country might provide some logistical support, it wouldn't commit forces or back a proposal that undermined Assad's government, said Raffaello Pantucci, director of international security studies at the London-based Royal United Services Institute. "I don't really see this being much of an actual game-changer," he said.

As its global business interests grow, China is cautiously revising the non-interventionist policy espoused in 1955 by then-Premier Zhou Enlai. Its growing exposure to the global terrorism threat was underscored Friday when three executives of state-owned China Railway Construction Corp. were among 22 people killed after al-Qaeda-linked militants attacked the Radisson Blu Hotel in Bamako, Mali.

Any cost-benefit analysis on Syrian action would probably lead Communist Party leaders in Beijing to keep a limited, low-key role. China, unlike Russia, has little invested in

the country or its government. If China does nothing, it might lose credibility as a rising player on the world stage. Or perhaps party leaders risk looking incompetent at home if Islamic State carries out a major attack on Chinese interests.

The cost of direct action, however, could be far higher. While Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi last year named China among 20 countries that had "forcibly seized" Muslim rights and included China's northwestern Xinjiang region on a caliphate map, the group has subjected the country to a fraction of the ire directed at the West.

Taking a larger role risks provoking retaliatory attacks, and could exacerbate unrest in Xinjiang, where human rights advocates argue China's efforts to clamp down on perceived separatism has helped radicalize the Muslim ethnic Uighur minority.

At least 300 Uighurs had joined the Islamic State cause in Iraq and Syria as of December, the official Global Times newspaper reported. A Xinjiang news portal confirmed Friday that police had killed 28 people allegedly responsible for the deaths of five police officers and 11 residents in Aksu prefecture, blaming them for being under the influence of an unnamed "foreign extremist organization."

Chinese Public Security Minister Guo Shengkun oversaw a meeting of top law enforcement officials in Beijing on Saturday, during which he proposed evaluating provincial authorities on their anti-terrorism efforts, the ministry said on its website yesterday. The same day, Beijing's municipal police raised their security preparedness level throughout the capital, the Beijing Youth Daily reported.

China doesn't want to follow the U.S. down the path of military intervention in the Middle East, said Li Guofu, director of the Center for Middle East Studies at the China Institute of International Studies. It has chosen to emphasize greater global cooperation to fight terrorism.

"It's quite clear to Beijing that the U.S. approach to Syria and the Middle East at large is not working," Li said. "You see this phenomenon, 'the harder the strike, the greater terrorism.'"

Xi will probably chart a middle course, said Clarke from ANU, insisting any international intervention gets UN approval and solely targets Islamic State.

"The problem with that is that too many other actors in this conflict have already chosen sides," Clarke said. "Xi is in a very difficult position here." **Bloomberg**

Animal cloning center to be built in Tianjin



CHINESE scientists have signed a deal to establish a commercial animal cloning center in the northern port city of Tianjin, edging the controversial science closer to mainstream acceptance.

The plant in the Tianjin Economic and Technological Development Area (TEDA), a government-sponsored business development park, will clone animals including sniffer and pet dogs, beef cattle and racehorses. Its main building is already under construc-

tion and due to be put into use in the first half of 2016, said sources on Monday.

Sinica, a subsidiary of Boyalife Group, which focuses on stem cell and regenerative medicine, signed the agreement with the TEDA on Friday.

With an investment of 200 million yuan (USD31 million), the center will be jointly built by Sinica, Peking University's Institute of Molecular Medicine, the Tianjin International Joint Academy of Biomedicine, and the South Korea's Soom Biotech Research

Foundation.

It will produce 100,000 cattle embryos a year initially, eventually increasing to 1 million, said Xu Xiaochun, board chairman of Boyalife Group, based in Wuxi, in east China's Jiangsu Province.

Chinese farmers are struggling to produce enough beef cattle to meet market demand, Xu said.

The center, the largest such facility worldwide, will also include a gene storage area and a museum, he added.

Scientists have cloned

mice, cattle and other animals since the world's first cloned sheep, Dolly, was born on July 5, 1996 in Britain.

Since 2000, Chinese scientists have cloned sheep, ca-

■ **The plant will clone animals including sniffer dogs and beef cattle**

ttle and pigs.

China's first commercial cloning company was established in September 2014 in Shandong province with the birth of three pure-blooded Tibetan mastiff puppies. The firm is a joint venture between Boyalife and Soom Biotech.

Prior to this, cloning in China had been limited to scientific research. More and more companies have shown interest in investing in the technology for commercial use, especially animal husbandry. **Xinhua**

Sino-US envoys promise better protection for business secrets

Joe McDonald, Business Writer, Beijing

U.S. and Chinese trade envoys yesterday promised to work together to protect business secrets and Beijing appeared to give ground in a dispute over proposed technology security rules for its banks.

The two governments also agreed to work more closely on food security and combating illegal logging and wildlife trafficking at the two-day meeting of the U.S.-China Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade.

Attended by Cabinet-level trade, agriculture and other officials, the event was the highest-level contact between governments of the world's two largest economies since Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Washington in September and met President Barack Obama.

There was no sign of progress on larger issues such as a proposed investment treaty on which U.S. businesses are urging both sides to

reach agreement.

The array of conflicts between the two sides include proposed Chinese restrictions on information security technology the country's banks are allowed to use, Washington's security review process for investments in the United States and foreign access to Chinese markets for insurance and other services.

The two governments pledged to strengthen protection of business secrets, a sensitive issue for U.S. companies that accuse Beijing of failing to stop rampant violations of patents and copyrights and theft of secret industrial processes.

Beijing promised U.S. companies "better legal tools," according to a statement by the U.S. delegation. On the American side, it said lawmakers were considering legislation to make it easier to pursue a complaint in federal court about trade secrets.

China's ruling Communist Party has promised to make its economy



more open but American and other business groups complain Beijing is failing to keep its promises to allow access to finance and other industries. They accuse regulators of trying to squeeze them out of promising technology industries.

