



RETAIL MUST TARGET LOCAL MARKET
 'Next-generation' retail in Macau should target the local market over the tourist sector, a consultant said

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40 PCT GROWTH IN FISCAL RESERVE
 The overall size of the Fiscal Reserve recorded an annual growth of around 40 percent at the end of 2015

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AQUINO WELCOMES JAPAN'S EMPEROR

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WORLD BRIEFS

CHINESE stocks sink again while other Asian markets rise and Europe retreats as investors look ahead to the US Federal Reserve's latest statement on interest rates and the economic outlook. *More on p8*

Wynn presses contractor to meet Cotai deadline

P7



VIETNAM's Communist Party re-elects its 71-year-old chief, Nguyen Phu Trong, for a second term, an expected outcome that sees the conservative pro-China ideologue cementing his hold on power.

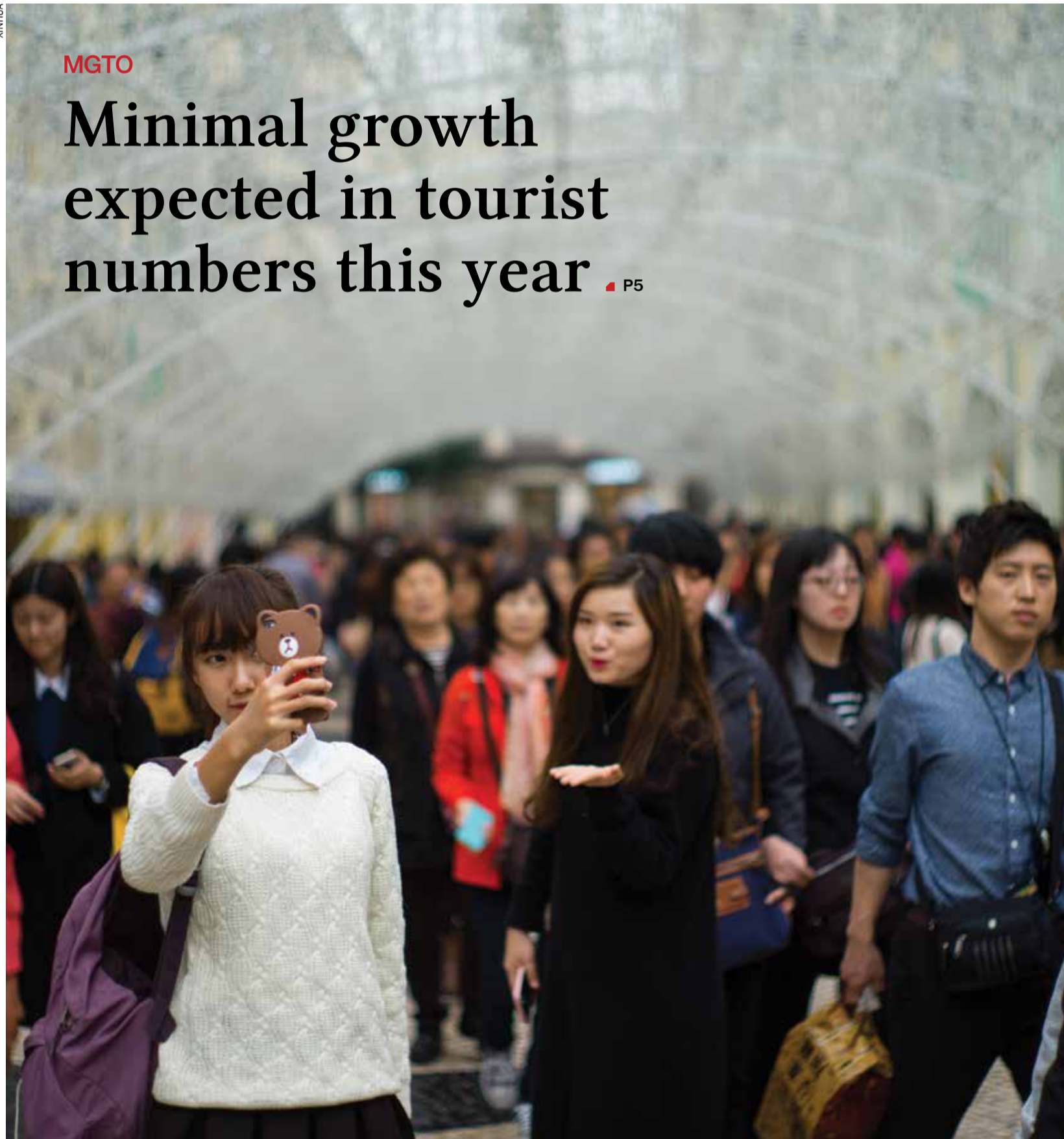
JAPAN Yahoo Japan says it is strengthening policing of the illegal trade of ivory on its online commerce site as criticism grows it is fueling the slaughter of wild elephants. Meanwhile, in Sri Lanka authorities yesterday began destroying a shipment of African ivory seized three years ago.

SOUTH KOREA Maritime police withdrew divers after they failed to find at least four people believed to be trapped inside a Chinese fishing boat that capsized, killing at least one passenger off South Korea's southwest coast.

THAILAND The hunt for the missing Malaysian airliner in the Indian Ocean has been set back with two of the three search ships sustaining damage to vital equipment in recent days.

MALAYSIA The anti-corruption agency says it will appeal the attorney general's decision to clear Prime Minister Najib Razak of criminal charges over a USD681 million financial scandal.

More on backpage



MGTO

Minimal growth expected in tourist numbers this year

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ENVIRONMENT

Management of local wetlands praised

THE management of Macau's wetlands was the topic of a discussion held last week at the University of Saint Joseph. Dr Kampeng Lei commended the work done to preserve the wetlands since renovation projects began in 2009.

Lei, who holds a PhD from the University of Macau and is now serving as an advisor to the government, claims that wetlands are considered to be the most biologically diverse of all ecosystems worldwide.

Wetlands are defined as areas in which water covers the soil for all or part of the year. They play an essential role in maintaining the environment by assisting with water purification, food control, and shoreline stability.

■ The wetlands are home to 173 bird species

In addition, they act as a carbon sink that accumulates and stores carbon-containing chemical compounds, thereby removing them from the atmosphere.

There are two main zones in the MSAR. Zone I is located west of the Cotai land reclamation area, while Zone II is located near the Lotus Bridge. The latter zone was recently included in a list of the top



Kampeng Lei (small picture)

ten most attractive wetlands in China. This can be considered quite a feat, given the quality of the competition on the mainland.

The two wetlands in Macau are important stopover points or destinations for migratory birds flying between Siberia and Australia. They also host a number of resident non-migratory species, some of which are unique to Macau.

According to Lei, the wetlands are collectively home to 173 bird species (some of which are migratory), 366 species of insect, more than 360 plant species and 54 species of fish. Additionally, there are 26 species of dragonfly and 63 species of butterfly, many of which are unique to the MSAR.

Many of the birds that use the wetland areas as a stop-off point are in danger of extinction due to human interference. Despite the threat, the birds are biologically engi-



neered to attempt the journey spanning thousands of miles. Up to 1,000 migratory birds reside in Macau during parts of the migratory season.

In 2009, a decision was made to reverse the recession of Macau's wetlands, and to maintain them so that they can continue to serve as a stop-off point for migratory birds, as well as to serve as a means of promoting eco-tourism.

An ecological project was commissioned in 2011 that in-

involved extending the water-to-land area ratio and planting shaved bamboo, upon which the birds like to perch when feeding.

A second project was conducted in 2014 that reportedly increased the water area by 50 percent. A number of ditches and trenches were also dug.

There are three key areas that the wetlands management personnel monitor throughout the year and upon which necessary restoration

works are undertaken during the summer: water environments; vegetation conditions; and mudflat environments.

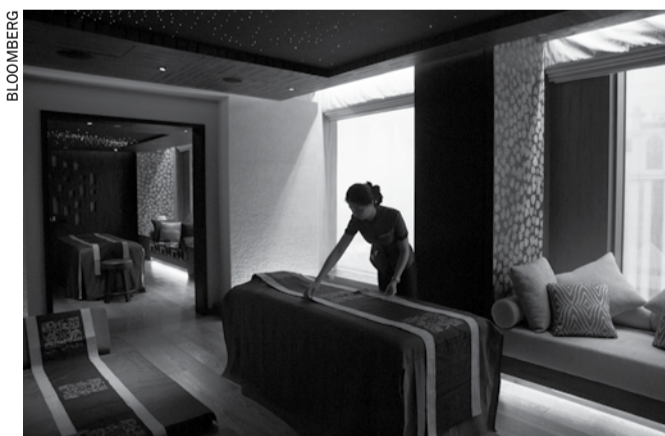
In the summer, grass is also cut because many of the water birds will avoid areas with long grass to evade lurking predators.

The projects are considered important elements in the promotion of eco-tourism, especially with the recent opening of new bird-watching facilities. **Staff reporter**

Unemployment rate stable at 1.9 percent

THE unemployment rate for October–December 2015 remained stable from the previous quarter at 1.9 percent; the underemployment rate was 0.5 percent, down by 0.1 percentage point.

According to a Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) statement issued yesterday, the total labor force was 400,600 and its participation rate stood at 73.2 percent. The sum



An employee arranges a massage table at the Banyan Tree Macau's spa

of employment decreased by 300 from September–November 2015, while the industry has seen a decline in construction-registered employments.

The number of unemployed was recorded to be 7,500 and fresh labor force entrants searching for first jobs accounted for 10.8 percent of the total unemployed, down by 0.9 percentage points.

The general unemploy-

ment rate remained unchanged, while the unemployment rate of local residents, which is 2.6 percent, dropped slightly by 0.1 percentage point.

Analyzed by industry, employment in Gaming & Junket Activities (81,300) and Construction (51,100) decreased by 2,900 and 1,800 respectively, while in Hotels, Restaurants & Similar Activities (57,300) em-

ployment increased by 2,500.

The bureau says that the median monthly employment earning of the workers employed (MOP15,000) and employed residents (MOP18,000) rose by 12.8 percent and 20 percent respectively year-on-year. As regards to household employment, the average number of employed persons per household was 1.8 in both 2014 and 2015; the median monthly income per household increased by 3.7 percent year-on-year to MOP28,000.

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OLIVER Tong, associate director of retail properties at Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL), said yesterday that 'next-generation' retail in Macau should target the local market over the tourist sector. He added that it should strive to introduce value-adding services that differentiate between online and in-store shopping experiences.

Tong made the comments during a presentation at a business luncheon, in which he summarized the health of the retail market. The event was co-organized by the British Business Association of Macau and the American Chamber of Commerce in Macau, both of which are celebrating their tenth anniversaries this year.

Evaluating the state of the industry, the JLL associate director claimed that total retail sales in Macau had dropped 10 percent in the first three quarters of 2015, compared with sales in the same period of 2014.

Luxury goods fared predictably worse, plunging 25 percent, as the drop in consumer traffic, instigated by President Xi's anti-corruption drive on the mainland, continues to slash demand.

However, not all retailers are doing badly, Tong said. He echoed JLL's predictions from last year's annual forecast, by saying that cosmetics, fast

Next-generation retail must target local market, introduce new services



Oliver Tong

fashion and sportswear had all continued to perform strongly in 2015.

His solution to reversing the downward trend is to develop value-adding services to physical shopping locations that would help to differentiate stores from their online competitors. Tong posits that the retail sector needs to consider the question: "What can they do offline that they cannot do online?"

Services like free Wi-Fi, customer lockers and umbrella stands are all very popular in Hong Kong and other major shopping destinations, because they add

convenience to the shopping experience.

The umbrella stands are an interesting example, he says. Customers initially pay a refundable deposit in return for use of the umbrella, but they "must return to the shop or shopping mall to return the umbrella, making it more likely that they will spend more."

