



ANIMA REFUSES LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY INVITATION
The association refused to attend a last-minute consultation today regarding the proposed Animal Protection Law

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With many emerging markets faltering, rarely seen bargains abound for big corporate aircraft

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS

HONG KONG

Days after it was launched, organizers have canceled an art installation on Hong Kong's tallest skyscraper that carried a politically provocative message about the city's relationship with mainland China.
More on p10



U.S. President Barack Obama lifts a half-century-old ban on selling arms to Vietnam, looking to bolster a government seen as a crucial, though flawed partner in a region that he has tried to place at the center of his foreign policy legacy. More on p12

THAILAND A nighttime fire at a dormitory at a primary school in northern Thailand kills 18 girls, many of whom had been roused by a dorm-mate but went back to sleep, thinking it was a prank.
More on p12

JAPAN's fertility rate rose slightly last year, to the highest level since 1994, indicating Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's economic program may have had some success in slowing the rate of population decline. The total rate rose to 1.46 in 2015, inching up 0.04 percentage points from the previous year, according to the health ministry. The biggest contribution to the change came from women aged 30 to 34.

More on backpage

Tourist arrivals could reach **40 million** by 2025

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Multiple blasts in Syria government strongholds kill 80

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Controversial cross-strait arts exchange

A cross-strait calligraphy and painting exchange exhibition held in Taiwan this year did not see attendance from one side of the exchange; namely those artists from mainland China, Macau and Hong Kong. According to Taiwan's Central News Agency, the calligraphers and painters could not attend the event because they were unable to organize the relevant paperwork in time, however their absence has sparked speculation about other motives. Shen Rong-hwai, head of the Taiwan Chinese Calligraphy Society told the broadcaster that he suspected the absence was due to misunderstanding over the political situation following the inauguration of President Tsai Ing-wen. The exhibition, held in Macau in 2015, moved to Taiwan this year and is being hosted at the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall until May 30.

Yip appointed new SmarTone CEO

Hong Kong-based SmarTone Telecommunications Holdings Ltd. announced that Anna Yip has been appointed as executive director and chief executive officer of the company, commencing June 16. Stephen Chau will cease to act as the interim chief executive officer from the same date. Yip is currently the head of the Hong Kong and Macau division of MasterCard Asia-Pacific, a role she has held since March 2014. She is responsible for the overall performance of MasterCard across both markets. Originally from Hong Kong, Yip joined MasterCard in 2013 as the head of Greater China for MasterCard Advisors, the professional services arm of the organization.

UM to hold graduation ceremony

The University of Macau (UM) will host its 'Congregation 2016' on May 28 at the institution's Sports Complex, according to a statement from UM. More than a thousand students will receive their graduation certificates at the event. Nearly 1400 students are to be awarded bachelor degrees at the ceremony, including 46 outstanding students who have completed programs of the Honours College. Chief Executive Chui Sai On will officiate the ceremony and oversee the presentation of degrees to the students. Graduating students' families and friends will need to present admission tickets to enter the venue. Tickets can be collected at the UM's Registry between May 19 and 25 during office hours, or at registration desks on the day of the ceremony.

Daniel Beittler

THE Society for the Protection of Animals, an animal rights group also known as Anima (Macau), has published a letter addressed to the President of the First Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly (AL), refusing to attend a last-minute consultation today regarding the proposed Animal Protection Law.

Addressing Kwan Tsui Hang of the First Standing Committee, Anima (Macau) President Albano Martins wrote that the organization would not send representatives to the consultation today just "to attend a hand-kissing ceremony," adding that it is "unacceptable to [be invited to] attend a meeting at the end of a lengthy legislative process, with knowledge only of the first project submitted to [the AL] two years ago."

According to the animal rights activist, the government proposals deliberately kept animal protection groups in the dark about the law until the last minute, refusing to publish any draft proposals.

Moreover, the group claims that the AL failed to answer multiple letters that they wrote

ANIMAL WELFARE

Anima refuses AL invitation to preview protection law



during the process, and did not give Anima (Macau) the chance to voice opinions while the law was being drafted.

"[You] received several letters from Anima throughout the legislative process, the first one on 23rd October 2014, when [the] legislative process started, in which we expressed our views," writes Martins in the letter. "We believe [that] it is not in the final stage of the legislative process that animal protection associations [...] should be heard."

The group is now refusing to

participate in what it sees as a rubber-stamp "exhibition," especially as it does not want its presence at the AL today to be misunderstood as an endorsement.

"We were astonished [that], at this late stage of the process, after the AL has finally reached agreement with the government, the AL has called upon animal protection associations without allowing them to view the final draft already agreed upon with the government," writes Martins.

In a somewhat condescending tone, the Anima Presi-

dent offered the President of the First Standing Committee some advice on how the group would have handled the consultation period: "The Government should immediately listen to associations [at the beginning of the process], taking good notes of their opinions to reflect on them, deciding whether or not to consider them during the production of the law."

"[Then they] could become aware of our concerns and suggestions before starting to discuss the details, with more in-depth knowledge on the matter," added Martins.

Anima (Macau) has spearheaded a campaign of international backlash against the treatment of animals in Macau, particularly the greyhounds at the Macau Canidrome facility, the reason for protests in major European cities earlier this month.

Zhuhai to provide free Wi-Fi at 710 public service facilities

THE Zhuhai government is planning to implement free Wi-Fi access at 710 public service facilities, according to a report by Jornal Va Kio.

The city's governmental authority has already approved the project, which has an estimated completion date of 2020. In order to achieve that goal, the authorities will invest about RMB86 million to install 13,100 Wi-Fi access point devices.

This provision of services to the community is one of the promises made by the Zhuhai government in its 2016 report.

The plan states that within the next three years, the city will add, in three phases, 460, 179 and finally 71 access points. This initial investment will likely be followed by another RMB46.42 million investment in maintenance costs. The primary purpose of the new Wi-Fi services is to aid citizens in checking government websites and reading the news.

According to Zheng Renhao, acting mayor of Zhuhai, the free Wi-Fi network should cover the major tourist spots, for the convenience of visitors to Zhuhai.