China appeared to soften its position on proposed rules that would require information technology used by banks to be "safe and controllable." They were suspended in April following complaints foreign suppliers might be shut out or forced to transfer sensitive operations into China or to potential local competitors. **AP**

Court hears appeal by senior journalist Gao Yu



A Beijing court yesterday heard the appeal of a 71-year-old Chinese journalist imprisoned on a conviction of leaking state secrets, but made no immediate ruling, the journalist's lawyer said. Lawyer Shang Baojun said he could not discuss yesterday's closed hearing on Gao Yu's case by the city's high court, but he said the court will announce its ruling on Thursday. Gao was convicted in April of sharing with an overseas news magazine a document detailing the Communist Party leadership's resolve to aggressively target constitutionality, press freedoms and groups that seek to change society but operate outside the party. The magazine, Mingjing News, has said Gao did not provide the document. Foreign governments and human rights groups have denounced the verdict against Gao as politically driven and urged authorities to release the elderly journalist, who is in poor health with heart problems. Shang said Gao's health appeared to be stable at yesterday's hearing, and that the lawyers would wait for the ruling on the appeal before deciding if they should apply for medical parole.

Authorities try to register estimated 13 million undocumented

Chinese authorities are trying to register an estimated 13 million people who are without documents, most of whom were babies born in violation of the country's strict family-size rules. China had announced weeks earlier it will loosen family planning restrictions to allow all couples to have two children, instead of one. The registration campaign described in a statement from the Public Security Ministry dated Saturday was reported by Chinese news media this week. A national law says all newborns must be registered, but many Chinese regions require local officials to withhold registration documents for children born in violation of one-child rules until their parents pay fines to family planning officials. The ministry said it is seeking input on how to deal with the estimated 13 million undocumented. It remains unclear whether any amnesty from fines will be considered. Without registration documentation, a Chinese person has no access to public education, subsidized health care and employment that offers proper benefits.

Gov't to add civilian facilities on S. China Sea islands

China is to build new civilian facilities on some islands and reefs of the South China Sea, said a Foreign Ministry spokesperson yesterday. "This is aimed at fulfilling China's international responsibility and offer better public goods and service for countries in the region," said spokesperson Hong Lei at a routine press briefing. He said China will build necessary defense facilities on some islands, adding the construction will be moderate and has nothing to do with militarization. "The construction will not target any country nor impede navigation and overflight freedom enjoyed by other countries in accordance with international law," Hong added. China has built two lighthouses on South China Sea reefs, which ensure the safety of ships, and completed a land reclamation project on some of the Nansha Islands in June, he added.

AUSTRALIA PM talks down prospect of US-led army in Syria

Australia's prime minister says there is no support among world leaders for the prospect of a U.S.-led army in Iraq and Syria to take back ground from Islamic State militants. Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said yesterday in a speech to Parliament on national security that his government did not intend to change Australia's military commitment to Iraq and Syria in response to the Paris terrorist attacks as well as recent attacks in Africa and Lebanon. Australia contributes fighter jets in Syria and Iraq and military trainers in Iraq. Turnbull says his recent discussions with world leaders at the G-20, APEC and East Asia Summit forums found "there is no support currently for a large, U.S.-led Western army to attempt to conquer and hold ISIL-controlled areas."

PHILIPPINES Marcos jewelry being appraised ahead of possible auction



The Philippine government is appraising millions of dollars' worth of jewelry seized three decades ago from Imelda Marcos, the former first lady known mainly for her massive stash of shoes, as it decides what to do with the dazzling collection. The jewelry collection, which includes a diamond worth at least USD5 million, was seized when Marcos' family fled to Hawaii in 1986 following a popular revolt that ended her husband's two decades in power. Late dictator Ferdinand Marcos' family allegedly amassed billions of dollars' worth of ill-gotten wealth. His widow, now 86 and a member of Congress, became known for excesses, symbolized by her huge shoe collection and staggering jewelry. The jewelry collection, comprising three sets seized in various locations, was valued at \$5-7 million when it was last appraised in 1988 and 1991. The collection, however, is likely to have significantly risen in value.

SLAVERY

Nestle confirms labor abuse among its Thai seafood suppliers

AP PHOTO



Fancy Feast cat food, fish and shrimp feast flavor, a product of Thailand

Martha Mendoza
National Writer, Washington

IMPOVERISHED migrant workers in Thailand are sold or lured by false promises and forced to catch and process fish that ends up in global food giant Nestle SA's supply chains.

The unusual disclosure comes from Geneva-based Nestle SA itself, which in an act of self-policing announced the conclusions of its yearlong internal investigation on Monday. The study found virtually all U.S. and European companies buying seafood from Thailand are exposed to the same risks of abuse in their supply chains.

Nestle SA, among the biggest food companies in the world, launched the investigation in December 2014, after reports from news outlets and nongovernmental organizations tied brutal and largely unregulated working conditions to their shrimp, prawns and Purina brand pet foods. Its findings echo those of The Associated Press in reports this year on slavery in the seafood industry that have resulted in the rescue of more than 2,000 fishermen.

The laborers come from Thailand's much poorer neighbors Myanmar and Cambodia. Brokers illegally charge them fees to get jobs, trapping them into working on fishing vessels and at ports, mills and seafood farms in Thailand to pay back more money than they can ever earn.

"Sometimes, the net is too heavy and workers get pulled into the water and just disappear. When someone dies, he

gets thrown into the water," one Burmese worker told the nonprofit organization Verite commissioned by Nestle.

"I have been working on this boat for 10 years. I have no savings. I am barely surviving," said another. "Life is very difficult here."

Nestle said it would post the reports online — as well as a detailed yearlong solution strategy throughout 2016 — as part of ongoing efforts to protect workers. It has promised to impose new requirements on all potential suppliers and train boat owners and captains about human rights, possibly with a demonstration vessel and rewards for altering their practices. It also plans to bring in outside auditors and assign a high-level Nestle manager to make sure change is underway.

"As we've said consistently, forced labor and human rights abuses have no place in our supply chain," Magdi Batato, Nestle's executive vice president in charge of operations, said in a written statement. "Nestle believes that by working with suppliers we can make a positive difference to the sourcing of ingredients."

Nestle is not a major purchaser of seafood in Southeast Asia but does some business in Thailand, primarily for its Purina brand Fancy Feast cat food.

For its study, Verite interviewed more than 100 people, including about 80 workers from Myanmar and Cambodia, as well as boat owners, shrimp farm owners, site supervisors and representatives of Nestle's suppliers. They visited fish ports and fishmeal packing plan-

ts, shrimp farms and docked fishing boats, all in Thailand.