"The research shows that these [services] make people come back more, spend more time in the shop, and spend more money," added Tong.

JLL also revealed that, according to data released by the

Statistics and Census Service (DSEC), only 40.1 percent of total retail spending in the MSAR comes from the approximately 30 million visitors to Macau each year. The majority surprisingly stems from a local population of just 636,000, as recorded at the end of 2014.

JLL added that the Macau retail sector is missing an opportunity by continuing to focus on tourism, and neglecting the local promotion of their products.

At a press conference at JLL's headquarters last week, the associate director told the Times that casino operators are in the early stages of targeting the local market, but that little progress has been made thus far.

Additionally, the untapped local opportunity is set to continue growing. According to DSEC, the medium income of Macau residents has consistently risen over the last 12 years. Today, local people are the wealthiest they have ever been in absolute terms, with the medium income reaching MOP15,000 as of the third quarter of 2015. **Staff reporter**

GIANT RUBBER DUCK ON ITS WAY



ON THE sidelines of the BBAM business luncheon at the Mandarin Oriental yesterday, Oliver Tong of Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) publicized the planned arrival of a giant rubber duck in Macau. The giant inflatable duck will arrive in April and will be located near the Science Center in the NAPE area. The JLL associate director said that creative installations such as the giant duck can create a positive impact on nearby retailers, citing the effect the project has had in other locations it has visited. Tong added that the installation could help to drive locals and tourists to visit the area.

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Fiscal Reserves record 40 percent growth

THE overall size of the Fiscal Reserve recorded an annual growth of around 40 percent at the end of 2015, the Monetary Authority of Macau (AMCM) said in a statement, reaching the preliminary figure of MOP345.05 billion.

The total reserve recorded an investment return of MOP2.41 billion; an annualized rate of return of 0.7 percent for the year.

The authority says that the significant growth in the reserve has been used to further diversification amongst global assets in order to allow for a better medium to long term risk and return tradeoff. It now includes foreign exchange reserves mostly denominated in USD, HKD and RMB.

According to AMCM, "the long awaited rate hike by the US Federal Reserve sent the USD stronger during the year, while China implemented stabilizing monetary policies in order to



AMCM's investment philosophy emphasizes safety

boost the economy." Pressure from a dwindling rate differential versus the USD further weakened the Yuan. Total revaluation loss from currency exposure amounted to MOP5.31 billion for 2015.

However investments in

other areas, such as the fixed income market, the equity markets, and the money market (including the bonds market) saw positive returns, contributing to a net income in reserves.

The AMCM stated in a press release issued yesterday that it "will continue to pursue the investment philosophy that emphasizes safety, stability and prudence." The statement adds; "AMCM will effectively manage the reserve investment on the basis of a comprehensive analysis of the relevant risk-return tradeoff."

MUSIC

Academy of St Martin to perform in Macau

THE Macau Cultural Center will present the British orchestra, Academy of St Martin in the Fields (ASMF), at its Grand Auditorium, opening its Asian tour on March 29.

The concert will be led by Sir Neville Marriner and by the Canadian piano virtuoso Angela Hewitt, a master pianist who will make a special appearance. This will be Ms Hewitt's second time to Macau after having performed a recital in CCM back in 2008.

Marriner founded the orchestra in 1958 and played for the first time in its namesake church in 1959. The orchestra is recognized by classical music audiences and has been praised by the [London] Times for its "brooding power, poetic sparkle and dramatic attack." ASMF, who received their first gold disc in 1969 after an acclaimed recording of Vivaldi's "Four Seasons," is among

the most recorded ensembles in the world, having released over 500 recordings to date.

The ensemble performs about 100 concerts around the world each year and, with as many as 15 tours per season, visits the most prestigious venues across various continents, from Europe and Asia to the Americas.

Two iconic pieces by Mozart – the majestic Haffner Symphony and the Piano Concerto No. 25 – will be played as the opening of the upcoming concert. Bizet's vibrant Symphony in C major, a performance that made the Academy's name, will also be performed.

Tickets are available at CCM's box office and Macau Ticketing Networks outlets. The 105 minute concert has variously priced tickets available that will range from MOP180 to MOP480.



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MGTO DIRECTOR

2016 with slight tourist growth 'in the most optimistic view'

Paulo Barbosa

THE Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) expects the number of tourists to increase slightly by one percent year-on-year, both during the upcoming CNY holidays and throughout the entire year.

The head of the MGTO, Helena de Senna Fernandes, said during the bureau's annual press conference at the Sheraton Hotel yesterday, "even in the most optimistic view," a one-percent increase would be a good outcome for the local tourism industry. "We want to maintain this number – 30 million – but our focus will be to attract more overnight tourists and visitors from outside the Guangdong province."

The director recognized that the local economy was "impacted by whirlwind forces," forcing the tourism sector to go through a period of adjustment. With the number of tourists registering a 2.6 percent drop in 2015 (totaling 30.7 million), the bureau expects to diversify the origins of visitors. As the numbers stand now, most tourists come from the Chinese mainland (20.4 million), with tourists from the Guangdong Province representing 44 percent of that figure. The number of international visitors dropped



by 3.9 percent last year. Preliminary data also indicates that a total of 8.52 million tourists came to visit in tour groups last year, a year-on-year decline of 8 percent.

Demonstrating the consequences of the gaming slump, it was said during yesterday's event – which was attended by hundreds of representatives from the hospi-

tality sector – that visitor expenditure between January and September totaled USD26.3 billion, a fall of 36.4 percent.

Presenting a review of the year, the director cited preliminary figures indicating that the average occupancy rate of hotel establishments in 2015 was 81 percent, a decline of 6 percent year-on-year. The average room

rate for three to five-star hotels was USD187, down by 7.8 percent. There are currently 110 hotels in town (including 46 budget accommodation establishments) supplying 33,047 rooms in total. That offer will certainly increase this year, with three new hotels and seven hostels currently undergoing the licensing process. Senna Fernandes estimated that the new hotel facilities will feature 3,000 new rooms.

"At this point, the hotels are targeting tourists from other countries. Previously, perhaps the mainland tourists would be sufficient, but given the 4 percent drop in that market, now we are led to think that, besides China, we should look further away. That was always a MGTO bet, but now we have the support from the [hotel] trade," she said.

No time-frame given to new projects

FOLLOWING recent announcements from the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, the MGTO director, Helena de Senna Fernandes, has said that developments would be made this year in projects such as the setting up of a "café and creative activities at the Nam Van Lake and Taipa Houses Museum" areas. "There are many features that we want to include in those places," Senna Fernandes said, though no clear time-frame was given. "We plan to implement at least something [with respect to those projects] this year."

Other new projects in preparation include expanding the Macau Grand Prix Museum and revitalizing the Coloane still houses. A feasibility study on the possibility of launching leisure cruise tours between the Macau Peninsula and Taipa/Coloane will also be undertaken. New walking tour routes and "more attractive touristic packages" are being arranged as well.

Events like the "Parade Through Macau, Latin City" and the "Macau Light Festival" will be maintained, the director said. Overall, the plan is to promote more touristic offers, in order to attract more visitors and to foster diversification of the region's source markets.

Outdoors, the MGTO will hold many promotional events, ranging from a food festival in Japan to a "major event" in Korea (Seoul and Busan). A promotional video will be launched under the new slogan "Experience Macau



Your Own Style."

To finance these projects, the MGTO will spend over one billion patacas coming from the Tourism Fund, an increase of 4 percent when compared to the spending from 2015. That amount doesn't include the bureau's operational expenses. The bureau's head said that all the projects will be evaluated in order to avoid unnecessary spending. "It's not only about organizing events; we must see that the events are reaching the goals that we set."

During yesterday's event, Senna Fernandes listed four major goals for tourism policy this year: "promote smart tourism by maximizing use of the Internet and social platforms for tourism promotion"; "deepen the planning of tourism development"; "develop electronic administration and enhance tourism service quality"; and finally "strengthen regional cooperation, actively participating in international organizations." **PB**

to Richard Suen after trials in 2008 and 2013.

Suen's attorneys argued the juries got it right, both times.

Suen contends that meetings he arranged with Chinese officials helped Las Vegas Sands Corp. get approval to build lucrative casinos on the Cotai Peninsula.

Adelson contends Suen didn't help and deserves nothing.

Adelson's family recently bought the local Las Vegas Review-Journal newspaper. **AP**

CE attends Coloane center unveiling

Chui Sai On yesterday attended the unveiling ceremony of the new Public Health Clinical Centre in Coloane. The Chief Executive presided over the formal opening ceremony of the center that features a high efficiency air filtration system and an ultra-violet air disinfectant system. In addition, it can accommodate 60 beds and top-of-the-line medical equipment. The new center can serve as a temporary medical home for addressing cases of infectious diseases such as MERS and bird flu, until the dedicated center is completed. The Public Health Clinical Center in Coloane has cost a total of MOP340 million to build.

Gov't under fire for location of disease complex

The government has come under fire again for its controversial plans to build an infectious diseases building near the site of the Conde S. Januario Hospital, numerous residential buildings, schools, and the casino tourism district. Lawmaker Pereira Coutinho criticized the government for failing to fully consider the health and safety impact the building could have on residents living nearby, TDM reported. Over 1500 citizens have now signed a petition against the project that is being led by the Health Bureau. Petitioners say that the government has rushed the project and that they have failed to consult adequately with the public. They insist that the government has not taken into consideration the health risks associated with constructing the building in proximity to heavily populated areas. Construction is due to start later this year.

Glass House relaunches booking program



The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) has opened the new round of the "Temporary Rehearsal Venue Booking Program of Tap Seac Square Commercial Centre" and applications will be accepted from February 1 until June 30. According to a press release, the R2 and R3 spaces of the Glass House remain available as rehearsal spaces for local theatre and dance groups. IC first launched the program in August 2013 at the Tap Seac Square Commercial Center to provide rehearsal venues to local theatre and dance groups, and the program has since accommodated approximately 40 local groups. The Glass House has also been open for various government departments, schools and civic groups to hold activities and events.

1.3 MILLION VISITOR INQUIRIES

THE LOCAL tourist information counters handled over 1.3 million visitor inquiries, material requests and suggestions last year, according to data revealed yesterday. Implementing measures to tackle illegal accommodation, an interdepartmental task force inspected over 1,100 apartments and sealed 153 of them. MGTO submitted an analytical report to the government on a proposed amendment to the Law on "Prohibition of Providing Illegal Accommodation."

COURTS

Nevada justices hear arguments in Las Vegas Sands Macau case

THE question of whether casino magnate Sheldon Adelson's company has to pay a USD70 million judgment to a Hong Kong businessman for helping to secure business in Macau is now before the Nevada Supreme Court.

Justices made no immediate ruling Tuesday after arguments in Las Vegas in a closely contested 12-year-old case.

Harvard University law professor Alan Dershowitz argued the case for Sands, which is appealing jury awards granted

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150kg of fruits and vegetables seized

THE Customs Service has inspected a car with license plates from both Zhuhai and Macau, having confiscated 150 kilograms of fruits and vegetables that were found on the backseat and in the trunk of the vehicle.

Four confirmed illegal records, occurring between 2014 and October of 2015, have also been related to that vehicle. The Customs Service has already prosecuted the two drivers involved in the case.

An operation conducted last week targeted food brought in by grey good traders. This operation involved investigations upon eight restaurants, resulting in a total seizure of about 586kg of goods imported without permission, including 330kg of vegetables and 19kg of processed food.

As the Chinese New Year approaches, authorities announced their intentions to expand their surveillance to ensure local food safety.



Wynn contractor may owe USD200m for casino delay

WYNN Macau Ltd. has said that the contractor commissioned to build the company's second casino in Macau could be liable for as much as USD200 million in damages if the Wynn Palace project experiences further delays.