Pedestrians cross a street in the Gongbei district of Zhuhai

The aforementioned report also states that future Wi-Fi access points will mainly be installed in primary government service offices and healthcare institutions. 62 percent of planned access points will be located in the city's west area.

As of end December 2015, the city offered 91 active access points for free Wi-Fi.

Design center sees record number of applicants

THE Macau Design Centre (MDC) has announced that its application call for studio residency last month received a significant increase in the number of candidates, compared to the previous application period back when the facility opened in 2014.

The application period between April 2 and 25 had received 13 formal applications for just one vacant studio. In total, the organization has 17 inde-

pendent studios, however most of them are currently being utilized by local entities.

The studios aim to provide a fully serviced and comfortable working environment for companies and design professionals at below-market prices. MDC endeavors to support the growth of the design industry by sparing start-up organizations the burden of high rent and building maintenance costs.

According to the organization,

"the result shows that MDC has earned recognition for its outstanding work performance in past years."

MDC stated that the applicants covered a range of design backgrounds, including graphic design, multimedia production, product design, 2D and 3D animation and special effects, photography, interior design, fashion design and craft design.

MDC and the Cultural Indus-

tries Fund jointly-selected a panel and judge to review the applications. The process involved analyzing their portfolio and proposal.

The final decision saw the vacant studio awarded to Cliffs Studio Company. The company will be able to rent the space for three years, though the agreement will need to be renewed each year based on the company's development and achievements.

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Tourist arrivals could reach 40m by 2025

A public consultation on the "Tourism Industry Development Master Plan" will be held between May 23 and July 22.

Helena de Senna Fernandes, director of the Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO), said yesterday that the number of tourists is expected to grow by one to two percent year-on-year.

According to Senna Fernandes, the main focus of the plan is to "establish Macau as a world centre for tourism and leisure" in the next 15 years.

Amongst other goals, the plan aims to promote environmentally friendly hotels, as well as encourage the hotel industry to establish eco-friendly practices.

According to the consultation material issued by the MGTO, mainland tourists represented 66.5 percent of the total number



Aspect of yesterday's press conference

of tourists in 2015, followed by visitors from Hong Kong. International markets accounted for nine percent of local tourism revenue. This number represents a consistent decline over the past few years. By 2025, in the words of Senna Fernandes, "the number of international tourists may account for 14 to 15 percent."

In 2015, the city welcomed a total of 30,714,628 tourists, a number which is expected to reach at least 33 to 35 million in 2025. Other estimates based on a 3 to 5

percent annual visitor growth, put the figure at as high as 40 million.

However, based on a recent report by the Macau Polytechnic Institute, last year's tourist arrivals already exceeded the region's overall carrying capacity. In response, Senna Fernandes claimed that Macau's carrying capacity should be expanded in the future. Furthermore, she commented that the gaming industry has been encouraged to offer "more tourist products," and hopes that current the non-gaming offerings will be doubled in the coming years.

The plan also intends to increase the number of international airlines flying to Macau. Senna Fernandes acknowledged that "over 90 percent of the passengers arriving at the Macau airport are from the mainland." She claimed that regional airports, will help to draw more international tourists to Macau.

In addition, the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge development project will reduce the distance between the regions.

Earlier this year, Senna Fernandes listed four major goals for tourism policy this year: to "promote smart tourism by maximizing our use of the internet and social media platforms for tourism promotion; deepen the

planning of tourism development; develop electronic administration and enhance tourism service quality; and strengthen regional cooperation, actively participating in international organizations."

The consultation will span two months, during which the MGTO will arrange several public discussion sessions. **Staff reporter**

ONE SHOT NEWS



The Nam Van Lake Nautical Center has commenced preparations to host the upcoming Dragon Boat races. Stands are being assembled for the thousands of people expected to attend.

PAULO BARBOSA

LAI CHI VUN DOCKYARDS REVAMP

THE MASTER plan includes some concrete construction projects, like the development of the Lai Chi Vun village dockyard in Coloane as a tourist spot for an art exhibition center dedicated to traditional shipping handcraft. Other measures include the renovation of the Grand Prix Museum, hosting of the International Film Festival, creation of the Gourmet Capital, and introduction of top-class theme parks.

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Renato Marques

CRIME

Man caught by student taking under-skirt photos

A 65 year-old man was arrested by the Public Security Police Force (PSP) after being accused by a schoolgirl of taking under-skirt photographs, the PSP informed in press conference held yesterday at the police force's headquarters.

A 17 year-old student called the police on Friday to inform them that a suspicious man was at the footbridge of Estrada da Areia Preta using his mobile phone to take photographs under the skirts of pedestrians passing by.

As the police officers arrived on the scene, the accuser pointed to a man standing near the footbridge saying that on May 17 the same person had taken photos of her while she was using the escalator and afterward when she had crouched to tie her shoelaces.

The victim explained to the officers that after tying her shoelaces, she had looked back to find the man quickly putting away his mobile phone in a nervous and suspicious manner. After crossing the bridge she was informed by an eyewitness on the opposite side that her suspicions had been correct and that he had photographed her.

As she was late for school and was surprised by the incident, the schoolgirl did not inform the authorities immediately. However, after seeing the same person at the same location two days following the incident, and acting in the same suspicious manner, she decided to alert the authorities.

The man, questioned by the police, admitted the crime and stated that he had been doing this since the middle of last year and had collected the photo files in an external computer hard drive at home.

A search at his residence address found the referred hard drive to contain around 80,000 images of under-skirt photographs dated from August 2015 to the present day. The victim recognized photographs of herself in at least 10 images among the bundle as well as another five school-mates who had already been contacted by the PSP regarding the case.

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doing this since the middle of last year and had collected the photo files in an external computer hard drive at home.

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Taxi driver intercepted with two Macau SAR ID cards

DURING an operation on Saturday targeting taxi drivers, the Public Security Police Force (PSP) found that one such driver was in possession of two Macau identification cards, according to information released by the PSP in press conference yesterday.

It was around 12:30 p.m. when the PSP stopped a taxi driver on Avenida 24 de Junho and requested him to present his identification.