Boat captains and managers, along with workers, confirmed violence and danger in the Thai seafood sector, a booming industry which exports USD7 billion of products a year, although managers said workers sometimes got hurt because they were drunk and fighting. Boat captains rarely checked ages of workers, and Verite found underage workers forced to fish. Workers said they labor without rest, their food and water are minimal, outside contact is cut off, and they are given fake identities to hide that they are working illegally.

■ The laborers come Myanmar and Cambodia. Brokers illegally charge them fees to get jobs, trapping them into working on fishing vessels

Generally, the workers studied by Verite were catching and processing fish into fishmeal fed to shrimp and prawns. But the Amherst, Massachusetts-based group said many of the problems they observed are systemic and not unique to Nestle; migrant workers throughout Thailand's seafood sector are vulnerable to abuses as they

are recruited, hired and employed, said Verite.

Monday's disclosure is rare. While multinational companies in industries from garments to electronics say they investigate allegations of abuse in their supply chains, they rarely share negative findings.

"It's unusual and exemplary," said Mark Lagon, president of the nonprofit Freedom House, a Washington-based anti-trafficking organization. "The propensity of the PR and legal departments of companies is not to fess up, not to even say they are carefully looking into a problem for fear that they will get hit with lawsuits," he said.

In fact, Nestle is already being sued: In August, pet food buyers filed a class-action lawsuit alleging Fancy Feast cat food was the product of slave labor associated with Thai Union Frozen Products, a major distributor. It's one of several lawsuits filed in recent months against major U.S. retailers importing seafood from Thailand.

Some of the litigation cites the reports from the AP, which tracked slave-caught fish to the supply chains of giant food sellers, such as Wal-Mart, Sysco and Kroger, and popular brands of canned pet food, such as Fancy Feast, Meow Mix and Iams. It can turn up as calamari at fine restaurants, as imitation crab in a sushi roll or as packages of frozen snapper relabeled with store brands that land on dinner tables. The U.S. companies have all said they strongly condemn labor abuse and are taking steps to prevent it.

Nestle promises to publicly report its progress each year. **AP**

NORTH KOREA

Seoul: Kim Jong Un demotes top official

Kim Tong-hyung, Seoul

NORTH Korean leader Kim Jong Un is believed to have demoted one of his top officials and sent him to a rural collective farm for reeducation, South Korea's spy agency told lawmakers yesterday.

If confirmed, the banishment of Choe Ryong Hae would be the latest in a series of executions, purges and dismissals that Kim has orchestrated in what analysts say is a further strengthening of his grip on power since taking over in late 2011.

Kim is believed to have demoted Choe Ryong Hae and sent him to a rural collective farm for reeducation

The office of lawmaker Shin Kyung-min said the National Intelligence Service disclosed the information in a closed-door briefing for members of the legislature's intelligence committee.

A memo on the briefing provided by Shin's office cited the NIS as saying it has informa-



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (right) salutes at a parade in Pyongyang



Choe Ryong Hae

tion that Choe was sent to the farm for reeducation in early November.

It quoted the NIS as saying that Choe's demotion was related to the alleged collapse of a water tunnel at a power station. Choe was reportedly responsible for the construction of the power station in North Korea's northeastern Ryanggang province. The NIS said Choe and Kim were also at odds over youth-related policies, according to Shin's office.

The memo didn't say how the NIS obtained the information. The NIS said it could not confirm contents of its legislature

briefing.

Choe was a rising star after Kim inherited power upon the death of his dictator father Kim Jong Il. He held a series of top posts, including the top political officer in the Korean People's Army which once made him North Korea's second most powerful official following the 2013 execution of Kim's uncle, Jang Song Thaek.

His influence is believed to have diminished in April 2014 when his top army post was found to have been given to Hwang Pyong So, who is now widely considered to be the North's No. 2 official.

Choe was still considered one of Kim's top aides. In September he attended a military parade in Beijing marking the end of World War II on behalf of Kim. But speculation about his fate flared earlier this month after his name wasn't in a list of top officials forming a funeral committee for a late marshal.

The NIS told lawmakers that Kim is eventually expected to rehabilitate Choe, but didn't say when.

South Korea's spy agency has a mixed record of tracking developments in North Korea. Information about the secretive, authoritarian state is often im-

possible to confirm.

The spy service faced widespread criticism when it failed to predict North Korean artillery strikes on a South Korean island in 2010 because it ignored intercepted communications that indicated a possible attack.

The agency saved face in 2013 when it said Jang had been executed, days before North Korea announced the killing of Kim's uncle for treason. In May, the agency said Kim ordered the execution of his defense chief, Hyon Yong Chol, for disloyalty two months before North Korean state media confirmed his replacement. **AP**

THAILAND

Court indicts 2 for deadly Bangkok bombing

Nattasuda Anusonadisai, Bangkok

A Thai military court yesterday indicted two foreigners accused of carrying out a deadly bombing at a shrine in Bangkok but questions hang over the case because of the attackers' unclear motive and an opaque investigation.

Both men have been described by officials as ethnic Uighurs from western China's Xinjiang region. Officials say the blast was carried out by a people-smuggling gang seeking revenge on Thai authorities for cracking down on their operation.

The Aug. 17 blast at the Erawan Shrine — a popular tourist destination



Police officers escort suspects in the Aug. 17 blast at the Erawan Shrine, Bilal Mohammad, front, and Mieraili Yusufu, rear, as they arrive at a military court in Bangkok

— was one of the most deadly acts of violence in Bangkok in decades, and left 20 people dead and more than 120 injured. Of the dead, 14 were tourists.

The attack shocked the residents of the capital because of the apparent

randomness, which drove home the point that no place is immune to acts of terror. Authorities, however, have declined to call it an act of terrorism out of apparent fear that it would hurt the country's huge tourism industry.

Police initially appeared at first to be at a loss, but soon claimed success with a series of raids and two arrests. Arrest warrants have been issued for 15 others.

The two suspects were brought to the court in handcuffs wearing brown prison garb. Members of the media were not allowed to enter the court and the indictments took place before the two suspects arrived, said defense lawyer Chuchart Kanpai.

The two, identified as Bilal Mohammad and Mieraili Yusufu, were indicted on 10 counts — none of them terrorism charges. They include conspiracy to explode bombs and commit premeditated murder, Chu-

chart said.