Leighton Contractors (Asia) Ltd., part of Australia's CIMIC Group Ltd., has been issued with a letter "to reinforce the importance" of meeting the scheduled June opening, Wynn Macau Ltd. said yesterday in a stock exchange statement.

"We are concerned that with your current levels of progress in the execution of the work, you will fail to achieve the third interim milestone," the Macau casino operator said in a statement signed by billionaire founder Steve Wynn.

Wynn Macau intends to deduct payments from Leighton amounting to USD200,000 for every day construction is delayed "in respect of any



failure by you [Leighton] to meet your completion obligations."

In addition, Leighton could become liable to pay delay damages equating to USD6.2 million, up until the end of this month.

In November, Wynn Resorts announced that the slated opening of the Wynn Palace would be postponed from March until June 25, 2016, after Leighton notified the company that they would be unable to attain the previous construction milestone to schedule.

The latest construction delays will not affect the revised opening date of the Wynn Palace, says a spokesperson for Wynn Resorts Ltd., parent of the Macau unit.

"We are not announcing any delay of Wynn Palace," said Michael Weaver, spokesman for Wynn Resorts. He declined to comment on the likelihood and potential impact of a delay to the project.

Fiona Tyndall, a spokeswoman for Sydney-based CIMIC, previously called Leighton Holdings who declined to comment.

The Wynn statement additionally said that due to the latest instances of construction delays, Leighton Contractors (Asia) are no longer eligible to receive an early completion bonus of approximately USD38 million.

CIMIC shares fell as much as 1.5 percent to AUS24.17 in Australia, the biggest one-day drop in more than a week. Wynn Macau jumped as much as 4.7 percent to HKD7.88 in Hong Kong to the highest level since January 8, amid a broader rally in casino stocks.

The Wynn Palace, one of a number of new casino resorts due to open in Macau this year, is to feature 1,700 hotel rooms, a lake with gondolas and fountains, a meeting space and a casino. It is the first of the company's venues in the developing gambling Cotai area.

The new resorts are highly anticipated as more mass-market attractions, and a transformation of the Cotai Strip "from the construction zone it's been for two years" should help Macau "regain its allure and buzz" among China's growing consumer class, according to Bloomberg Intelligence in a note last week. **MDT/Bloomberg**

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Enda Curran

WHEN Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen looks for an update on China at this week's policy meeting, she'll find little reason for cheer.

The Shanghai Composite Index has tumbled to a 13-month low as a rout that started in the middle of 2015 shows no signs of easing up. Capital is leaving at a record pace. Readings on the economy remain mixed, with expansion last quarter at the slowest pace since 2009. And then there's the yuan: down about 5 percent over the past year against the dollar, and concerns of a steeper devaluation are persisting.

Taken together, the signals from the world's second-largest economy bolster those calling for the U.S. central bank to hold off from another interest-rate increase, said David Mann, chief Asia economist at Standard Chartered Plc in Singapore.

"The Fed has to pay more attention than ever before to what is happening in China," Mann said. "China's market wobbles and U.S. stock indices' recent performance add to the list of reasons to expect a move dovish outcome."

Yellen and her fellow officials are expected to hold rates steady at their first gathering of the year, a two-day meeting that concludes today. Investors will look for any commentary around risks from emerging economies and China in particular in the statement to be released at 2 p.m. in Washington. Overnight, the Shanghai Composite Index dropped 0.5 percent, extending a 6.4 percent plunge on Tuesday.

By contrast, a period of relative calm in China's markets toward the end of 2015 helped the Fed to raise rates for the first time in almost a decade. That was after Yellen in September said China's market turmoil had been

China climbs back up Yellen's worry list amid market rout



Janet Yellen, chair of the US Federal Reserve, speaks at the Economic Club of Washington

among reasons to stay on hold.

To be sure, the panic seen on China's markets is viewed as out of step with the underlying economy, which is expected to undergo another modest slowdown this year. Gross domestic product will expand 6.5 percent in 2016, compared with last year's 6.9 percent, according to the latest survey of economists by Bloomberg News.

The Fed's September response to that round of China-induced turmoil has become increasingly viewed as an overreaction. For that reason, Yellen will be intent on looking through financial market reactions and concentrating on China's real economy, according to Mickey

Levy, the New York-based chief economist for the U.S. and Asia at German bank Berenberg.

"Having made a blunder in September, they'll be more careful this time around and not be so reactionary to the financial turmoil," Levy said. "They'll be more focused on the fundamentals."

The Fed's "baseline" view of China is that the economy is clearly slowing, but with tremendous uncertainty over how much it's slowing, he said.

Yet the lingering perception from China's market woes is fueling jitters around the world.

"The general risk-off sentiment that it seems to have triggered must be a concern to

the Fed as it tightens financial conditions in the U.S.," said Richard Jerram, the chief economist at Bank of Singapore.

Capital outflows hit USD1 trillion in 2015, more than seven times the drain in 2014, based on Bloomberg Intelligence data dating back to 2006. While the consumer and services sectors continue to hold up well, their strength isn't enough to offset a slowdown in manufacturing and exports.

Another China problem: transparency. A growing chorus of current and former policy makers, including International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde, have called on China to be more

Janet Yellen and her fellow officials are expected to hold rates steady at their first gathering of the year, which concludes today

explicit about its exchange-rate policy. That might be easier said than done in a centrally controlled economy.

"Who in China would do the signaling?" said Andy Xie, an independent economist who previously worked for the World Bank and Morgan Stanley. "The recent policy actions are pretty chaotic."

Some Chinese policy makers put the blame for currency swings elsewhere. Vice President Li Yuanchao last week said the yuan's recent depreciation was fueled by the Fed's decision to raise interest rates.

Whoever is right, investors and policy makers are likely to remain cautious on China, Standard Chartered's Mann said.

"Confidence has been hard hit since the start of January by worries over policy direction in China, specifically over whether there is a conscious effort to weaken the currency," he said.

Bloomberg

corporate bits

THE VENETIAN TO PARTICIPATE IN SATTE 2016 TRADESHOW

The Venetian Macao is scheduled to participate in the upcoming SATTE 2016 tradeshow for the sixth time. The event will be held in New Delhi from January 29 to 31 and the casino will announce its latest promotions, including the "Scrumptious Macau Getaway" hotel package, "Macau Meetings with More" MICE package, and its range of entertainment options. The getaway package is available at three Sands Resorts Cotai Strip Macau properties, offering accommodation, shopping offers and dining options, including one at the only Michelin-starred Indian restaurant in Asia. "Macau Meetings



with More," a promotion for MICE delegates and event planners, offers a wide range of discount benefits at all six Sands Resorts Cotai

Strip Macau hotels. The Venetian will attend the trade show to boast its extensive MICE, entertainment and hospitality facilities.

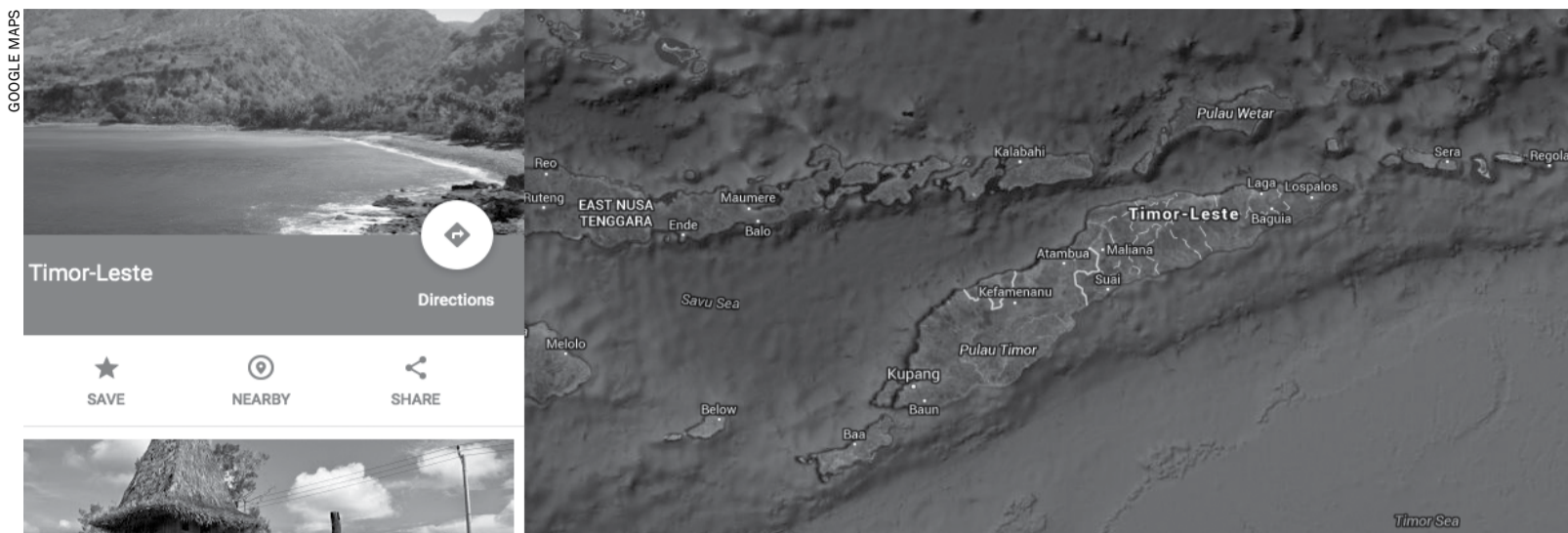
GRAND HYATT TO CELEBRATE CNY WITH DONGBEI FEAST

To celebrate the Chinese Lunar New Year, the Grand Hyatt's Beijing Kitchen will follow in Dongbei's tradition of feasting on a whole pig, which symbolizes plenty of luck and blessings for the year ahead. Beijing Kitchen offers the time-honored tradition of experiencing a Chinese Spring Festival feast, prepared by the restaurant's experienced and well-traveled chefs, Shenyang and Dalian. These two chefs have journeyed to Northeast regions to explore and study authentic ingredients and flavors of the whole pig feast. "Mouthwatering mains include braised pork cheek in soy sauce, sautéed pig tails with fresh chili, and



Dongbei-style braised pork belly with vermicelli, black pudding and preserved vegetables," a press release reads. The CNY dinner will

be served from February 7 to March 13. Beijing Kitchen promises a seasonal taste of northern China and classic village dishes.



THE CONUNDRUM OF EAST TIMOR

Few tourists but tourism is key to development

Maya Leonor, Dili

THE Tale of the Timorese Coffee Farmer – Timor-Leste's booth at the 2015 Milan Expo – showcases one of the region's main exports. This exhibition marks the country's biggest international promotion event to date, representing a significant moment for the country's ascension onto the world scene. Members of the Timorese government have visited Milan, and a permanent delegation has been established to help promote a country that remains, for the most part, completely unknown around the world.

The exhibit conveys much about what Timor-Leste (East Timor) hopes to achieve in terms of its development – tourism included – and about the challenges it faces in doing so, all against the backdrop of the country's coffee production. The Timorese coffee farmer who has “experienced not only the effects of colonization, war and political upheaval” but also “has [had] to compete internationally with other much larger and established coffee producing nations globally through means of producing organic, premium coffee” has met these challenges by maintaining organic farming in order to promote sustainable development and environmentally friendly practices. This sort of streamlined solution has yet to be achieved in the context of tourism.

In tourism, as in coffee, Timor-Leste must bear the burden of its past – for example, lack of infrastructure and adequately trained human resources – and it faces stiff competition from other established and emerging markets. There are many popular tourism destinations nearby, notably in the vast Indonesian archipelago, where infrastructure is better, prices more accessible, and the tourism sector better prepared.