The police officer then noticed that aside from the ID handed to the officer, the man had in his wallet a second MSAR identification card.

Further investigation found that both ID cards

had the suspect's photograph but different personal information.

Questioned by the PSP the man admitted that about one week before he had visited Zhuhai and discovered a place that produced fake identification cards. He informed the police that he paid RMB200 for the fake ID.

The 61-year-old said that he had intentions to use the fake ID only in Mainland China for the reservation of hotel rooms without having to provide his real identification card. He was presented to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) yesterday morning.

FAKE CURRENCY CASE

IN A separate case, the Judiciary Police (PJ) recently caught two men from the mainland who were trying to pass fake currency in a casino located in Cotai. After being reported by the casino the men were intercepted by the PJ in possession of a total of 33

counterfeited HKD1,000 bank notes. The quality of the forgery was considered "quite bad" as they appeared to be photocopies of original bank notes. The men were presented to the Public Prosecutions Office accused of the fraudulent use of counterfeit currency.

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Visitor arrivals fall 3 percent

VISITOR arrivals decreased by 3 percent year-on-year to a total of 2,471,253 persons in April 2016, according to information released by the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC), however the figure was up 4.4 percent when compared with the previous month, March.

DSEC accredits the yearly decline to the fact that the Easter holiday fell in April last year instead of March as in this year.

Last month same-day visitors dropped by 10 percent year-on-year to 1,247,036, whereas overnight visitors rose by 5.6 percent to 1,224,217. The average length of stay of visitors increased by 0.2 days year-on-year to 1.1 days, with same-day visitors holding stable at 0.2 days and overnight visitors climbing 0.3 days to an average of 2.1 days.

Visitors from mainland China increased by 1.2 percent year-on-year in April to 1,651,662, coming lar-



Close to 10m tourists visited Macau in the first four months of 2016

gely from Guangdong Province (666,166), Hunan Province (75,290) and Fu-

jian Province (65,373).

Those visiting from South Korea (43,661), Thailand (25,321) and Taiwan (92,141) increased on a yearly basis by 5.9 percent, 39.5 percent and 9.7 percent, respectively year-on-year. On the other hand those from the Philippines (25,979) and Hong Kong (485,970) decreased by 0.7 percent and 19.4 percent respectively. Long-haul visitors from the U.S. and

the U.K. decreased slightly year-on-year while those from Australia and Canada increased marginally.

Analyzed by entry point, visitor arrivals through the Border Gate numbered 1,244,085 last month, while those entering via the Cotai checkpoint reached 168,025, rising by 3.7 percent and 9.1 percent, respectively year-on-year.

Meanwhile those arriving via the Outer Harbor (510,658) and the Provisional Ferry Terminal in Taipa (352,025) fell by 19.6 percent and 2.6 percent respectively. Visitor arrivals through Macau International Airport increased by 13.9 percent year-on-year to 194,590.

In the first four months of 2016, visitor arrivals totaled 9,928,359, marginally down by 0.3 percent year-on-year. For this period, Mainland visitors and Hong Kong visitors were down by 1 percent and 3 percent compared with the same four months in 2015. **DB**

Junket president supports credit database

Kwok Chi-chung, the president of Macau's Association of Gaming and Entertainment Promoters, has expressed his support for the establishment of a credit database, with the prerequisite of not disclosing certain information about participants. He proposed the inclusion of a disclaimer and a vetting mechanism, as well as a requirement for the lender to first obtain the consent of the borrower. Kwok said that if the government sets up a credit database, it would take a long time for administrative measures, such as passing the proposal through the Legislative Assembly, to run their due course. The industry would therefore prefer the database to be run by the industry itself, allowing for greater flexibility and a quicker establishment process.

Banking sector sees increase in number of workers

The number of full-time employees in the banking sector increased by 258 year-on-year to 6,000 at the end of the first quarter of 2016, according to information from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC). Analyzed by occupation, there were 1,614 directors and managers, and 2,109 clerks (including 764 bank tellers) employed by the 28 local banks. In March 2016, the average earnings (excluding bonuses and allowances) of full-time employees amounted to MOP25,150, up by 5.2 percent year-on-year. The average earnings of bank tellers increased by 10 percent to MOP15,320. At the end of the first quarter of 2016, job vacancies dropped to 238, down by 80 from a year ago; vacancies for clerks totaled 131, including 45 for bank tellers.

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Renato Marques

ADMIRERS DIVIDED OVER PLAN

Poet's remains could be moved from Macau to Lisbon

A petition was recently submitted to the Portuguese parliament requesting that the mortal remains of the poet Camilo Pessanha, who died and is buried in Macau, be transferred to the National Pantheon of Portugal.

The petition, which is now being reviewed by the Portuguese Parliament Committee on Culture, Communication, Youth and Sports, is championed by legislator Edite Estrela, a former member of the European Parliament.

The plan to exhume the body of the reputed poet has not yet reached a consensus, particularly in Macau. Some argue that the poet's tomb in Macau "is a landmark of the Portuguese presence and memory." Some feel that "the grave is something tangible," and believe that it is not absolutely essential to transfer it to the 17th-century monument in Lisbon. A burial in the Pantheon is considered to be the highest posthumous tribute, reserved only for the most respected Portuguese citizens.

Ana Jorge, great-granddaughter of Camilo Pessanha, told Lusa news agency that she disagrees with the possibility of the mortal remains being moved elsewhere, highlighting the fact that the poet shares his grave with his son and wife, who were of Chinese ethnicity.

Pessanha's descendant told Lusa that in Macau, there exists a "different mentality" regarding ancestors. "We do not touch these things," she said, recalling that the grave has already been in place for over 90 years, and that the family sees no reason to move it.

In Portugal, lawmaker Gabriela Canavilhas opined that the Portuguese government's investment in "increasing its visibility, keeping the tomb visible and in good condition, and improving knowledge about the poet in Macau," would be a more "useful" measure to take.

Contacted by the Times, architect Carlos Marreiros, a longtime fan and follower of Pessa-



Camilo Pessanha's grave stands at the St Miguel Arcanjo cemetery

nha's work, said that the news of the discussion in Portugal is bringing him "double joy."