Early speculation about the bombing had suggested it might be the work of Uighur separatists who were angry that Thailand in July forcibly repatriated more than 100 Uighurs to China, where it is feared they face persecution. The theory was bolstered by the fact that the Erawan Shrine is popular among Chinese tourists, who figured prominently among the victims of the bombing.

But Thai officials reject any political or religious motive, sticking to the theory that it was a revenge for disrupting a human-smuggling gang. Still, skepticism about the police explanation on the shrine attack has aboun-

ded because of leaks, contradictions, misstatements and secrecy surrounding the investigation.

The two men have been held at an army base since their arrests in late August and early September. No details of their interrogation have been revealed. Even their nationalities remain unclear.

They are being tried at a military court on an army base in Bangkok because cases of "national security" have been handled by the military since last May, when the army seized power in a coup from an elected government.

Former National Police Chief Somyot Poomphanmuang said before his retirement in September that the case against the two suspects was supported by closed-circuit television footage, witnesses, DNA matching and physical evidence, in addition to their confessions. **AP**

SYRIAN CONFLICT

Russia confirms its jet shot down near Turkish border

Susan Fraser and
Nataliya Vasilyeva, Ankara

TURKEY shot down a Russian warplane yesterday, claiming it had violated Turkish airspace and ignored repeated warnings. Russia denied that the plane crossed the Syrian border into Turkish skies.

"We are looking into the circumstances of the crash of the Russian jet," Russia's Defense Ministry said. "The Ministry of Defense would like to stress that the plane was over the Syrian territory throughout the flight."

Russia said the Su-24 was downed by artillery fire, but Turkey claimed that its F-16s fired on the Russian plane after it ignored several warnings. The ministry said the pilots parachuted but added that Moscow had no further contact with them.

Video footage of the incident showed a warplane on fire before crashing on a hill and two crew members apparently parachuting safely.

Jahed Ahmad, a spokesman the 10th Coast Division, an insurgent group in Syria, said its forces fired at the Russian pilots as they descended. One was dead when he reached the ground, Ahmad told The Associated Press.

The group released a video showing gunmen standing around a blond man in aviator

AP PHOTO



This frame grab from video by Haberturk TV, shows a Russian warplane on fire before crashing on a hill as seen from Hatay province, Turkey

gear whose face was bruised and appeared dead.

The fate of the second pilot was unknown.

The North Atlantic Council, NATO's governing body, called a meeting requested by Turkey, an alliance member. "The aim of this extraordinary NAC meeting is for Turkey to inform allies about the downing of a Russian airplane," said Carmen Romero, NATO's deputy spokesperson.

Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said nothing about the incident at a ceremony approving the list a new cabinet members.

Turkey's private Dogan news agency said two

Russian helicopters, flying low over the Turkmen Bayirbucak region, searched for the two pilots.

"This isn't an action against any specific country. Our F-16s took the necessary steps to defend Turkey's sovereign territory," a Turkish official said in an email. The official cannot be named because of government rules that bar civil servants from speaking to journalists without authorization.

The official said the Russian plane was first warned that it was within 15 kilometers of the Turkish border, and the aircraft then crossed over Turkish territory.

Turkish officials released what they said was the radar

image of the path the Russian plane took, showing it flying across a stretch of Turkish territory in Turkey's southernmost tip, in the region of Yayladag, in Hatay province.

A Turkish military statement said the plane entered Turkish airspace over the town of Yayladagi, in Hatay province.

"On Nov. 24, 2015 at around 09.20 a.m., a plane whose nationality is not known violated the Turkish airspace despite several warnings (10 times within five minutes) in the area of Yayladagi, Hatay," the military said before the plane's nationality was confirmed.

"Two F-16 planes on aerial patrol duty in the area intervened against the plane in ques-

RUSSIA RESPONDING CAUTIOUSLY TO JET DOWNING

DEFENSE ANALYSTS say Russia seems to be responding cautiously to the downing of one of its warplanes on the Turkey-Syria border. Natasha Kuhrt, lecturer in International Peace and Security at King's College London, said Russian television reports "have mainly been blaming the anti-Assad rebels inside Syria, and not mentioning Turkey at all. The general thrust is to try to play down this incident." "Relations have been very strained between Russia and Turkey of late so Moscow will be trying its utmost to contain the damage this might cause," she said. Shashank Joshi of defense think tank the Royal United Services Institute said the large number of nations in the air over Syria had led to a dangerous and unpredictable situation. He said there would be intense diplomatic efforts to defuse the situation, but the combination of crowded airspace, Russian probing of Turkey's border and diplomatic between Moscow and Istanbul created a "real toxic cocktail that can easily erupt into crisis."

tion in accordance with the rules of engagement at 09.24 a.m."

It said the plane was warned 10 times within the space of five minutes.

"It's the kind of thing we've been warning about," said Ian Kearns, director of the European Leadership Network think-tank in London. "And it's a direct military engagement between a NATO country and Russia, so I think it's a serious incident in anybody's book." **AP**

Nicolas Vaux-Montagny
and Maria Cheng, Paris

FRENCH authorities yesterday questioned a top suspect linked to attackers who terrorized Paris, while Belgium's capital remained locked down under threat of a possible similar attack.

Jawad Bendaoud, the only person in France facing potential terrorism charges linked to the Nov. 13 Paris attacks was handed over yesterday morning to an anti-terrorism judge in Paris, according to a judicial official. Bendaoud was detained last week for providing lodging to the suspected mastermind of the attacks in an apartment in the Paris suburb of Saint-Denis.

Bendaoud, 29, told BFM television, "I didn't know

PARIS ATTACKS

Suspect quizzed, Brussels still in lockdown



A Belgian police officer guards the building of the European Commission in Brussels

they were terrorists. I was asked to do a favor. I did a favor, sir."

He would be either charged or released yesterday.

Four people have been handed terrorism charges in Belgium since the Paris attacks, which have been traced to a network of people with ties to both France and Belgium.

Brussels remained at its highest alert level yesterday, after Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel cited a "serious and imminent threat" to the city, which houses the headquarters of the European Union and NATO. Belgium's crisis center said the alert level would only

change if a significant breakthrough warranted it.

Increased security measures in the wake of the massacre in Paris have virtually shut down the Belgian capital, with the subway system, many shops and schools remaining shut. Michel said that despite the continued high-alert level, schools would reopen today.

Many questions remain unanswered as investigators try to piece together what happened and who might still be at large.