One of the least visited countries in the world (it is difficult to come up with real tourism sta-

tistics as most tourism visas are obtained by people who actually work temporarily there), Timor-Leste welcomes perhaps only a few thousand tourists a year. Encountering visitors travelling the country is still quite a novelty, despite the growing number of programmes, tours, options, and destinations. Many simply fly into Dili on prepaid and pre-booked tours to go diving, returning to the airport immediately. Others are “political tourists” visiting the revolutionary sites and stomping grounds of political change in the newest nation of the 21st century, partaking in the history of a nation that was, in 1999, the focus of global media attention.

■ In tourism, as in coffee, Timor must bear the burden of its past – for example, lack of infrastructure and adequately trained human resources

A study published in early 2015 by the Asia Foundation based on a survey of 700 visitors concludes that the country's tourism sector is promising. Based on inbound arrivals, it estimates that the industry is currently worth USD14.6 million per annum, placing it close behind coffee, which remains Timor-Leste's primary export in the non-oil economy at USD15 million per annum. “The study also indicates high satisfaction with 83 [percent] of travellers believing their experience met their expectations with almost equal proportions saying they would recommend Timor-

Leste to their friends and family,” the study notes.

This satisfaction is not reflected in the numbers, however. Compared to other nations in the region, for example, a recent ANZ analysis confirms that in the case of Timor-Leste, the contribution of tourism to its GDP is “n/a”, while it represents 13 percent in the Solomon Islands and 40 percent in Fiji. While it is difficult to compete with the huge oil and gas industry (which almost entirely funds the country), tourism should and could have a greater impact.

To be sure, Timor-Leste is not currently a major destination on the tourism map, as a recent newspaper article would indicate: “Timor-Leste: what it's like to travel in a land without tourists.” But there have been advancements in the past few years that could turn the tide: there are now regular diving tours, both on the main island as well as on the island of Atauro, and “political tourism” continues to attract people from all over the world. Personal recommendations – often by people who live or have lived in the country – also account for a percentage.

Overall, the tourism industry has grown significantly: flights to and from the country have increased with availability from Darwin, Bali, and Singapore; there are more boats for hire; accommodation has increased; and the shopping and restaurant industries have expanded. This rapid growth is significant for a country that almost burned to the ground only 16 years ago and has since had to weather a significant civil conflict in 2006.

The capital, Dili, is a prime example of Timor-Leste's ability to meet the needs of global events. It hosted the 10th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries in 2014, and accommodated in June of this year (despite the skepticism of many Timorese and foreigners

living in Dili), a one-day unprecedented influx of hundreds of tourists from the Pacific Jewel Ship, the first ever cruise ship to dock in Timor-Leste. The city's infrastructure responded well, tours were organized both in Dili and outside the capital, and tourists reported positive experiences overall. But this may not be enough for tourism development to truly thrive.

In a highly competitive global tourism market, in a region where tourism is king and visitors already have an unending range of options – from luxury to off-the-beaten-track – Timor-Leste barely registers, and changing that will require significant investment not just in marketing and brand development. Perhaps more important to determine is what ilk of tourism, exactly, Timor-Leste wants to offer and how to go about laying the groundwork for the development that would accomplish such a goal.

The majority of visitors to the country, for example, note that they relied on word-of-mouth recommendations to inform their itinerary ahead of their trip, as there was little or no information available online or in other traditional media sources. Nor was this void filled when they entered the country. For example, hotels offer little or no promotional materials at all for guests.

Currently, the government's strategy centres on five pillars: ecological and maritime tourism, historic and cultural tourism, sport and adventure tourism, religious tourism, and tourism partnered with conferences and conventions. Areas, which require shared improvements, such as basic infrastructure, but target completely different audiences and markets therefore require completely different public and private projects, which will prove both costly and inefficient. The strategy planning documents also acknowledge difficulties in a crucial element of any tourism development: human resources. Timor-Leste lacks trained staff particularly in the service industry where better language skills are required and specific technical expertise necessary.

Of course, one of the biggest challenges is the lack of infrastructure. Despite the improvements made in the 13 years since independence, much remains to

be done, most notably in areas such as roads, water, sanitation, and other basic commodities, which any large-scale tourism strategy requires. Such large-scale promised investments remain on paper, and actual improvements, for example, in roads, have been slow and difficult.

On the consumer side, just getting to the country is expensive (from Singapore it can cost upwards of USD500 and from Darwin even more so); travelling in the country is equally expensive (a 4WD car can cost up to USD100 per day); and the accommodation available generally offers little value for money spent, despite recent developments and new spaces. Comparatively, the tourism dollar does not stretch far in Timor-Leste. The Asia Foundation survey, for example, notes that a visit to Timor-Leste (flights excluded) would cost around USD638, suggesting that “the annual economic value-add by travellers who have participated in leisure travel during their visit to Timor-Leste is approximately USD14.6 million”.

For the government, tourism is – alongside agriculture and oil and gas – one of the pillars for the country's future economic development. After all, Timor-Leste has “considerable advantages” in these industries due to the country's “natural resources, geography, and economic profile.” Yet, the government recognizes that consolidating this objective is a mid-term endeavour, expecting that it may not be until 2030 that Timor-Leste will “have a well-developed tourism industry, attracting a large number of international visitors, contributing substantially to the creation of community benefits, locally and nationally, and creating jobs in the country.” The Strategic Development Plan (2011-2030), which serves as a guide for government and state strategy across all areas, considers the “natural beauty, rich history, and cultural patrimony” of Timor-Leste of containing “great potential for the development of tourism as an important industry for economic development”.

Effectively utilizing this potential towards the end goal, however, has proven more complicated and less realistic: of the objectives for 2015, only one has been achieved – the Archive and Museum of the Timorese Resistance. The five Regional Cultural Centres have not been opened; the National Archive and Library remain, largely, a theoretical project; the project of building outdoor cinemas around the country has yet to take off; and the National Creative Arts Academy still does not exist at all.

This, unfortunately, points to a sluggish development of the tourism industry. But this cloud may contain a silver lining: for now, visitors to Timor-Leste may have the unique experience of travelling around a country undulterated with the consequences of tourism. A country in its raw, genuine form. Enjoy it while you can. **MDT/Macauhub**

Ai Weiwei withdraws works in Denmark due to immigration law



Chinese artist Ai Weiwei arrives for a news conference about his Einstein Professorship at the University Of Arts, Berlin

CHINESE artist and activist Ai Weiwei is withdrawing his works from two museums in Denmark to protest a new law that allows Danish authorities to seize valuables from migrants.

Ai announced on social media yesterday that he no longer wanted to have his works on display at the Aros museum in Aarhus and the Faurschou Foundation in Copenhagen.

Curator Jennie Haagemann told AP that Ai called the owner of the Faurschou Foundation to inform him of his decision. The museum had been planning to extend a popular exhibition of Ai's

works until April, but ended it with immediate effect, Haagemann said.

"One could say it's a shame because Ai Weiwei's art is so much about freedom and humanity," she said, adding that the owner respected Ai's decision.

Aros museum officials said they didn't know anything beyond what Ai had posted on Twitter and Instagram. His works were part of the museum's ongoing exhibition "A New Dynasty — Created in China."

Museum director Erlend Hoeyersten said he has "great respect" for Ai's criticism of Danish immigration policies, "but I also find it unreasonable that an entire people is punished for the government's policies."

Danish lawmakers this week adopted a new law that gives police the right to seize valuables above 10,000 kroner (USD1,500) from asylum-seekers to help cover their housing and food costs while their cases are being processed. It also extends from one year to three the period that family members must wait before they can join a refugee in Denmark.

Human rights activists say the new rules are degrading to people who have fled war and poverty.

Danish government officials say similar rules already apply to Danes, who must sell assets worth more than 10,000 kroner before they can receive social benefits. **AP**

COMMODITIES

Aluminum extends gain on Chinese imports as Xi vows more demand

ALUMINUM and zinc were the best performers among base metals as Chinese leaders pledged to boost demand in its flagging economy. Most mining stocks fell in London trading.

Aluminum climbed 1 percent to USD1,510 a metric ton yesterday in London, extending Tuesday's advance. Zinc added 1.1 percent, while copper was little changed. Antofagasta Plc, the copper miner controlled by Chile's richest family, slid 3.4 percent after missing its 2015 output target.

Data Tuesday showed Chinese imports of zinc surging in December to the highest since May 2009, while copper shipments rose to the highest since at least 2008, as buyers snapped up metal in anticipation of further weakness in the yuan. The nation must reduce excessive capacity while expanding aggregate demand, according to a state television report citing President Xi Jinping on the same day.

"After a strong day yesterday, the base metals have largely retained the gains made on stronger Chinese imports," Vivienne Lloyd, an industrial metals analyst at Macquarie Group Ltd. in London, said by phone. "I wouldn't be surprised to see the market take a bit of a breather today with lower volumes."

Aluminum climbed above \$1,500 a ton, marking a significant move, Lloyd said. A close at above that level would be the highest this year. Alcoa Inc., which is spinning off aluminum assets later this year, says global demand for the metal will exceed production this year by a record 1.2 million metric tons, forcing car and appliance makers to draw down inventories.

Anglo American Plc led mining shares lower, falling 4.4 percent. BHP Billiton Ltd. lost 3.2 percent.

Antofagasta produced 630,300 metric tons last year, down 11 percent from 2014, as lower grades and community protests curbed output from its mines, according to a statement yesterday. The company's shares have plunged more than 20 percent this year.

"The continued deterioration of the macro-environment and associated falling commodity prices combined with several operational setbacks resulted in copper production declining," Chief Executive Officer Diego Hernandez said in the statement. "Whilst we have finished the year on a good note, 2015 has been undeniably difficult." **Bloomberg**

Australia: Nations will respect tribunal on South China Sea

AN international arbitration case over the disputed South China Sea that has been boycotted by China will "settle once and for all" whether artificial reefs are entitled to territorial waters, Australia's top diplomat said.

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said the ruling by the tribunal in the Hague in the case brought by the Philippines will be "extremely important" as a statement of international principle.

She said that although Beijing is saying it will not be bound by the ruling, which is expected later this year, the tribunal's decision "will be embraced and upheld by all other nations with claims or interests in the region."

China has built up several artificial islands to advance its sweeping territorial claims in the South China Sea, a major thoroughfare for world trade. China says its claims have a historical basis, but that has brought it into conflict with other claimants like the Philippines and Vietnam, and raised broader international concerns over Beijing's intentions.

"In my mind that arbitration will settle



People pose for a group photo together after landing at the airfield on Fiery Cross Reef, known as Yongshu Reef in Chinese, in the Spratly Islands, known as Nansha Islands in Chinese, of the South China Sea

le once and for all the question of whether or not an artificial reef can create some kind of 12 nautical mile buffer. Our belief is that it does not as a matter of international law," Bishop told a seminar organized by the Center for a New American Security, a Washington-based think tank.

Australia is not among the claimant governments in the South China Sea, but Bishop said that like the U.S., it supports freedom of navigation and overflight. She sidestepped questions about

whether Australia, a close U.S. ally, would follow Washington in conducting a freedom of navigation mission close to China's artificial islands.

She called on Southeast Asian nations and China to put in place a code of conduct on behavior of nations in the South China Sea — an initiative that has made little headway in the past dozen years.

"We want to see de-escalation of tensions in the region. We would hate for there to be some kind of miscalculation that would lead to conflict," Bishop said. **AP**

Matthew Lee
& Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

THE United States and China sparred yesterday on how to deal with North Korea's latest nuclear weapons test and ease rising tensions over territorial disputes in the South China Sea.

After meeting for more than four hours in Beijing in what they both termed "constructive" and "candid" discussions, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi nonetheless presented sharply opposing positions on the two issues at a news conference.

Kerry acknowledged that "our differences will continue to test us" but stressed that the world benefits when the United States and China are able to work together, including on the Iran nuclear deal and climate change.

On North Korea, Kerry said the United States wanted new U.N. Security Council action that would impose "significant new measures" to punish Pyongyang for its latest test earlier this month and boost pressure on it to return to disarmament talks.