"Firstly, by the fact that the value of the person and his work is being considered for such a high recognition, and above all because people in the [Portuguese] republic still remember the diaspora poet," he said, stating it "is something that has only been happening for the last 20 years."

Marreiros, the author of the

poet's statue near Lisboa Hotel, considers Pessanha to be a deserving figure for the National Pantheon of Portugal, together with figures like the footballer Eusébio and the singer Amália. He does, however, also argue that "staying in Macau might be a good thing" as long as the current location is made more "dignified."

"After all, it was here that he lived almost all his life and produced all his work," Marreiros said. He believes "the Portuguese authorities should join the local institutions and admirers of the poet's work in order to dignify the grave, and eventually find another place inside the same graveyard for a small but distinctive monument, which should include some biographical information and excerpts from his most highlighted works." This proposal, according to the architect and artist, would "bring up the value of the poet," contributing positively to a deeper study of his works and the production of higher quality Chinese-language publications.

Alexandra Domingues, a teacher at the Portuguese School, told the Times that she is divi-

ded about the topic of Pessanha's grave. On the one hand, it would be a "great homage" to see the poet in the National Pantheon of Portugal.

"Camilo is from Macau and he belongs in Macau," she said, highlighting the fact that it was here that he lived and where his work first gained renown. "Macau is his home."

Regarding what possible measures to preserve his memory and work, Domingues said that "the preservation passes through the schools and its students," adding that "reintegrating the study of Pessanha's work into the school curriculum would definitely be a first step." She considers Pessanha to be a

"universal poet" and the first to "open the door between Macau and modern Europe."

Journalist Carlos Morais José has been studying the poet's works and feels strongly that

It is more important to Portugal that one of its great poets lived in Macau, has roots and family in Macau, than to remove his bones.

CARLOS MORAIS JOSÉ

his body should stay in Macau. "He is a Portuguese poet from Macau," he said, adding, "It is more important to Portugal that one of its great poets lived in Macau, has roots and family in Macau, than to remove his bones."

In addition, Morais José finds a few other factors relevant to the discussion. "[The transfer of the mortal remains] is an expensive process and involves many things, such as his family's beliefs and traditions. There is much more to do than just to move his bones. Touch his work, for example."

The Hoje Macau newspaper director added, "This year completes 90 years from his death and we have barely done anything to celebrate the poet, besides a conference during the Macau Literary Festival."

In his opinion, in order to keep Pessanha's memory alive, his work must be released to the public, either in schools or in a dedicated museum, which "should have been already done."

Macanese museum waits for IC assessment

THERE has been a study into the feasibility of establishing a Macanese House Museum, which would highlight three of Macau's most respected writers, including Camilo Pessanha. Regarding this possibility, Carlos Marreiros reaffirmed that "the feasibility assessment is done and has been delivered," and that they are waiting for the Cultural Bureau (IC) to make a final decision on the project.

The Macau Holy House of Mercy (SCMM) intends to build the proposed Macanese House Museum inside two typically Macanese houses that they own in the St Lazarus district, close to Tap Seac. SCMM has been trying to develop this museum since 2011. The houses would showcase how old Macanese families lived, displaying furniture, pictures and objects that belong to the community.

WHO IS CAMILO PESSANHA?

CAMILO PESSANHA was born on September 7, 1867 in Coimbra, Portugal and died on March 1, 1926, in Macau. Remembered as one of the world's greatest symbolist poets, he arrived in Macau on April 10, 1894 to become a philosophy teacher in the newly established Gymnasium of Macau. Pessanha's masterpiece "Clepsydra"

(1920) is the product of his habit of giving away his poems to friends, resulting in many of them being either lost or destroyed – combined with his talent for rewriting most of his works from memory. "Clepsydra" was prompted by an idea from Ana de Castro Osório to compile all of Pessanha's works into a single volume, to which he agreed.



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ANALYSIS

Luxury brands' Chinese binge is showing signs of slowing

Andrea Felsted

IT'S already happened to middle-of-the-road stores across high streets and main streets. Now the world's biggest luxury stores are starting to shutter outlets.

The culprit is the Chinese consumer, who is starting to rein in spending at home and abroad. The effect will be no less severe: expect more closures to come.

Over the past decade, Chinese consumer demand and new store openings together turbo-charged luxury sales. New store space accounted for 55 percent of global luxury revenue growth over the past eight years, according to analysts at Mainfirst.

As for Chinese nationals, they powered about two-thirds of luxury market's growth over the past decade, according to Exane BNP Paribas.

20

Hugo Boss's planned closures in China



Now both of these forces are running out of steam.

Given the slump in Hong Kong and the slowdown in China, stores there are the main focus of attention.

Hugo Boss has already announced plans to close 20 of the 131 stores it directly owns on the mainland. It's reviewing as many as 20 of its least-profitable 430 stores globally.

The company is in talks with its landlords, so not all of these outlets will close - but it expects to announce a sizeable number of exits later this year.

Prada won't say where its selective store cuts might fall, but as it expanded aggressively in Asia, it's a good bet that some will be there.

And last week, Richemont, maker of Cartier jewelry and Jaeger-Le-

Coultre watches, said it was also reviewing its retail network in Hong Kong and Macau. This could include closures, moving to cheaper premises or lease renegotiations.

Indeed, seeking rent reductions is an alternative to outright closure.

Bloomberg Intelligence's Patrick Wong says rent reductions of as much as 50 percent are possible in some locations in Hong Kong. But demand remains strong for space in premium malls, limiting the scope for discounts.

In mainland China, tenants have most bargaining power in new malls, particularly in second-tier cities, hit by a slump in demand and plentiful new supply, Wong notes.

While the most attention might be on China, glo-

bally, brands are focusing on making their existing stores work harder. Rather than planning large scale openings, existing outlets are being refurbished.

The luxury groups are right to halt their dizzying expansion, and start to cut back. As they do, there could be opportunities for more niche upmarket brands to expand. Kering's Saint Laurent, LVMH's Givenchy Fendi and Celine, and Swatch's Harry Winston could all open stores at more attractive rents.