Only one fugitive has been publicly named: Salah Abdeslam, who crossed into Belgium the

morning after the attacks.

A street cleaner in a Paris suburb found an explosive vest Monday near the place where Abdeslam's cellphone was found, raising the possibility that he aborted his mission, either ditching a malfunctioning vest or fleeing in fear.

Authorities said the device, which did not have a detonator, was in a pile of rubble in the southern Paris suburb of Montrouge. A police official said the vest contained bolts and the same type of explosive used in the Nov. 13 attacks that claimed 130 lives and left hundreds wounded. **AP**

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 SUPER
 STACK

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what's ON



AFA AUTUMN SALON 2015
TIME: 10pm-7pm (Closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: November 28, 2015
VENUE: Casa Garden Orient Foundation
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6064

INK WASH OF THE FORBIDDEN CITY
 – PAINTINGS BY CHARLES CHAUDERLOT
TIME: 10am-7pm
 (No admittance after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: June 19, 2016
VENUE: Macau Museum of Art,
 Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
ADMISSION: MOP5
 (Free on Sundays and public holidays)
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

NOTABLE COUPLE – ARTEFACTS FROM SUN WAN, DR. SUN YAT-SEN'S SECOND DAUGHTER, AND HER HUSBAND, TAI ENSAI
TIME: 10am-6pm (Ticket booth closes 5:30pm; Closed on Mondays; Open on public holidays)
UNTIL: January 10, 2016
VENUE: Exhibition Gallery, 3rd floor, Macau Museum, No. 112 Praceta do Museu de Macau
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 7911

THE ART OF LINGNAN SCHOOL
 – CHINESE PAINTINGS BY LAI MING
TIME: 10am-7pm
 (No admission after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: December 6, 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

WESTERN VIEWS ON CHINA:
PAINTS OF THE 19TH CENTURY ABOUT CHINA
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

Offbeat

RAPPER THROWS WADS OF MONEY OVER BALCONY TO FANS AT MALL



Rapper Fetty Wap gave fans a run for his money this weekend, tossing wads of cash over a balcony at a New Jersey mall to the delight of screaming on-lookers.

Videos posted to social media show the Paterson native

throwing money Saturday as he walked through the Garden State Plaza mall in Paramus.

The rapper posted on Twitter that he was so happy to be shopping with his daughter that he threw USD2,000 to fans. He tweeted: "never no who needed it."

Wap's real name is Willie Maxwell. He's had a breakthrough year with multiple hits, including the pop smash "Trap Queen."

His self-titled debut came in at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 albums chart this month, and his other Top 10 pop hits include "679" and "My Way."

TV canal macau

| | |
|-------|--|
| 13:00 | TDM News (Repeated) |
| 13:30 | News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast |
| 14:30 | RTPi Live |
| 19:00 | Trail of Lies (Repeated) |
| 19:50 | TDM Interview (Repeat) |
| 20:30 | Main News, Financial & Weather Report |
| 21:00 | Montra do Lilau |
| 21:40 | GM Food - Cultivating Fear |
| 22:10 | Trail of Lies |
| 23:00 | TDM News |
| 23:30 | Champions League Highlights |
| 23:45 | Champions League: Porto - Dynamo Kiev (Repeated) |
| 01:15 | Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated) |

cinema

CINETEATRO

19 Nov - 25 Nov



THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY PART 2

ROOM 1
 (2D) 2.15, 4.45, 9.45 pm
 (3D) 7.15 pm

Director: Francis Lawrence
Starring: Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, Liam Hemsworth
Language: English (Cantonese)
Duration: 137min

RETURN OF THE CUCKOO

ROOM 2
 2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm
Director: Patrick Kong
Starring: Chi Lam Cheung, Chairmaine Sheh
Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)
Duration: 86min



LOST IN HONG KONG

ROOM 3
 7.30 pm
Director: Zheng Xu
Starring: Zheng Xu, Wei Zhao, Bei-Er Bao, Juan Du
Language: Mandarin/Cantonese (Cantonese/English)
Duration: 114min

OUR TIMES

ROOM 3
 7.00 pm
Director: Ding Sheng
Starring: Andy Lau, Liu Ye, Wu Ruofu, Wang Qianyuan
Language: Mandarin (English/Cantonese)
Duration: 134min

MACAU TOWER

05 Nov - 25 Nov

007 - SPECTRE
 2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm
Director: Sam Mendes
Starring: Daniel Craig, Christoph Waltz, Léa Seydoux
Language: English (Cantonese)
Duration: 148min

this day in history



1998 'CORRUPT' TURKISH GOVERNMENT FALLS

The government of Turkey has collapsed after losing a no-confidence motion over corruption allegations.

The Turkish assembly voted by an absolute majority - 314 votes to 214 - in favour of an opposition motion of no confidence in the coalition government of Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz.

Mr Yilmaz has been accused of tampering with the \$600m sale of a state bank, and of links with the Turkish mafia.

He has denied the charges, saying he is being brought down by the mafia, and is taking legal action to clear his name.

He warned the country's economic and foreign policy would suffer as a result.

"If you bring this government down, you will make the gangs laugh," he said. "Of all governments past and present, ours has been the most determined to go after gangs."

He was referring to a police crackdown on organised crime which led to the arrest of several prominent mafia bosses over the past few months.

Mr Yilmaz came to power nearly 17 months ago after Turkey's first pro-Islamic government was forced out of power by the military.

He had acknowledged that he expected to lose the vote of confidence after key coalition partner the People's Republican Party withdrew its support from his coalition.

This is the fourth administration to collapse since the rightist-led government of Tansu Ciller fell from power in 1995.

Its demise comes as Turkey struggles to overcome annual inflation of 62% and high government debts.

It is also likely to prolong the argument between Turkey and Italy over the extradition of Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan, who has applied for political asylum in Rome.

Correspondents say Turkey now faces a further period of political uncertainty as there is no obvious successor as prime minister and no party looks capable of forging a strong parliamentary majority.

The President, Suleyman Demirel, is now holding talks with other factions in parliament to see if any are capable of forming a new government.

They include the largest party in parliament, the pro-Islamist Virtue Party, which is strongly opposed by Turkey's secular politicians and by the military.