"There's been a lot of talk about North Korea through these past years. Now we believe is the time for action that can bring North Korea back to the table," Kerry said.

Wang said China agreed on the need for a new resolution, but suggested that Beijing would not support new sanctions. "Sanctions are not an end in themselves," he said.

"The new resolution should not provoke new tension in the situation, still less destabilize the Korean peninsula," Wang said.

China is North Korea's most important ally, chief trading partner and a key source of economic assistance. While it condemned the latest test, Beijing has balked at imposing harsh sanctions that could destabilize the hard-line communist regime.

Kerry noted that sanctions had brought Iran to the nuclear negotiating table. "With all due respect," he said. "More significant and impactful sanctions were put in place against Iran, which did not have a nuclear weapon than against North Korea, which does."

"All nations, particularly those who seek a global leadership role, or have a global leadership role, have a responsibility to deal with this threat," he said, referring to China.

Kerry said the sides agreed both on the need for a strong new resolution on North Korea, but also to accelerate talks on what that would entail.

"It's good to agree on the goal. But it's not enough to agree on the goal, we believe we need to agree on the meaningful steps

AP PHOTO



U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry

US, China spar over N. Korea, South China Sea

necessary to get to the achievement of the goal to the negotiations that result in denuclearization," Kerry said.

For his part, Wang also took umbrage at U.S. complaints that China is not doing as much as it can with the leverage it has on North Korea to stop the destabilizing behavior. He noted that China's position has been consistent in opposing North Korea's nuclear weapons program and supporting a diplomatic resolution to the matter.

"For many years China has been working hard to implement these," he said. "We have delivered on our obligation."

Wang said China's position is

All nations, particularly those who seek a global leadership role ... have a responsibility to deal with this [nuclear] threat.

JOHN KERRY
U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE

"clear cut" and "responsible."

"Our position will not be swayed by specific events or the temporary mood of the moment," he said. "We reject all groundless speculation or distortion of China's position."

Kerry, though, pressed ahead, saying that China is North Korea's main link to the outside world, and that it could do more to limit cross-border transactions that benefit North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his government.

Kim Jong Un's actions in testing the latest device was "reckless and dangerous," Kerry said, vowing that the U.S. would take whatever steps it needed to protect itself and its allies.

Kerry, who after meeting with Wang was set to see State Councilor Yang Jiechi and President Xi Jinping, also called on China to halt land reclamation and construction of airstrips in disputed areas of the South China Sea, steps that have alarmed its smaller neighbors.

"I stressed the importance of finding common ground among the claimants and avoiding the destabilizing cycle of mistrust or escalation," Kerry said.

Wang, though denied that China has been doing anything other than protecting its territorial sovereignty. And, he rejected accusations from the United States and others

that China was not interested in peaceful resolutions to the disputes or militarizing the areas. "We cannot accept the allegation that China's words are not being matched by actions."

Kerry arrived in China from stops in Laos and Cambodia, where he called on the two members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to present a united front in dealing with increasing Chinese assertiveness over the South China Sea claims. His visits to Vientiane and Phnom Penh come ahead of a summit with the leaders of all 10 ASEAN nations that President Barack Obama will host next month in California.

China, which claims sovereignty of much of the territory in the South China Sea, rejects claims from countries like the Philippines and Vietnam and has bristled at U.S. warnings that its activities threaten the freedom of navigation in some of the world's busiest commercial shipping lanes. Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei also have overlapping claims in the strategically vital sea, through which around USD5 trillion in world trade passes each year.

The U.S. says it takes no position on the claims but says developments in the South China Sea are a national security interest. It has urged that the disputes be settled peacefully

and that a binding code of conduct be established for the area.

Tensions have been especially high since Beijing transformed seven disputed reefs into islands, where it is now constructing runways and facilities that rival claimants say can be used militarily. China has said it built the islands primarily to foster safe civilian sea travel and fishing.

In response, the U.S. sent a guided-missile destroyer close to one of the Chinese-built islands, called Subi Reef, in October in a challenge to Beijing's territorial claims, sparking warnings from China. U.S. officials vowed to continue maneuvers to protect freedom of navigation and overflight.

Recent developments, including China's movement of an oil rig into a zone disputed with Vietnam and warnings against Philippines overflight of what it claims to be its territory, have raised those levels of concern. China dismisses the warnings as unwarranted, but has harshly criticized a U.S.-Philippines defense pact that allows American forces, warships and planes to be based temporarily in local military camps. China says that will "escalate tensions and undermine peace and stability in the region," echoing language the United States uses to criticize China's actions. **AP**

Eric Talmadge, Tokyo

ANALYSIS

US student arrest renews scrutiny of N. Korean tours

AN American university student's arrest in North Korea has rekindled questions about whether a small but steady trickle of U.S. tourists who go to the country are unwittingly offering themselves up as valuable pawns in a political game with Pyongyang that can have serious repercussions for officials back in Washington who have to bail them out when things go wrong.

U.S. tourism to North Korea is legal and virtually all Americans who make the journey return home without incident.

But the detention of Otto Warmbier (WORM-bir), a 21-year-old University of Virginia economics major who had chosen to spend his New Year's vacation in North Korea, comes at a particularly difficult, or opportune, time, depending on how you choose to interpret it.

Just days after he was arrested, North Korea conducted what it said was its first H-bomb test. As Warmbier sits in detention, the United Nations Security Council is mulling a new round of what are expected to be heavy sanctions in response to that test.

According to Warmbier's tour agent, Young Pioneer Tours, he was almost on his plane home when officials pulled him aside, took him into a special room at the Pyongyang airport and placed him under arrest for allegedly committing an as-yet-undisclosed hostile act against the state.

He is still under lock-and-key, possibly in the relative comfort of the Yanggakdo, a tourist hotel where his group had stayed that has previously been used to keep detainees until they are deported or more formal legal measures are taken. North Korea says he is under investigation and acted with the "tacit connivance of the U.S. government and under its manipulation."

That is an ominous detail for North Korea to offer.



Passengers wait for their luggage upon arrival from Beijing at the Sunan International Airport in Pyongyang

Initial announcements by North Korea rarely say much about the actual crime, and linking it to the U.S. government in their first statement to the world through state-run media is highly uncommon. Though not a tourist, one more American, missionary Kim Dong Chul, believed to be a naturalized citizen of Korean descent, is reportedly in North Korean custody along with a Canadian-Korean missionary who is serving a life sentence.

"We can't comment on Mr. Warmbier's case at this time as we don't feel it would be in his interests, but every arrest that has occurred has, to our knowledge, been with context," Troy Collings, one of the directors of Young Pioneer Tours, said in an email yesterday.

Without more information on the charges, it's impossible to gauge North Korea's motives for throwing the book at Warmbier or speculate about how difficult his release might be.

Despite the headlines and attention they garner, especially compared with problems involving Chinese visitors, who are far more numerous but rarely if ever jailed, actual arrests of U.S. tourists in North Korea are extremely rare. And while North Korea might be lowering the bar for cases it chooses to pursue, arrests are by no means random — virtually all have come after violations of well-known North Korean regulations on how tourists must conduct themselves.

But the real problems kick in over what happens next. That's when things tend to get political.

North Korea and the United States are still technically at war and have no diplomatic relations. So gaining an American's freedom can and often does require a senior U.S. official or well-known statesman to fly to Pyongyang, hat in hand, to personally bail the detainee out.

That's great for North Korea, where it's portrayed as a magnanimous humanitarian act and U.S. capitulation. For Washington, it's an unwanted distraction and forced detour from its efforts to isolate North Korea by refusing to deal with it in any kind of substantive bilateral negotiation.

Without banning it outright, the U.S. State Department has long warned against travel to North Korea. But, post nuclear test, the U.S. is now reportedly seeking a ban on tourism and restrictions to keep North Korea's flagship airline, Air Koryo, from flying into and out of airports abroad. Most tourists board their flights to Pyongyang from Beijing.

As yet, none of the major North Korea travel agencies are canceling upcoming trips. One of the year's biggest tourist draws, the Pyongyang marathon, is just months away.

They are, however, concerned about the fallout from Warmbier's arrest.

China-based Young Pioneer stressed in a news release that Warmbier was the first of the 7,000 people it has taken to North Korea over the past eight years to face arrest. Uri Tours, based in New Jersey, told the AP that it has also only had one such case — American Matthew Miller, who ripped up his tourist visa on arrival in what he has said was a deliberate attempt to get arrested.

Beijing-based Koryo Tours, the biggest agent specializing in bringing Westerners to North Korea, was not immediately available for comment.

"We serve about 1,000 travelers per year on average to the DPRK," Uri Tours CEO Andrea Lee said in an email

from Shanghai, using the acronym for North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. "About 40 percent of our travel clients are American. We have been operating in the country for nearly 15 years, and the only one incident we've had was the case of Matthew Miller."

In the past, North Korea has held out until senior U.S. officials or statesmen came to personally bail out detainees, all the way up to former President Bill Clinton, whose visit in 2009 secured the freedom of American journalists Euna Lee and Laura Ling. Both had crossed North Korea's border from China illegally.

It took a visit in November 2014 by U.S. spy chief James Clapper to bring home Miller and Korean-American missionary Kenneth Bae, who had been incarcerated since November 2012.

Jeffrey Fowle, another U.S. tourist detained for six months at about the same time as Miller, was released just before that and sent home on a U.S. government plane. Fowle left a Bible in a local club hoping a North Korean would find it, which is considered a criminal offense in North Korea.

Still, Lee said Americans are not treated differently from other tourists.

"Critics claim that tourism is an avenue for the DPRK government to arrest Americans as political hostages. However, this has not been our experience," she said. "We've taken many American tourists and with the exception of Matthew Miller, they've all returned safely with positive feedback." **AP**

JAPAN

Zero fighter flies over the country for first time since WWII

ONE of Mitsubishi's legendary Zero fighter planes took to the skies over Japan yesterday for the first time since World War II.

The restored plane made a brief flight to and from a naval base in southern Japan. Decorated former U.S. Air Force pilot Skip Holm flew the aircraft.

Zero fighters were considered one of the most capable long-range fighter

planes in World War II, rivaling the British Spitfire. Only a few are still in operating condition.

This particular plane was found decaying in Papua New Guinea in the 1970s. It was owned by an American until Japanese businessman Masahiro Ishizuka purchased it and brought it to Japan last September.

"I wanted for the people of Japan and especially

young people to know about this Zero airplane, as well as those who are old who remember the past," Ishizuka said. "Each of them should have different thoughts and perspectives on this, but I just want people to know how Japan has developed its technology."

Japanese see the aircraft both as a symbol of their country's technological advance and a reminder of the harrowing

history of the war. In the last phase of the fighting, they were used for "kamikaze" attacks.

Kamikaze pilots took off from the same airfield as yesterday's flight, Kanoya Naval Air Base on the island of Kyushu.

Under its previous American owner, the plane made an appearance in the Hollywood movie "Pearl Harbor" and at various events in the United States. **AP**



PHILIPPINES

President Aquino welcomes Japan's emperor as ties blossom

Jim Gomez & Teresa Cerojano,
Manila

PHILIPPINE President Benigno Aquino III gave a red-carpet welcome to Japan's emperor yesterday in a sign of blossoming ties between the two nations, both mired in territorial disputes with China, while further moving past painful memories of Japan's World War II aggression.

Aquino and Emperor Akihito held talks at Manila's Malacanang presidential palace, where Philippine and Japanese flags were displayed side by side and Filipino troops fired cannons in a traditional salute. Aquino is to host a state banquet later for Akihito, whose visit marks 60 years of diplomatic relations between the two nations.

Aquino and Akihito briefly discussed robust sales of Japanese-made cars that have contributed to Manila's heavy traffic and the entry of Japanese retail store Uniqlo, presidential spokesman Herminio Coloma Jr. said.