Pandora, the affordable luxury chain, is one retailer that is still growing its store base, including in China.

And here's another trend that mirrors what is happening on high streets and main streets. As mid-market brands retrench, discount players move in.

Pandora is hardly the same as Primark (its jewelry can cost 60 pounds (USD87) rather than six pounds at its less upscale cousin). But the Danish jeweler offers cheaper, more accessible luxury.

That's still a winning formula in China, whether it is LVMH's cosmetics and fragrance brands - or Pandora's charms. **Bloomberg**

Ryanair posts record 2016 profit, sees lower summer fares

Shawn Pogatchnik, Dublin

EUROPEAN budget carrier Ryanair has posted record full-year profits and passenger figures, and expects both to hit new highs this summer amid rapid growth and declining fares.

Yesterday's results for the year ending March 31 showed the Dublin-based airline strengthening on every front. Net profit before exceptional gains rose 43 percent to 1.24 billion euros (USD1.4 billion) and the percentage of seats sold rose 5 points to 93 percent. Total sales rose 16 percent to 6.54 billion euros and the overall number of passengers for the year rose 18 percent to 106.4 million.

Chief Executive Michael O'Leary says Ryanair expects average fares to fall around 6 percent this summer and even more in winter amid increased competition and well-hedged fuel costs. He says Ryanair should carry 116 million passengers and record a minimum net 2017 profit of 1.38 billion euros, 11 percent higher than Monday's record figure. Analysts expect Ryanair to beat that forecast by at least 100 million euros.

O'Leary said Ryanair foresees its fleet of Boeing 737-800s growing this year by 53 aircraft to reach 380 as the airline expands eastward with seven new bases including Bucharest, Romania; Prague, Czech Republic; Sofia,



Bulgaria, and the German cities of Hamburg and Nuremberg. Ryanair already is central to western Europe's short-haul traffic with the biggest market share in Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Poland and Spain. It's No. 3 in Germany and France and No. 2 in Britain where it's battling to dethrone budget rival easyJet.

Ryanair shares rose 1.75 percent in early Dublin trading to 13.44 euros.

Yesterday's net profit excluded an exceptional gain of 317.5 million euros from Ryanair's November sale of its stake in rival Irish carrier Aer Lingus to IAG, the parent of British Airways. Ryanair launched three hostile bids for Aer Lingus that faced opposition from competition regulators, the Irish government and labor unions.

Analysts credit Ryanair's 2013 decision to start improving customer service and broadening its product range as critical in driving its latest growth. A business previously infamous for surprise extra charges and cut-throat inflexibility now offers smoother online sales, family and business tickets, more relaxed baggage rules and better space on its new Boeing models. **AP**

corporate bits

TRIA SPA OPENS AT MGM



"Tria Spa" opened today at MGM Macau offering a variety of treatments for wellness, vitality and beauty, according to a press release from the casino operator.

The spa will include a SoSound Therapy Lounge, allowing visitors to experience the latest in wellness technology. According to the press release, this is "the only place in Asia where this technology is

available," offering "vibrational oscillations" to create a "powerful and unique experience to displace tension and stress." Also on offer at Tria Spa is a sauna, a hammam (Turkish bath), vitality pool and equipped gym. During the warmer months, an area next to the spa at the hotel's outdoor swimming pool will also be made available.

ADEGA ROYALE PRESENTS FINE PORTUGUESE WINES TO HK, MACAU

With its extensive coverage of wines from South to North Portugal, Adega Royale Ltd has brought various fine wines to consumers in Hong Kong and Macau.

The appearance of winery owners and wine-makers to support the company's wine tasting event last month in the JW Marriot has given consumers an extensive knowledge of Portuguese wines.

In a statement, the wine company said they are not only focusing on traditional port wines, but a wide range of "still wines [...] reds, whites and sparkling varieties, to increase people's awareness of Portuguese wines."

Adega Royale also brought a new collection from four famed regions of France: Champagne, Bordeaux, Rhône and Provence.

Moreover, 30 lucky draw winners were offered "A Unique Vintage Wine Encounter" in which to taste rare vintage wines from the 50s, 70s and 80s.

'UBER COMMUTE' IS NEXT FRONTIER FOR CEO KALANICK

Amid resistance from European lawmakers, Uber Technologies Inc. founder Travis Kalanick called on local regulators to promote the financial incentives car owners could benefit from if they were to pick up a neighbor and share their ride to work.

"We can turn every car into a shared car - the next frontier is the Uber commute," CEO Kalanick said yesterday at a conference in Brussels. "Is there a way that someone could pick up a neighbor on the way to work? We have the technology for it, but there are also regulatory frameworks we have to work with. Why can't these folks get a little more incentive?"

Kalanick said he met with regulators at the European Commission earlier in the day to talk about how cities can solve problems like traffic,



Uber Technologies CEO Travis Kalanick

parking, and having too many cars on the roads.

"We're making our case but also learning what it's going to take to bring our kind of innovation to many cities here in Europe," Kalanick said at the conference, organized by think tank Lisbon Council. "I got my first course in speaking European this morning at the European Commission."

MOZAMBIQUE

Contract signed for dredging the port of Maputo

THE dredging of the access channel to the port of Maputo to allow the entry of vessels of up to 80 tons of gross tonnage will begin in May following the signing of a contract recently, Sunday newspaper Domingo reported.

The contract, worth USD100 million for a 10-month contract was signed by the Maputo Port Development Company and Jan de Nul Dredging Middle East FZE, a dredging company based in Dubai, UAE Arab States, of family-owned group Jan de Nul, with financial headquarters in Luxembourg.

Dredging to deepen the approach channel from the current 11 meters to 14 meters will create conditions for safe navigation and ensure that larger ships can dock safely, making the port of Maputo more competitive.

The previous dredging operation of the Maputo port channel allowed access to vessels of up to 65,000 tons, which contributed to the expansion of the ferro-chrome and container terminals, a new terminal for grains and recovery of piers three, four and five.