There is strong support for an early election, probably in April next year, but the military is thought to favour postponing any poll until 2000.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Turkey spent the next six weeks in political limbo after two attempts to form a new coalition - by former Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit and then by independent deputy Yalim Erez - failed.

Then former Prime Minister Tansu Ciller made a political about-turn to support the coalition put together by Bulent Ecevit after all.

Mr Ecevit continued as Turkey's prime minister until 2002, when growing economic and political turmoil resulted in the resignation of several of his senior ministers.

In November 2002 the Islamist-based Justice and Development Party won a landslide election victory. A change in the constitution was necessary before the party's leader, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, could become prime minister.

Although his party has Islamist roots Mr Erdogan insists it is committed to secularism.

He has identified EU entry as a top priority and has introduced reforms designed to bring Turkey more closely into line with entry requirements.

The investigation into corruption charges against Mr Yilmaz is continuing.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Don't point fingers at anyone but yourself. You're the one putting yourself on the back burner...

Taurus April 20-May 20 You love a bargain, and prices keep falling. What a good combination. You have all the incentive to shop around...

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Is it a good time to buy, sell or stay where you are? Asking for opinions is a waste of time. Don't take anyone else's word for it...

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 You're in a hurry to make money, but being in a hurry won't help. You need to take your time, now more than ever...

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Don't let stress get in the way of something you've always enjoyed. The situation you're in is a whole new ballgame that requires an education of sorts...

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Money issues take even more time to decipher than they used to. Not only are they more complicated, but you have more to lose than ever before...

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 You're not just projecting your inner fears onto the real world. This time you're right on the money. It's how you handle it that's dependent on the reel playing inside your psyche...

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 You may not be out for gain, but you can't seem to avoid it. Profit follows you like a shadow today. Go ahead, help others selflessly...

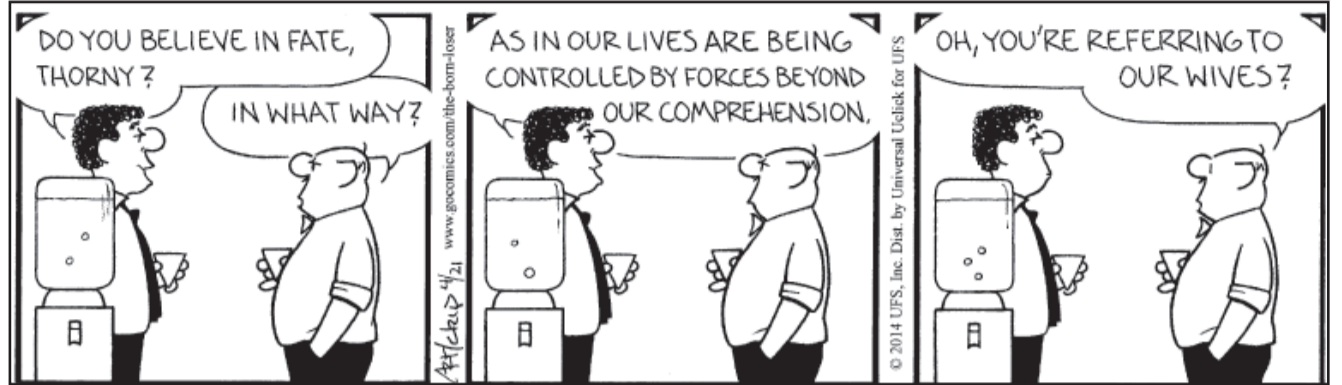
Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Getting a lot done is admirable, but you're much more likely to make money if you have fun while you're at it. Strange how childlike the universe actually is...

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 If you've been taking care of your responsibilities with some regularity, then all you've lost is fun money. No matter how much it was, pat yourself on the back if you at least still have your security net...

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Philanthropy may seem like the first thing to cut out of your budget, but it should be the last. There is always room to care about others as much if not more than you care about yourself...

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 There seem to be few lessons to absorb from your financial predicament, but there are actually quite a few. You're just not paying attention in class. Wake up and get your head out of the fog...

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Country singer McEntire; 5- Diamond flaw?; 10- McDonald's founder Ray; 14- Some nest eggs; 15- Gullible; 16- Granny; 17- Morse element; 18- Ropelike hairstyle; 20- Absorbent cloth; 22- Key in again; 23- Debt that remains unpaid; 25- Usher's offering; 26- Boring; 27- FedEx alternative; 28- Freudian topics; 32- Like custard; 33- Shops want to achieve high ones; 35- Arp art; 36- Sailor; 37- Very skilled person; 38- Mdse.; 39- Gen. Robert ___; 41- Hives; 43- Sponsorship; 44- Religious practice; 45- Neither's partner; 46- Degrees in a right angle; 48- Parade spoiler; 50- Well-bred people; 51- 12 constellations; 54- Long hard seat; 55- Vacillating; 57- Bank (on); 61- Sardine containers; 62- Philbin of TV; 63- Cruising; 64- ___ Rhythm; 65- Bird homes; 66- Apparatus for weaving;

DOWN: 1- Free; 2- Baseball stat; 3- ___-relief; 4- Smokers receptacle; 5- On end; 6- Less common; 7- Cambodian currency; 8- Eggs; 9- To correct; 10- Entangled; 11- Suggestive; 12- Peeling potatoes, perhaps; 13- Beer buy; 19- Grassland; 21- Not 'neath; 23- Wild sheep of Asia; 24- Sense of loss; 25- Swiftiness; 26- Discourage; 27- Stomach woe; 29- Gagman; 30- Peculiarity; 31- Fresh; 34- Composer Copland; 40- Most strange; 41- Mythical creature; 42- Unity; 43- Spellbind; 47- Business mag; 49- Small batteries; 50- Understand?; 51- Tubular pasta; 52- Not a dup.; 53- Bond classic; 54- Insects; 56- Bruce ___ was a famous kung-fu movie star; 58- That, in Tijuana; 59- The Lion; 60- Thanksgiving tuber



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Samuel Petrequin, Paris

FOOTBALL

FIFA ethics committee seeks life ban against Michel Platini

THE FIFA ethics committee has requested a life ban for Michel Platini, the Frenchman's lawyer said yesterday, a move that would rule the UEFA president out of the race to succeed Sepp Blatter.

Thibaut d'Ales told The Associated Press that the maximum sanction was asked for when the FIFA ethics committee investigations unit submitted its final case report.