Akihito, a revered symbol of Japanese unity who plays no political role in his country,



Filipinos wave Japanese and Philippine flags during a wreath-laying ceremony by visiting Japan's Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko at the monument of Dr. Jose P. Rizal, the country's National Hero

does not plan to discuss contentious security issues such as the territorial disputes or demands for an apology by Filipino women who accuse Japan's wartime army of forcing them into sexual slavery, according to the emperor's press secretary, Hatsu-hisa Takashima.

During the meeting with Aquino, "there was no mention of the war," he told reporters.

But Takashima said it was

well known to Aquino that the emperor had earlier expressed his "profound remorse for the loss of lives of many Filipinos" during the war and that "the Japanese people must remember the agony and difficulty suffered, experienced by Filipino people."

Asked if an apology could put an ending to the issue of wartime sex slaves, Takashima said it was not the emperor's role to

address individual subjects related to the war, but that Akihito "always mentions the necessity of peace and the stability of the international relations as well as [to] never forget the war and never forget the victims of the war."

Relations between Japan and the Philippines have improved dramatically in the seven decades since the war, with Japan becoming a major trading part-

ner and aid donor for the Philippines. Akihito's visit is seen as a strong sign of a further deepening of ties as the countries, both close American allies, confront China over long-contested maritime territories.

Japan's Self-Defense Forces have staged joint search and rescue exercises with the Philippine navy near the disputed South China Sea and are providing the Philippines with coast guard patrol boats.

Still, six elderly Filipino women led a protest outside the presidential palace yesterday asking the Japanese government to formally apologize and compensate them and other sex slaves abused by Japanese forces during the war. They carried placards reading: "No to rising Japanese militarism."

Akihito's foreign trips conveying a pacifist message are important because they ease concerns over perceptions that Japanese political leaders are trying to flex the country's military muscles once again, said Richard Heydarian, a political science professor at Manila's De La Salle University.

He said it is still important to push Japan to deal with the remaining issues from its wartime aggression.

"We should forgive but we should not forget the past. That will also help Japan," Heydarian said.

Akihito is to pay his respects at memorials for both Philippine and Japanese war dead during his visit, which ends Saturday. **AP**

A look at past WWII-related visits by Japanese Emperor

A visit by Japanese Emperor Akihito to the Philippines this week is the latest in a series of trips that are seen as an attempt to show his commitment to peace and remorse for World War II, a conflict Japan fought in the name of his father, Hirohito.

The current emperor has repeatedly expressed regret for the damage caused by the war, but has never offered a straightforward apology. The furthest he has gone is to express "deep" remorse in an address last year marking the 70th anniversary of the end of the fighting.

A look at his past World War II-related visits, from his statements of remorse to the hostility he faced in Britain and Okinawa.

OKINAWA, JULY 1975 — Akihito, then crown prince, visited Okinawa on behalf of his father Emperor Hirohito, who reigned until January 1989. Akihito's visit 30 years after the bloody Battle of Okinawa came when residents' anger toward the Japanese government and its war responsibility was still strong. A protester threw a Molotov cocktail at Akihito when he and Empress Michiko visited a war memorial; the couple was unhurt.

THAILAND, MALAYSIA, INDONESIA, SEPTEMBER 1991 — Two years after becoming emperor, Akihito's first foreign destination was Southeast Asia. During state banquets in each country, he noted Japan's postwar effort to build new friendships with the countries based on a commitment "never again to repeat the tragedy of the horrors of the unfortunate war, and to live as a peace-loving nation."

CHINA, OCTOBER 1992 — The Japanese government saw Akihito's visit to China as an opportunity to heal wounds left by Japan's wartime aggression. He offered what was then the strongest imperial statement of remorse over the war, though stopped short of apologizing. "In the long history of relationships between our two countries, there was an unfortunate period in which my country inflicted great suffering on the people of China. To this I feel deep sadness," he said.

GREAT BRITAIN, MAY 1998 — Akihito repeatedly encountered jeering by former prisoners of war and civilian internees protesting their harsh treatment by the Japanese military. The

POWs demanded a formal apology and turned their backs on the emperor as he was taken by Queen Elizabeth along The Mall to Buckingham Palace. Akihito said ahead of the visit that he believed "it is important to put oneself in the position of others and strive to have a full sense of the pain in their hearts." In London, he said the great suffering of many people caused by the war is an "unforgettable memory" for him.

SAIPAN, JUNE 2005 — Six decades after the war, Akihito made the first trip by a Japanese monarch to an overseas World War II battlefield. He paid tribute to the 55,000 Japanese killed on the Pacific island of Saipan, and offered prayers and flowers at memorials for thousands of Americans and islanders. Akihito also prayed for the first time for Koreans forced to fight for Japan. Korea was a Japanese colony at the time. The fall of Saipan was a turning point in the war.

PALAU, APRIL 2015 — Seven decades after the war, Akihito and his wife Michiko laid bouquets of white chrysanthemums, Japan's Imperial symbol, in front of a memorial for Japanese victims who



Japan's Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko bow their heads in silent prayers at Saipan's Banzai Cliff, or Puntan Sabaneta, to pay tribute to the Japanese soldiers and civilians who jumped off the rocky cliff during World War II rather than surrender to U.S. forces

died in the battle of Peleliu in the Pacific island nation of Palau. The couple later prayed at a separate memorial for Americans. At a state banquet, Akihito said it was "truly painful" that the battles caused casualties among the islanders and thanked residents for helping recover the remains of Japanese war-dead. Many Japanese are still unaccounted for in the Pacific.

ZIKA

Health minister says Brazil is 'losing battle' against mosquito

Jenny Barchfield, Rio De Janeiro

BRAZIL'S health minister says the country is sending some 220,000 troops to battle the mosquito blamed for spreading a virus suspected of causing birth defects — but he also says the war is already being lost.

Marcelo Castro said that nearly 220,000 members of Brazil's Armed Forces would go door-to-door to help in mosquito eradication efforts ahead of the country's Carnival celebrations. Agency spokesman Nivaldo Coelho said yesterday details of the deployment are still being worked out.

Castro also said the government would distribute mosquito repellent to some 400,000 pregnant women who receive cash-transfer benefits.

But the minister also said the country has failed in efforts against the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito that transmits Zika, dengue, chikungunya and yellow fever.

"The mosquito has been here in Brazil for three decades, and we are badly losing the battle against the mosquito," the ministers told reporters as a crisis group on Zika was meeting in the capital, Brasilia.

A massive eradication effort eliminated *Aedes aegypti* from Brazil during the 1950s, but the mosquito slowly returned over the following decades from neighboring nations, public health experts have said. That led to outbreaks of dengue, which was recorded in record numbers last year.



A municipal worker gestures during an operation to combat the *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes that transmits the Zika virus in Recife, Pernambuco state, Brazil

The arrival of Zika in Brazil last year initially caused little alarm, as the virus' symptoms are generally much milder than those of dengue. It didn't become a crisis until late in the year, when researchers made the link with a dramatic increase in reported cases of microcephaly, a rare birth defect that sees babies born with unusually small heads and can cause lasting developmental problems.

The World Health Organization repeated yesterday that the link remains circumstantial and is not yet proven scientifically.

But worry about the rapid spread of Zika has expanded across the nation, and the he-

misphere beyond. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has advised pregnant women to reconsider travel to Brazil and 21 other countries and territories with Zika outbreaks.

One of them, the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico, reported 18 new confirmed cases of Zika, though none involve pregnant women. One case had been reported earlier.

Officials in El Salvador, Colombia and Brazil have suggested women stop getting pregnant until the crisis has passed.

Repellent has disappeared from many Brazilian pharmacies and prices for the product

have tripled or even quadrupled where it's still available in recent weeks since the government announced a suspected link between Zika virus and microcephaly

Nearly 4,000 suspected cases of microcephaly have been reported in Brazil since October, compared with fewer than 150 cases in the country in all of 2014.

Castro's remarks have proven controversial, both in and outside Brazil.

World Health Organization spokesman Christian Lindmeier said he hadn't seen the remarks, "but in general terms I think that this would be a bit

of a fatalistic approach because this should mean we could lay down all our approaches now and declare the war lost.

"I don't think this is the case," he added at WHO headquarters, in Geneva.

In Brazil, some called for Castro to be fired.

"He is incapable of occupying his position," wrote Helio Gurovitz, a columnist with G1, the internet portal of the Globo television network. "To prove that Castro doesn't have the capacity to occupy such an important position, at such a delicate moment with the spread of the epidemic, all that's needed is a selection of such comments."

Both Brazil's Zika outbreak and the spike in microcephaly have been concentrated in the poor and underdeveloped northeast of the country, though the prosperous southeast, where Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro are located, are the second hardest-hit region. Rio de Janeiro will host the Aug. 5-21 Olympic games.

Yesterday, officials in Rio also ramped up their fight against the *Aedes aegypti*, dispatching a team of fumigators to the Sambadrome, where the city's Carnival parades will take place next month, and the region's governor was distributing mosquito-fighting vehicles for poor suburbs of the city.

Officials in another hard-hit South American country, Colombia, also ramped up efforts against Zika yesterday.

Health Minister Alejandro Gaviria visited the city of Ibague, a hotbed of Zika, to start a "Tour of Colombia" campaign to educate local officials on how to fight the mosquitoes. Colombian officials say they've recorded more than 13,500 suspected cases and President Juan Manuel Santos said there could be 600,000 cases by year's end.

The WHO's Lindmeier said that the U.N. agency plans a special session on the virus during a Geneva meeting of its executive board today. **AP**

HAITI

Cruise line restarts port calls after recent protest

David McFadden, Port-Au-Prince

A U.S. cruise line yesterday (Macau time) re-established port calls to its fenced-in site and beach attraction in northern Haiti after suspending visits just over a week ago following a peaceful protest by area residents.

Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. suspended cruise ship stops to the Labadee port on Jan. 19 when its 15-deck Freedom of

the Seas encountered a number of people in small boats staging a demonstration in the area's turquoise bay. The 3,634-passenger vessel spent the night at sea instead of docking.

Since then, spokeswoman Cynthia Martinez said the company has been in close communication with Haitian officials. They decided to restart port calls by sending its massive Allure of the Seas ship to Labadee, which has provided

the largest source of tourism revenue to Haiti for decades.

"Based on our conversations, we feel comfortable that there will not be any significant impact on our guests' ability to enjoy" the attraction, Martinez said in an email.

There have been conflicting reports about the reasons for the protest in the northern bay, which coincided with an uptick in political protests in the Haitian ca-

pital some 250 kilometers away. Cruise ship tourists don't leave the 260-acre private beach resort, long a source of frustration to some area residents as well as political leaders of Cap-Haitien, a nearby city of roughly 200,000 people.

Yesterday, the office of Haitian Prime Minister Evans Paul said the government initiated talks with local residents over the weekend. Tourism Minister Stephanie Villemoulin tweeted that

the government has been working "collaboratively with local people on sustainable projects." More Royal Caribbean vessels are scheduled to make port calls later this week to Labadee.

Each passenger to the cruise port pays a roughly USD10 tax to the Haitian government, producing more than \$6 million a year for the hemisphere's poorest nation.

Local people in the village of Labadie cou-

ld not immediately be contacted Tuesday about the recent talks with government officials or the reason for the recent protest.