The Maputo Port Development Company is a private company resulting from a partnership between Mozambican state-owned port and railway company CFM and and Portus Indico, which in turn is made up of South Africa's Grindrod group, DP World of the United Arab Emirates and Mozambican company Mozambique Gestores. **MDT/Macauhub**

China takes stake in TAP, prepares flights to Portugal

A direct air link between Lisbon and Beijing, a long-standing objective of the governments of Portugal and China, is about to become a reality, at a time when a Chinese airline is taking a stake in Portuguese airline TAP.

With restructuring, completed last week, of the capital of TAP Air Portugal, the airline that offers the most flights between the Portuguese-speaking countries, by August of this year China's Hainan Airlines (HNA) will have a share of 13 percent after converting the TAP bonds it subscribed.

Humberto Pedrosa, representing the Atlantic Gateway consortium, said at a press conference last Friday that HNA, a shareholder of Brazilian airline Azul, which is part of the consortium that won the privatization of TAP (Atlantic Gateway), "will have an indirect stake in



TAP of 13 percent with the conversion of the bonds by Azul that [...] may reach 20 percent."

Portuguese weekly newspaper Expresso reported HNA taking a stake in the consortium will happen when the transaction is closed, when private shares are transferred to the state.

Getting a link to the Far East "as soon as possible", including to Beijing, was one of the goals outlined

by the Portuguese Minister of Planning and Infrastructure, Pedro Marques, resulting from the Chinese involvement in TAP.

David Neeleman, who in November sold about a quarter of the share capital of Azul to the HNA Group for 1.7 billion reais, has argued that the partnership with the Chinese group could allow the Brazilian carrier enter the Asian market through code share

agreements.

HNA's involvement in TAP was initially limited to financing the Portuguese company, through a bond issue of 90 million euros.

The purchase and sale agreement of TAP shares stipulates that the State keeps 50 percent, and the Gateway consortium, has 45 percent, which may increase to 50 percent with the capital available to TAP employees.

Jorge Costa Oliveira, Portugal's Secretary of State for Internationalization, said last week that by the end of this year, a flight is expected to be launched between Hangzhou (capital of Zhejiang province), Beijing and Lisbon.

The connection, for which "they are reviewing the final details," will be operated by Beijing Capital Airlines, a subsidiary of HNA, the Secretary of State told Portuguese news agency Lusa. **MDT/Macauhub**

AD



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DAYS after it was launched, organizers have canceled an art installation on Hong Kong's tallest skyscraper that carried a politically provocative message about the city's relationship with mainland China.

The organizers of a large-scale public art exhibition said in a statement Sunday that they were dropping the light show on the building, which featured a countdown to the end of Hong Kong's status as a special region of China.

Local artists Sampson Wong and Jason Lam used the LED lights on the 484-meter-tall International Commerce Center's facade to display the number of seconds left until June 1, 2047, to stir debate amid growing concerns about Hong Kong's future under Beijing's rule.

However, the Hong Kong Arts Development Council and the show's curator said the artists changed the show's title and message without consulting them.

They said in their statement that the "disrespect" shown by Wong and Lam against the original agreement "put at risk any future possibility to work further in the public space."

The installation's debut last week was seen as especially subversive because it occurred during a visit by the Chinese Communist Party's No. 3 official, Zhang Dejiang, although the artists have said the timing

Hong Kong axes provocative skyscraper art installation



The 118-story International Commerce Centre (ICC), the tallest building in Hong Kong

was coincidental.

Originally named "Our 60-second friendship begins now," Wong and Lam renamed the artwork "Countdown Machine"

after the exhibition opened.

A former British colony, Hong Kong became a specially administered region of China after Beijing took control in 1997

and retains civil liberties such as freedom of speech unseen on the mainland and considerable control over its own affairs. However, Beijing's tightening

grip on the city has sparked anxiety among residents about what will happen after its 50-year special status expires in 2047. **AP**

HEALTH

Nationwide investigation to determine how to aid poor

Anationwide health investigation of poor people in China is underway, and the results are expected to lead to new policies to aid the country's sickest and poorest citizens.

Statistics show there were 12.56 million households living in direct poverty due to unaffordable medical bills as of 2013, accounting for 42.4 percent of the total poor on record.

Starting in mid-April, the National Health and Family Planning Commission (NHFPC) asked local health staff to collect information on these people, including their names, addresses, illnesses and medical costs.

A report will be written up by the end of July for the commission, which will decide how to help them based on the report.

In rural villages, village doctors have been tasked with going door to door to ask about patients' illnesses and fill in the charts. In Ping'an Village in Yudu County of Jiangxi, village doctor Zhang Yingwu started data collection with a septuagenarian woman named Qiu Chengxiu. The woman suffers chronic kidney disease.

"Her family was able to make ends meet when the government offered loans for her son. But last year, her health got worse and cost the family a big fortune," he said.



Farmers in China

Jiangxi is one of the poorer provinces in China. By the end of 2014, Jiangxi had 2.76 million people living below the poverty line, and more than half of the poverty was caused by sickness.

Jiangxi health officials said there have been a few suicides of people unable to afford exorbitant medical expenses. In Shangrao County, illness cost fourth-grader Chen Yunfei her childhood.

She lost her father to bone cancer eight years ago, and later her mother left. Her grandfather, her caretaker, committed suicide after being diagnosed with stomach cancer in 2014. He was unwilling to drag the family further into debt.

"Sickness is one of the most formidable obstacles standing in the face of the poorest population in China," said Hu Meiyang, a doctor at the

Children's Hospital of Jiangxi and a deputy to the National Congress.

"Better health care is the only way to keep people out of poverty," she added.

Medical cooperative programs and insurance can cover as much as 70 percent of medical costs for rural farmers, but for some diseases, the reimbursement rate is less than 30 percent, Hu said.

The Chinese government offers special medical plans for people living in extreme poverty. However, the program has not been expanded to cover all of the population on record as living in poverty. By the end of 2014, only a third of Jiangxi's impoverished people were covered by the plans.

"It all depends on the pocket of the local government. In some poor counties, the maximum the government can pay is only 12,000 yuan for one person, which is far from enough," said Li Jianlin, director of Medical Affairs in the First Affiliated Hospital of Nanchang University.