Platini faces a hearing before FIFA ethics judge Joachim Eckert in December.

"The overreaching of the request really convinces us of this commission's total lack of credibility," D'Ales said in a telephone interview. "There is not a single tangible element in this case that can confirm the suspicions."

Platini is currently serving a 90-day ban over a USD2 million payment of FIFA money he received in 2011 as backdated salary. He worked as a presidential adviser from 1998-2002 for Blatter, who also faces the ethics court's judgment in the case.

Platini denies wrongdoing and says he had a verbal contract with Blatter to receive the money.

Eckert is expected to give his verdicts in the cases of Platini and Blatter in December. Any sanctions can be challenged at

AP PHOTO



UEFA President Michel Platini

the FIFA appeals committee and Court of Arbitration for Sport.

D'Ales said he was informed of the ethics committee's request on Monday and decided to make it public after it leaked in the French press. He said FIFA's aim is to prove that there was no contract between Platini and Blatter.

"Obviously we've got the proof that such a deal existed," D'Ales said. "We will submit it to CAS, which will handle the case within a fairly short space of time."

A spokesman for the FIFA ethics prosecutors declined to confirm what sanction was requested last week.

"We are entitled to comment but we decided for reasons of personality rights and the presumption of innocence not to publish the request," Andreas Bantel told The Associated Press in a telephone interview. "If Mr. Platini wants to comment on the request he is entitled to do that."

Platini aims to clear his name and stand as a candidate in

the FIFA presidential election on Feb. 26 to succeed Blatter, who is stepping down. Blatter announced his exit plans on June 2 under pressure from American and Swiss federal investigations into bribery and corruption at FIFA.

Switzerland's attorney-general has opened criminal proceedings against Blatter over the \$2 million payment as suspected criminal mismanagement of FIFA money.

Platini was quizzed on Sept. 25 at FIFA headquarters as "between a witness and an accused person," according to attorney general Michael Lauber.

A FIFA life ban has been overturned by CAS in the past.

Mohamed bin Hammam of Qatar had his expulsion by FIFA overturned on appeal in July 2012, more than one year after a bribery allegation ended his presidential campaign against Blatter. The CAS panel said a FIFA investigation did not prove Bin Hammam was the source of \$40,000 bribes to Caribbean voters, though it suspected he was. **AP**

GOLF

Spieth gets all the tough questions at the Australian Open

JORDAN Spieth must have thought he answered all the tough questions during a 30-minute media conference yesterday that had to be cut off by Australian Open organizers.

The most prying questions, though, came a few hours later from a group of about 60 kids during a junior clinic on the range at The Australian Golf Club, where Spieth will open play tomorrow in defense of his 2014 title.

After discussing Australian sports — including cricket — with the kids, Spieth appeared perplexed when asked what type of ball he uses. "Cricket ball?" he asked initially, then realized they wanted to know the type of golf ball he plays with.

That warmed him up for the next question, from a boy of about 11 or 12, who asked: "Do you believe in God, or do you believe in science?"

Without batting an eye, but with a smile at the surprising tone of the question, he answered: "God," then added, "that sure was an inte-

resting one."

Asked at the media conference how he enjoyed playing two of the famed sand belt courses in Melbourne on the weekend before he came to Sydney, he was careful not to rank Royal Melbourne or Kingston Heath one over the other "because that won't go over so well ... yeah, it was certainly one of the last couple of places on the bucket list to play golf."

Which could have begged another question: How does a 22-year-old have a bucket list?

Spieth still has fond memories of last year's closing course-record 63 in brutal conditions at The Australian that gave him a six-shot win over a field that included Adam Scott.

"I just stayed very patient and played one of the best rounds I've ever played in my life when I really needed it," Spieth said Tuesday.

Last year when he won in Sydney, he promised to return to defend his title. But Australian organizers were

understandably nervous throughout most of this year after Spieth won the Masters, U.S. Open, the Tour Championship and the FedEx Cup.

No need to worry — there was never any doubt he'd return Down Under, calling Australia "my favorite place I've ever traveled to to play golf," and saying it was a "no-brainer coming back."

Spieth and Scott will be joined by 1997 Australian Open champion Lee Westwood, 2011 British Open champion Darren Clarke and former Australian champions Geoff Ogilvy, John Senden and Greg Chalmers.

Also in the field is Champions Tour regular Peter Senior, the 2012 Australian Open champion and who won last week's Australian Masters at the age of 56.

Despite calling Senior's win "really inspiring," he has no plans to be still hitting a small white ball at that age.

"I think when I'm 56 I may be on a beach somewhere," Spieth said, "where nobody knows where I am." **AP**

BOXING

David Haye announces comeback with bout against Mark de Mori

FORMER heavyweight champion David Haye is going to return to boxing with a bout against Mark de Mori of Australia at London's O2 arena next year.

Haye will take on the 33-year-old De Mori on Jan. 16, his first fight since beating fellow Briton Dereck Chisora in 2012.

Haye says "I'm so happy to be

able to step back through the ropes and back into the ring."

The 35-year-old Haye was forced to withdraw from two fights in 2013, against Manuel Charr and Tyson Fury, because of injuries.

He was advised by surgeons to consider retiring after shoulder surgery which ruled him out of taking on Fury.

AP PHOTO



Former World Heavyweight Champion David Haye, left, poses with Australian opponent Mark de Mori following a press conference at the O2, London

opinion

Macau Matters

Richard Whitfield



HENGQIN CAMPUS FAILED MACAU

It is now a few years since Macau people spent many billions of patacas to build the Hengqin campus of the University of Macau. As I have only recently had occasion to visit the development a few times, it seems appropriate to use this column to report on my initial impressions of how well our money was spent.

The University of Macau Hengqin Campus project was started in 2009-10 and at the time there were many questions, but very little information, about the project. I looked into the design and construction of the campus a few times and found very little, and at the time several friends and acquaintances in the construction industry also commented to me that the project seemed to be a big secret. Even now, there does not seem to be a great deal of information available online about the complex.

The first time I visited the Hengqin campus I got a speeding ticket when travelling through the tunnel to reach it. Not an auspicious start, and I am totally baffled as to why tunnels in Macau have lower speed limits than the rest of the road network.