During outgoing President Michel Martelly's tenure as Haiti's leader, there has been a push to develop tourism to help spur an economic revival in the Caribbean nation of 10 million. But for now, the majority of tourists are still cruise ship passengers who never leave Labadee. **AP**



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what's ON



10TH MACAU DESIGN BIENNIAL

TIME: 10am to 7pm

(Closed on Monday, no admission after 6:30 pm)

UNTIL: February 14, 2016

VENUE: Macau Museum of Art

ADMISSION: Adult MOP5, free for Children under 12

years old, elderly over 65 years old

(Admission is free on Sundays and public holidays)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 7588

MANUEL CARGALEIRO-PINTURA: 1954-2006

TIME: 10am-7pm (Closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: March 3, 2016

VENUE: Casa Garden Orient Foundation

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2855 4691

MACAU PRINTMAKING TRIENNIAL

TIME: 10am-7pm

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

UNTIL: February 14, 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

CREATIVE & COLLECTIVE EXHIBITION

TIME: 12pm-7pm

(Closed on Tuesdays, open on public holidays)

UNTIL: January 31, 2016

VENUE: No Cruzamento da Avenida do Coronel

Mesquita com a Avenida Almirante Lacerda Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2853 0026

TUTTI COLORI

- ARTS, CRAFTS & SKETCHES EXHIBITION

TIME: 10am-6:30pm

UNTIL: February 18, 2016

ADMISSION: Free

VENUE: Calçada Da Barra, No. 16 R/C LJ A, Edif.

San Chak, Macau

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2896 2820

"FOAM TIP" BY ARLINDA FROTA

TIME: 12pm to 8pm (closed on every Tuesdays)

UNTIL: January 31, 2016

ADMISSION: free

VENUE: Signum Living Store, Rua do Almirante

Sérgio, no. 285, R/C, Macau

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2896 8925

Offbeat

BRITISH PRINCIPAL TELLS PARENTS:
NO PAJAMAS ON SCHOOL RUN

The principal of a primary school in northern England wants to impose a dress code — not on students, but on their parents.

That's because she's tired of them wearing pajamas and slippers when they drop off their offspring at the school gates each morning.

Kate Chisholm of Skerne Park Academy in Darlington, 385 kilometers north of London said she acted after some parents wore what she considered nightwear to school meetings.

In the letter published this week she asked parents to "dress appropriately in day wear" when bringing their children to school.

Chisholm said she wanted parents to set a good example for the students and that it was "not too much to ask parents to have a wash and get dressed."

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
16:50	Criminal Minds S.7
18:10	Trail of Lies (Repeated)
19:00	Montra do Lilau (Repeat)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:40	Comedy
22:10	Trail of Lies
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Television Film
00:05	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:40	RTPi Live

cinema

CINETEATRO

28 JAN - 04 FEB



THE 5H WAVE_

ROOM 1

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: J Blakeson

Starring: Chloë Grace Moretz, Nick Robinson,

Maika Monroe

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 112min



THE LAST WOMEN STANDING_

ROOM 2

2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Luo Lu

Starring: Shu Qi, Eddie Peng Yuyan, Hao Leie

Language: Mandarin (English/Cantonese)

Duration: 100min

THE BIG SHORT_

ROOM 3

2.30, 4.45, 9.30 pm

Director: Adam McKay

Starring: Christian Bale, Steve Carell, Ryan Gosling

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 130min

IP MAN 3_

ROOM 3

7.30 pm

Director: Wilson Yip Wai Shun

Starring: Donnie Yen, Lynn Xiong, Max Zhang

Language: Cantonese (English/Cantonese)

Duration: 110min

MACAU TOWER

14 JAN - 10 FEB

THE 5H WAVE_

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: J Blakeson

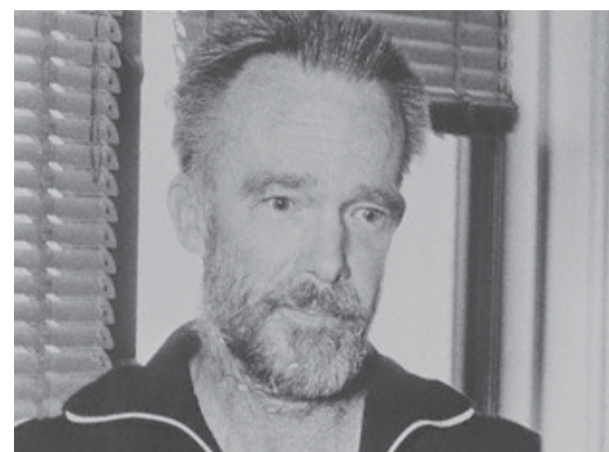
Starring: Chloë Grace Moretz, Nick Robinson,

Maika Monroe

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 112min

this day in history

1982 US GENERAL RESCUED
FROM RED BRIGADE

Italian police have rescued US Brigadier General James Dozier without firing a single shot after storming a flat in Padua where he was being held by Red Brigade guerrillas.

The 50-year-old general and deputy Chief of Staff at Nato's Southern European land forces headquarters at Verona, emerged after 42 days in captivity unharmed, but thinner and with a beard.

Police had been watching the flat in Padua for three days. The decision was taken to go in this morning at 1136 local time.

A squad of specially-trained officers broke down the door of the five-room apartment and confronted the five terrorists, including a woman, who surrendered immediately.

The general was gagged, barefoot and wearing a tracksuit. He was inside a tent. One of the terrorists, who was standing pointing a gun at the general's head, was quickly overpowered.

The general's first words are reported to have been: "Thanks, thanks, marvellous, ok, police."

He was allowed to telephone his wife, who is in West Germany and the US Ambassador in Rome before being taken to an American military base near Verona.

His Red Brigade kidnappers are said to include the Venice leader, Antonio Savasta, and his partner, Emilia Libera. A third suspect was identified as Cesare Leonardo. The other two remain unidentified.

The left-wing Red Brigade was set up in the 1970s following the failure of the New Left government.

It has sought to highlight its cause by kidnapping and murdering prominent Italian politicians and other senior figures, including former prime minister Aldo Moro in 1978.

Police seized a number of guns, hand grenades, explosives and ammunition from the flat.

The general's wife, Judith, and 24-year-old daughter Cheryl, are being flown from West Germany to be reunited with him.

US President Ronald Reagan has hailed the general as a "courageous soldier whose life has been dedicated to the defence of liberty" and said his rescue was "a happy ending, the prayers of millions of Americans have been answered."

The general was captured in December. Members of the Red Brigade posing as plumbers called at his flat on the sixth floor of an apartment block in Verona.

He tried to fight off the intruders, but was hit on the head with a pistol and forced into a trunk, which was loaded into the boot of a car.

He was the first foreigner to be captured by the Red Brigade. There were rumours a ransom had been demanded of up to £4.5m.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

A week later Brigadier General James Dozier was flown back to the United States, where he received a hero's welcome.

At his first news conference after his release, General Dozier admitted he had been warned about the possibility of a kidnap attempt but he had been "too busy" to take any notice of the threats.

During his captivity he described how he had been chained by his left foot and right hand to the central pole of a small tent, within the flat in Padua. He said his captors treated him with "businesslike indifference" but they kept their faces covered so he could not identify them.

The general said he was also forced to wear earplugs or listen to loud music on earphones for seven or eight hours a day. He complained at first he was given only rock music and so he was allowed some classical, but his hearing was permanently damaged.

The general's kidnappers subsequently informed on other members of the Red Brigade. It led to a number of arrests and in early 1983 59 members of the group stood trial for the murder of Aldo Moro and 16 others. At least two of them received life sentences.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Be as clear as you can be today — otherwise, things are sure to get really weird.

Taurus April 20-May 20
Things are getting somewhat weird today, so make sure that you're stepping up and tackling the challenges as they arise.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21
You may not even realize you're flirting until someone starts to step up their game and you have to make the call: Go or no go.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22
You may not want to pore over all those data tables or job listings, but now is the best time to handle the details.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You're blessed with friends, and should find that most of them are giving you what you need today.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22
Work is on your mind — maybe you need a new job, or maybe you need to close out an account so you can finally sleep well at night.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22
Your great energy is perfect for any brainy activity — or just for having fun! See if you can sweet-talk a few close friends into an impromptu barbecue or something even bigger and more wild.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
This is not a good time to ignore the fine print — get in deep and really make sure you understand it all!

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21
If you're worrying about what comes next, take it easy — things are looking up, really! You just need to take firm, decisive action, as your presence determines success or failure now.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You feel somewhat looser and more willing to wander today — so make the most of it and enjoy what you've got!

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18
You've got creative energy to spare — and today, the whole world can see it! Don't hold back, because your biggest, boldest ideas are those that are likeliest to sway people and bring about change.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20
You are feeling just a little busier than you would like, but that's okay — in fact, you kind of need the distraction. You can feel a surge of energy coming, but it's not quite here yet, so just keep plugging away.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle.

Easy+

9x9 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle.

Medium

9x9 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle.

Hard

9x9 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle.

WEATHER

Table with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION

CHINA

Weather forecast table for various Chinese cities including Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, etc.

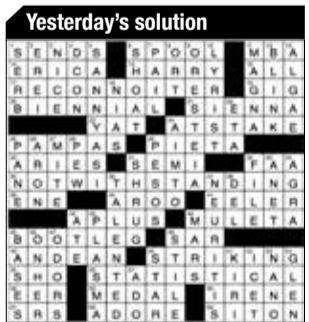
WORLD

Weather forecast table for various world cities including Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, London, New York.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- SeaWorld attraction; 6- Bridge position; 10- At the drop of ___; 14- Heaps; 15- Woody plant; 16- ___ lay me...; 17- Archie Bunker's wife; 18- French 101 infinitive; 19- Ayatollah's land; 20- Circuitous way; 22- Free from dirt; 24- Spring mo.; 26- Ditto!; 27- Whenever; 31- ___ few rounds; 32- Stiller's partner; 33- More wan; 36- Sunblock letters; 39- Nota ___; 40- More recent; 41- The back end of something; 42- Annoy; 43- Feminist Abzug; 44- ___ firma; 45- Scandinavian rug; 46- Bondage; 48- Frost's field; 51- Prom duds; 52- Table protector; 54- Comedian; 59- Not punctual; 60- Role for Ingrid; 62- World-weary; 63- Watched intently; 64- Greek portico; 65- "Network" director; 66- Hamlet, for one; 67- Disrespectful back talk; 68- Les ___-Unis;

DOWN: 1- Exceeded the limit; 2- Conceal; 3- Came down to earth; 4- Take ___ your leader; 5- City in S Argentina; 6- Summer along the Seine; 7- Some are liberal; 8- Caravansary; 9- Mall-goer, often; 10- "Peer Gynt Suite" dancer; 11- Goddesses of the seasons; 12- Cognizant; 13- Minute; 21- LP speed; 23- Aviation pioneer Sikorsky; 25- Drive back; 27- Prefix with dextrous; 28- Not e'en once; 29- Pull abruptly; 30- Quattro minus uno; 34- Hole-boring tool; 35- Fewest; 36- Shrivelled, without moisture; 37- Henry VIII's sixth; 38- Skimish; 40- Not a direct hit; 41- Gun, as an engine; 43- Unit of computer memory; 44- Subject to tax; 45- Ebb; 47- Carry with effort; 48- Beach, in Baja; 49- Like some cereals; 50- Seaport in the Crimea; 52- Answered a charge; 53- General ___ chicken; 55- Overabundance; 56- Baby's cry; 57- I'd hate to break up ___; 58- Profits; 61- Small batteries;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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Fire department 28 572 222
Water Supply - Report 1990 992
PJ (Open line) 993
Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333
Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944
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Sports Writer, Melbourne

TENNIS

Brits Murray, Konta win on a distracting day in Melbourne

ANDY Murray and a much lesser-known British player, Johanna Konta, advanced to the Australian Open semifinals yesterday, when the action on court had to compete, again, with news about the integrity of the sport.

Murray beat David Ferrer 6-3, 6-7 (5), 6-2, 6-3 to reach his 18th a Grand Slam semifinal. Konta, who is making her debut in the main draw at the season's first major, had a 6-4, 6-1 win over Chinese qualifier Zhang Shuai.

It's the first time since the December 1977 version of the Australian Open that two British players — John Lloyd and Sue Barker that year — have advanced to the final four of any major.