China's health budget for 2016 is 1.24 trillion yuan, and aiding the poor is a key objective. "The public is calling for increased government spending and effective enforcement of policies. They are the only hopes for the most depleted people," said Li. **MDT/Xinhua**

Hundreds protest lack of college placements

SOME 500 people on Sunday protested what they say is a lack of university student placements in their central China province, in the latest protest over education reform.

Parents holding banners that read "Fair education" rallied in Zhengzhou city against what they say is a serious shortage of college placements in Henan province. The protest in Zhengzhou's Erqi Square ended peacefully.

The Ministry of Education says Henan has more than 207,000 college placements, and almost 300,000 students from the province were enrolled in undergraduate courses in the country last year.

This year, the ministry says at least an additional 16,800 Henan students will be able to study in other provinces. But 820,000 Henan students have applied to take the university entrance exam this year, and the protesters say

more placements are needed.

Protests over reform to college enrollment quotas also took place last weekend in nearby provinces, Hubei and Jiangsu. However, those parents were against cuts in the numbers of college placements for locals

■ The Ministry of Education says Henan has more than 207,000 college placements, and almost 300,000 students

in their areas to enable more students from poorer provinces, like Henan, to have more access to universities. **AP**

U.K.'s first Chinese-backed offshore wind farm gets go-ahead

Jessica Shankleman

THE U.K.'s first Chinese-backed offshore wind farm took a major step forward after three investors reached financial close on the 2.6 billion pound (USD3.8 billion) Beatrice project, in the Moray Firth off the north west coast of Scotland.

The 588-megawatt wind farm is due to be completed in 2019 and is 25 percent owned by China's SDIC Power Holdings Co. SSE Plc owns 40 percent and Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners K/S has 35 percent, according to a statement by the developers yesterday.

Beatrice will be funded with 60 percent debt, Gregor Alexander, finance director for SSE, said on an analyst call May 18. It has a contract from the U.K. government to provide power at 140 pounds a megawatt-hour. Siemens AG will supply 84 of its 7-megawatt turbines, with the blades made at its new factory in Hull, on the east coast of England.

SDIC Power "will be able to take its experience from constructing Beatrice home to China," said Tom Harries, an analyst for Bloomberg New

■ Even though it has some of the world's best wind resource, Scotland doesn't yet have any offshore wind farms

Energy Finance. Lack of developer experience and proven home-built turbines has slowed the development of offshore wind in China, though this could change with the country expected to install 2 gigawatts to 3 gigawatts a year in the 2020s.

"Beatrice is SDIC Power's first exposure to the European offshore wind market, and we fully believe it has a promising future," said Yang Lin, secretary at SDIC Power, according to the statement.

The investment also marks a turnaround for SSE, after it said in 2014 that offshore wind wouldn't be part of its future portfolio, citing "high costs"



and "limited" government incentives for the sector.

"A couple of years ago we probably slightly spat the dummy on offshore wind because it looked more tricky," Alexander at SSE said on May 18. "But clearly at the moment for go-

vernment, it's the only game in town for additional capacity."

Offshore wind is now "definitely back on the agenda" for SSE, he said, adding that it was also looking at its involvement in the Seagreen zone that it's developing with Fluor Corp.

and the Dogger Bank wind farm zone, being developed in the Forewind consortium with RWE Generation UK Plc, Statkraft Vind AS and Statoil ASA.

The commitment to build Beatrice takes the U.K. past the 10-gigawatt mark of offshore wind projects that are either operating, under construction or with a final investment decisions, according to the trade group RenewableUK.

Even though it has some of the world's best wind resource, Scotland doesn't yet have any offshore wind farms. Beatrice could become Scotland's second project, after Statoil's floating Hywind project, which this month gained a seabed lease from the Crown Estate and is due to start producing power in 2017. It's also expected to be Scotland's largest private infrastructure project, according to the statement.

A third planned Scottish offshore wind farm, Mainstream Renewable Power Ltd.'s 2.8 billion-pound Neart na Goithe, faces an uncertain future. It remains locked in one battle with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and another with the U.K. government over whether it's still eligible for a power purchase contract. **Bloomberg**

Cash-strapped local governments look to boost funds

CHINA'S cash-strapped local authorities are scrambling for ways to rebuild their fiscal firepower as a tax

overhaul has seen them lose out to the central government and efforts to clear unsold apartments prompts many

to restrict land sales for new development.

Proposals include turning over pension commitments to Beijing,

redistributing sales-tax revenue from the central government to local coffers, or allowing provinces to start applying new levies on housing, according to proposals by former officials and tax experts in Beijing. The Ministry of Finance is in the midst of an overhaul of the nation's tax system, with details on how local governments can boost revenue anticipated in coming weeks and months.

Meantime, the local economies hardest hit by revenue shortfalls are falling back on land sales to plug the gap, potentially worsening their long-term housing problems by adding to excess supply. The northeast rust-belt provinces of Heilongjiang, Liaoning and Jilin are most reliant on land sales, a Bloomberg provincial risk tracker shows.

The government has orchestrated a debt swap for local governments to convert expensive loans into bonds, with 5 trillion yuan (USD764 billion) of such borrowings matu-

are an important backstop for consumption as the provider of pensions and welfare.

With local officials relying more on Beijing's assistance, "their sense of uncertainty has grown, making them more reluctant to plan for long-term development of their local economies," said Xu Shanda, former deputy director of the National Taxation Administration.

Still, regional and local governments' fiscal and economic position improved in the first quarter and should continue to do so in coming quarters as the real estate market and macro economy stabilize, Moody's Investors Service wrote in a report dated yesterday. Provinces heavily exposed to excess capacity industries such as steel and coal are lagging behind, it said. **Bloomberg**

ONE SHOT NEWS



Office workers stretch after participating in a tai chi class at a public park in Beijing. Tai chi has enjoyed a resurgence in popularity in modern China for its perceived health, meditation, and exercise benefits.