Arriving at the campus the lack of street parking, and the high proportion of streets blocked off from public traffic is quite noticeable. When I eventually found the public day parking area, the entrance was very confusing. Also, about 1/3 of the cars it held had removal notices on them, but some of them had clearly not been driven for several months. Long term car storage seems to be a common, and unacceptable, problem in many of Macau's public car parks. My guess is that bribes paid to let cars be stored long term in public is a lucrative business.

I chose the nearest exit to leave the car-park but it opened into the middle of a flower bed, which seemed a strange landscaping design choice. In general the shabby state of the landscaping throughout the campus created a very poor first impression. Many of the paved footpaths had frequent broken pavers and grass growing out between them indicating bad sub-surface preparation. Moreover, in several places edgings were broken and soil had already eroded onto footpaths. I understand that the campus is built on reclaimed land, but the soil quality over the whole area looked to be very poor - a lot of exposed sand and rubble.

Generally, I was also very disappointed with the building designs. They seemed very 1970s and have not been designed to suit the local climate or with any "green" or "sustainable" features. For example, some of the residential buildings use simple domestic split-system air conditioners which are very inefficient when used in large buildings (you never see them used in hotels, for example). Previously, I have briefly noted that I felt that the campus totally wasted the great opportunity it had to create a green, sustainable development that showcased leading edge technologies.

I also visited a residential college and was very surprised to see guards and turnstiles at the entrance so that access was very restricted. This seems a very strange policy in a place as safe as Macau and where you want students to mingle and engage with each other and build friendships and support networks. Related to this, the campus was generally empty and sterile with little evidence of student social activity.

Overall, I was not happy with the complex and I do not give it a passing grade. Macau people spent a lot of money on this campus, and they deserved to get something better.

THE BUZZ FIRST JAPANESE ROCKET WITH COMMERCIAL PAYLOAD LAUNCHED

The first Japanese rocket with a commercial payload headed into space yesterday in a bid by Japan to enter the market for international satellite launches. The Mitsubishi Heavy Industries rocket took off at 3:50 p.m. from the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency launch pad

on the island of Tanegashima, off Japan's southernmost main island of Kyushu. It is carrying a broadcast and telecommunications satellite for Canadian company Telesat. The launch was delayed for about 30 minutes because a boat entered a restricted zone.



AP PHOTO

| Station | Air quality |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Roadside | 35-55 Moderate |
| High Density Residential Area | 45-65 Moderate |
| Ambient | 40-60 Moderate |

SOURCE: DSI/MG

Portugal's Socialists to take power, backed by radicals

Barry Hatton, Lisbon

PORTUGAL'S president announced yesterday he is inviting Socialist Party leader Antonio Costa to form a government backed by the Communist Party and radical Left Bloc, despite doubts over those parties' commitment to the economic goals of the eurozone.

President Anibal Cavaco Silva made the announcement in a statement on his website, ending weeks of uncertainty over the eurozone country's political future.

Costa's Socialists headed an anti-austerity alliance of leftist lawmakers that two weeks ago unseated a center-right government that had been in power for 11 days. That government had over the past four years introduced spending cuts and economic reforms following Portugal's 78 billion-euro (USD83 billion) bailout in 2011.

The Communists and Left Bloc have pledged to vote with the Socialists in Parliament, ensuring its legislation passes. Some fear Portugal will abandon the fiscal discipline demanded of countries sharing the euro currency, but Costa insists he will abide by international agreements, including government spending limits. However, he criticized the outgoing government for being "submissive" in its



Portuguese Socialist Party leader Antonio Costa talks to journalists after a meeting with President Anibal Cavaco Silva, at the Belém presidential palace in Lisbon

dealings with the rest of Europe.

Although they are supporting it, the Communists and Left Bloc aren't expected to join the new government — Portugal's seventh in 15 years.

Portugal emerged as one of the eurozone's weak links during the 19-nation bloc's financial crisis. It was undermined by a decade of average annual growth below 1 percent while record low interest rates invited it to borrow wealth it hadn't created.

Four years of austerity have improved its economic statistics. Portugal's budget deficit in 2010 was more than 10 percent but the European Union estimates it will be around 3 percent by the end of this year. Unemployment, which surged to a record 17 percent after the bailout, has fallen to 12 percent.

But with government debt at 130 percent of gross domestic product — the third-highest in the European Union — and the three main ratings agencies still classifying Portuguese debt as junk, Portugal's eurozone partners have warned that it can't afford to stray from the path of economic reform and debt reduction.

Costa's leftist alliance says it will "turn the page" on austerity. That means reversing cuts in pay, pensions and public services, as well as tax increases that have brought widespread hardship, street protests and strikes in recent years. Some 400,000 Portuguese left to seek work abroad.

Costa says he wants to speed the economic recovery by putting more money in Portuguese pockets and stimulating consumption.

Among the measures planned by the leftist alliance are giving back government workers' cut pay; unblocking pension increases; spending more on the national health service; providing free nursery schools for all 3-year-olds and free school books for all; reducing sales tax at restaurants from 23 percent to 13 percent; and restoring four public holidays that were scrapped to improve productivity. Questions remain over how Costa's government will pay for those measures. AP

WORLD BRIEFS

LIBERIA A teenage boy has died of Ebola in Liberia, a health official said Tuesday, the first fatality since July in one of the three West African countries hit hardest by the worst ever outbreak of the disease.

SWEDEN The Swedish government has proposed tough measures to stem the flow of asylum-seekers into the country, including granting temporary residence permits to refugees who earlier were eligible for permanent residency.



VATICAN CITY A Vatican tribunal yesterday rejected a journalist's request to dismiss charges against him for publishing confidential documents as a trial opened in the Holy See's latest leaks scandal. Journalists Emiliano Fittipaldi and Gianluigi Nuzzi are accused of having published books about Vatican waste, greed and mismanagement that were based in part on confidential Holy See documents. Alongside them in the courtroom yesterday were three people, including a high-ranking Vatican monsignor, accused of leaking them the information.



USA A nonprofit founded to combat obesity says the USD1.5 million it received from Coke has no influence on its work. But emails obtained by The Associated Press show the world's largest beverage maker was instrumental in shaping the Global Energy Balance Network, which is led by a professor at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. Coke helped pick the group's leaders, edited its mission statement and suggested articles and videos for its website.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Paulo Barbosa



Food feast. This year's featured country at the Macau Food Festival, ending on Sunday, is South Korea.

AP PHOTO