Konta, the first British woman to reach a Grand Slam semifinal since Jo Durie at the 1983 U.S. Open, will play Angelique Kerber, who beat two-time champion Victoria Azarenka 6-3, 7-5. Born in Australia but living in Britain since her early teens, Konta also has Hungarian citizenship and calls herself a "tricitizen."

The No. 2-ranked Murray, who has lost four finals at Melbourne Park, will meet Milos Raonic in the semifinals. The 25-year-old Canadian beat Gael Monfils 6-3, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 in a night match, continuing his strong form that has seen him beat Roger Federer in the Brisbane International final and French Open champion Stan Wawrinka in the fourth round here.

Novak Djokovic and Federer will contest the other semifinal.

Murray's match with Ferrer involved plenty of long rallies. Two of them — at 27 and 31 shots in length — came during the second-set tiebreaker, and Murray lost both of those points. But the Scotsman moved out



Andy Murray of Britain

to a 4-1 lead in the third set, during which there was a brief break when the roof on Rod Laver Arena was closed because of an approaching thunderstorm.

Murray liked it with a roof over his head.

"That helped me a little bit," Murray said. "I like playing in-

doors. I think it was actually good for us to have a little bit of a break. We played some brutal rallies at the end of the second set and the beginning of the third."

Murray and Raonic, who advanced to his second Grand Slam semi — he lost in the final

four at Wimbledon to Federer in 2014 — are 3-3 in career meetings.

"I think just the perseverance throughout it, I had a lot of opportunities even in that set I lost," Raonic said. "I just said to myself keep making opportunities and hopefully they'll

go my way."

Kerber went down a break in the second set before winning five consecutive games and saving five set points before beating Azarenka, the result coming as a surprise despite the difference in seedings. No. 7 Kerber broke No. 14 Azarenka's serve to end the match, her first win in seven matches against the Belarussian.

"When I was down 2-5, I was actually playing more aggressive," Kerber said.

Six-time champion Serena Williams and No. 4-ranked Agnieszka Radwanska will meet in the other women's semifinal, also today.

The independent review announced in a news conference at Melbourne Park, earlier reported by The Associated Press, will be funded by the Tennis Integrity Board, which oversees the anti-corruption unit set up by the sport in 2008 to combat match-fixing. It will be led by Adam Smith, a London-based lawyer who is an expert in sports law.

Kermode acknowledged that the announcement of the review helped keep the topic of match-fixing prominent in and around the tournament action.

"It has been hard on the Australian Open, no question about it," Kermode said. "Obviously the report was timed to hit at this point, try to create as big a story as possible. But [Australian Open organizers] have been unbelievably supportive of the actions we've taken." AP

Tennis to review integrity unit to restore public confidence

TENNIS leaders are taking steps at damage control as they grapple with allegations of match-fixing in recent media reports, which have cast a shadow over the first Grand Slam of the year and shaken confidence in the integrity of the sport.

An independent review of tennis' anti-corruption unit was announced yesterday at the Australian Open in the wake of allegations that officials had failed to properly investigate suspected cases of match-fixing.

ATP Chairman Chris Kermode said immediate action was needed to "restore public confidence in our sport" and that



Wimbledon Chairman Philip Brook (center) speaks, along with ATP Executive Chairman and President Chris Kermode (right) and International Tennis Federation President David Haggerty

"nothing is off the table." "I think this is a very bold step. We need to address the perception, public confidence, hit it head on. We don't have anything to hide at all."

The creation of the re-

view, which was earlier reported by The Associated Press, came 10 days after the BBC and BuzzFeed News published stories alleging that tennis authorities had suppressed evidence of match-fixing

and failed to thoroughly investigate possible cases of corruption involving 16 players who have ranked in the top 50 over the past decade. No players were named in the reports.

The review will be fun-

ded by the Tennis Integrity Board, which oversees the anti-corruption unit set up by the sport in 2008 to combat match-fixing. It will be led by Adam Smith, a London-based lawyer who is an expert in sports law.

"The last thing anyone wants is another sports body investigating itself," Kermode said.

Andy Murray agreed that having an outsider conduct the inquiry would give it added credibility.

"Yeah, that's positive. Surely, I think in these situations I think people become skeptical when it's sort of kept in-house a little bit," he said after

his quarterfinal win over David Ferrer.

Kermode said the review panel would have an open-ended deadline and budget and that its findings would be made public. He also said tennis' governing bodies were committed to acting on every recommendation of the panel.

Among the issues the panel is expected to examine is whether the Tennis Integrity Unit (TIU) needs additional resources to do its job, how it can improve transparency without compromising its investigations, and whether the sport needs to expand its integrity education programs. AP

opinion

Views on China

Tracy Alloway, Bloomberg

THE CONFERENCE BOARD'S NEW CHINA GDP FIGURES SUGGEST THAT 'HARD LANDING' HAPPENED ALREADY

You'd be forgiven for missing this footnote from the Conference Board's latest economic outlook:

"This year's Global Economic Outlook uses an alternate series of GDP estimates for China, which adjusts for overstated official Chinese data. Based on [Harry] Wu (2014), growth rates of Chinese industrial GDP are adjusted for misreporting bias and non-material services GDP are adjusted for biases in price deflators. This adjustment has important implications for our assessment of the growth rate of the global economy in general and that of the emerging markets in particular – both reflecting a downward adjustment in their recent growth rates. For a detailed discussion on this adjustment, see Wu (2014) and for frequently asked questions on the China adjustment see China GDP FAQ."

While many have questioned the accuracy of China's headline economic figures, it's still rare to see a semi-official organization use something other than the authorized stats. The Conference Board's economic data is widely-cited and well-respected.

Indeed, the change was enough to generate a note from Macquarie Capital Ltd. analysts led by Viktor Shvets, who observe that: "We are unaware of any other reputable agency adopting anything other than official numbers as a base case, although clearly there has always been a lot of scenario analysis."

The difference between the official figures and the Wu estimate now employed by the Conference Board is stark. While China's authorities have spat out average GDP growth of around 7.7 percent for the past five years, the Wu estimate is much lower at around 4 percent.

The Wu model is also far more volatile, sometimes even reporting GDP growth that has been faster than the official number – and lending credence to the idea that Chinese authorities have been smoothing their figures in recent years. Indeed, others have previously observed that China may be leveling its data as it continues to move from the old Soviet-style of economic reporting, in which various sectors self-report their output, to the more widely-used and independent system of national accounts (SNA).

The good news is that the cratering of the Wu estimate indicates China's economy has already slowed down significantly, and potentially even already reached its fabled "hard landing." It's a notion supported by the Conference Board itself, which noted that its new estimates "suggest that the economy has already experienced a significant slowdown over the past four years, beginning in 2011." The bad news is that it also lends fresh urgency to the need for reform, as it implies a much lower level of productivity growth.

Here's Macquarie again:

Theoretically, the two series should converge at some point. However, from an investor perspective, a far more important question is whether China's hard landing has already occurred and what are implications for productivity growth, overcapacity absorption and degree of likely financial stress? In our view, Wu-Maddison numbers explain the current state of commodity markets and fit into the global deflationary narrative much better than official numbers. In our view, the key difference between official and alternative estimates is the degree to which productivity and efficiency of asset utilization has already declined. If Wu estimates are right, the room for stimulus and investment is more limited and the need to drive productivity (structural reforms) much more urgent. Although by the time China retroactively adjusts its GDP, it would be treated as history, in the absence of stronger productivity rebound, China would be in danger of getting stuck in the 'middle-income trap' and would be unable to inject incremental demand into the global economy. Stay safe.

The Conference Board's FAQ on the topic is well worth a read.

THE THIRD VICTIM OF HYPOTHERMIA REPORTED IN MACAU

A new case of death due to hypothermia was announced by the authorities early this morning. According to the Health Bureau, a 75-year-old man died late last night. No further details were released by press time.

It is the third fatality due to hypothermia recorded in the last few days, following two deaths earlier this week. They were among several cases of hypothermia reported since temperatures dropped drastically in Macau on Sunday.

REPORT

Fearing refugees, West curtails human rights



Syrian refugees sit in a Doctors Without Borders clinic at the Shatila refugee camp in Beirut, Lebanon

WESTERN governments fearful of terror attacks and the potential threat posed by refugees are adopting counterproductive policies in the name of security, Human Rights Watch said in its world report yesterday.

HRW executive director Kenneth Roth said "fear of being killed or starved" drove millions of people to flee Syria and other conflict zones in 2015, while fear of "what that influx of asylum-seekers would mean, particularly in Europe, led many governments to try to raise the gates" to block refugees.

He chided Europe and the United States for allowing fear of terrorism – particularly since November's Paris attacks – to give rise to

"blatant Islamophobia and shameless demonizing of refugees" which alienates the very communities that could help in counterterrorism efforts.

"As a counterterrorism measure, Islamophobia is the last thing you would want," he said.

The organization unveiled its annual report reviewing human rights practices around the world in Istanbul. Turkey is home to 2.2 million Syrian refugees and the main departure point for migrants headed to Europe.

Roth urged Turkey, which has been promised USD3 billion by the European Union in aid to prevent the outflow of migrants, to avoid measures such as turning refugees back to

Syria or becoming party to any EU effort "to deny the basic rights of people to flee persecution."

The estimated 1 million asylum seekers who reached Europe by sea in 2015 would represent only 0.20 percent of the European Union population if member countries shared in resettlement, he said.

"Creating a safe and orderly way for refugees to make their way to Europe would reduce lives lost at sea while helping immigration officials to screen out security risks," Roth said.

Policy makers in the U.S. and Europe, the report said, are using the terrorist threat as an opportunity to expand law-enforcement powers, including mass surveillance.

Meanwhile, Russia and China have embarked on the largest crackdown on civil society in decades, according to the 659-page report reviewing more than 90 countries. It noted similar trends in Turkey, Kenya, Sudan, South Africa and Israel.

Human Rights Watch celebrated gains for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities in 2015 – including the legalization of same-sex marriage in Ireland, Mexico, and the United States. Mozambique decriminalized homosexuality. **AP**

Station	Air quality
Roadside	40-60 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	40-60 Moderate
Ambient	40-60 Moderate

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS



MYANMAR A landslide of mining waste kills at least six people in the sixth deadly such accident in northern jade mining region since a November disaster left more than 100 dead.

UNITED NATIONS launches an appeal for USD393 million in humanitarian aid to Afghanistan to help millions of vulnerable people this year.

UK Brazilian midfielder Ramires has left Chelsea as compatriot Alexandre Pato arrived in London to join up with the Premier League champions. After more than five years at Chelsea, Ramires has signed for Chinese Super League club Jiangsu Suning. But Chelsea is set to add striker Pato to its squad until the end of the season. Pato flew into London from Brazil to complete an expected loan move from Corinthians.

FRANCE's charismatic justice minister Christiane Taubira unexpectedly resigned after objecting to President Francois Hollande's push to revoke citizenship from convicted terrorists with dual nationality. **AP**

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

AP Photo/Dmitry Lovetsky



Flames of sorrow. People walk in snowfall from an eternal flame to the Motherland monument to put flowers at the Piskaryovskoye Cemetery where most of the Leningrad Siege victims were buried during World War II, in St. Petersburg, Russia, yesterday. More than 1 million people died mainly from starvation during the 900-day siege.



PARIS A huge "mood" garden decor – replete with a relaxation pond, forest and grass – greeted the 43-year-old Oscar-winner Paltrow, who posed for cameras in a check Chanel skirt suit with high collar near some steps leading up to a minimalist wooden hut. It was so realistic there was even a small swarm of flies buzzing around on the verdant lawn – and with it Lagerfeld may possibly have created the world's first couture ecosystem. Other celebrity attendees included actresses Monica Bellucci and Diane Kruger.