■ The local economies hardest hit by revenue shortfalls are falling back on land sales to plug the gap

ring this year. Provincial authorities play a vital role sustaining China's investment-led economy by helping fund infrastructure projects, and

Eighteen girls killed in fire at school dorm in northern Thailand

A nighttime fire at a dormitory of a primary school in northern Thailand killed 18 girls, many of whom had been roused by a dorm-mate but went back to sleep, thinking it was a prank, officials and the girl who sounded the alarm said yesterday. The victims were between 5 and 12 years old.

Five girls were injured in the Sunday night fire. Many survived by rappelling down from a second-floor window using sheets tied together to form a rope.

The two-story wooden structure that caught fire housed 38 girls, most of them belonging to the area's ethnic minorities. Fifteen girls escaped without injuries. The cause of the fire was not immediately known.

Some of the students were still not asleep when the fire broke out and were able to raise the alarm, said Rewat Wassana, manager of the Pithakkaiat Witthaya School, to which the dorm



The outside of a damaged school dormitory is seen where local police say 18 girls, ranging from 5 to 12 years old, died in a fire

is attached.

The kindergarten and primary school in Wiang Pa Pao district, just outside the city of Chiang Rai, has about 400 day students and boarders. It is about 800 kilometers north of Bangkok.

Rewat said the fire broke out in the dorm's lower level, which is used for activities. The upper level housed the sleeping quarters. It is one of the two dorms on the 8-hectare school grounds. The other dorm, which is lo-

cated nearby and is for boys, was untouched, Rewat said.

"We have a teacher who sleeps with the girls in the dorm. She tried to help the students escape," Rewat told reporters at a news conference broadcast on local television.

An 11-year-old girl identified only as Suchada said at the same news conference that she had gotten up to go to the bathroom when she noticed the fire downstairs, and ran to tell her friends in

various rooms. But some of them didn't believe her and closed the door on her to go back to sleep, she said.

"We remembered some lessons from Girl Scouts to tie cloth together to make a long rope and we climbed out of the window," the fifth-grade student said. "The teacher helped us. While the teacher was climbing down, the rope tore and she hurt her leg and waist."

A police official told The Associated Press by phone that besides the 18 dead, another five girls were injured, including two in serious condition. He said two of the bodies were so badly burned they were unidentifiable. The official did not wish to be identified because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

Firefighters took three hours to extinguish the fire, and pulled survivors and bodies from the second-story window of the wooden building. **AP**

JAPAN

Trade data, factory survey show economy weakening

JAPAN'S economy appears to be weakening as exports fell 10 percent and imports plunged 23 percent in April while a monthly survey of factory managers showed the sharpest deterioration in operating conditions in over three years.

Customs figures released Monday show Japan posted a trade surplus of 823 billion yen (USD9.1 billion) in April, compared with a deficit of 58.3 billion yen a year earlier.

A stronger yen exaggerated the drop in exports, but shipments fell in volume terms, too. The declines were seen in key industries, such as industrial machinery and vehicles.

The biggest drop in imports was a 49 percent decline in purchases of oil, gas and other fossil fuels. But imports of electrical machinery, food, raw materials and chemicals also fell.

Meanwhile, the key figure in a monthly survey of factory managers fell to 47.6 in May from 48.2 in April. A reading of 50 marks the line between contraction and expansion. Economists said the latest data suggest exports will fall further in the current quarter. **AP**

AD

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Foster Klug, Hanoi

Obama lifts decades-old arms ban in first visit to Vietnam

U.S. President Barack Obama yesterday lifted a half-century-old ban on selling arms to Vietnam during his first visit to the communist country, looking to bolster a government seen as a crucial, though flawed partner in a region he's tried to place at the center of his foreign policy legacy.

Obama announced the full removal of the embargo at a news conference where he signaled a desire to leave behind the troubled history between the former war enemies and reward what he described as modest progress on human rights in the one-party state.

"At this stage, both sides have established a level of trust and cooperation, including between our militaries, that is reflective of common interests and mutual respect," Obama said, adding that every U.S. arms sale would be reviewed case by case. "This change will ensure that Vietnam has access to the equipment it needs to defend itself and removes a lingering vestige of the Cold War."

Obama is seeking to strike a balance with Vietnam, which he called a vital country in one of the world's most vital regions, amid Chinese efforts to strengthen claims to disputed territory in the South China Sea, one of the world's most important waterways.

Obama said the United States and Vietnam had mutual con-



Barack Obama (left), and Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang walk to a meeting after shaking hands at the Presidential Palace in Hanoi

cerns about maritime issues and the importance of maintaining freedom of navigation in the South China Sea. He said that although Washington doesn't take sides on the territorial disputes, it does support a diplomatic resolution based on "international norms" and "not based on who's the bigger party and can throw around their weight a little bit more," a reference to China.

Lifting the arms embargo will be a psychological boost for Vietnam's leaders as they look to counter an increasingly aggressive China, but there may not be a big jump in sales. Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang praised the expansion in security and trade ties between "former enemies turned friends" and called for more U.S. investment in Vietnam. He said there was enormous bilate-

ral trade growth potential.

U.S. lawmakers and activists had urged the president to press the communist leadership for greater freedoms before lifting the arms sale embargo. Vietnam holds about 100 political prisoners and there have been more detentions this year.

Obama said the countries still have differences over human rights but noted modest improvements by Vietnam.

The United States partially lifted the embargo in 2014, but Vietnam wanted full access as it tries to deal with China's assertive land reclamation and military construction in nearby seas.

After three days in Vietnam, Obama heads to Japan for an international summit and a visit to Hiroshima, where he will be the first sitting president to visit the site of the first atomic bomb attack.

He arrived in Hanoi, the capital, late Sunday, making him the third sitting president to visit the country since the end of the war. Four decades after the fall of Saigon, now called Ho Chi Minh City, and two decades after President Bill Clinton restored relations with the

nation, Obama is eager to upgrade relations with an emerging power whose rapidly expanding middle class beckons as a promising market for U.S. goods and an offset to China's growing strength.

Obama was greeted yesterday by Quang at the Presidential Palace. Obama congratulated Vietnam for making "extraordinary progress." He said he hopes the visit will show a continued interest in strengthening ties in the years to come.

Obama will make the case for stronger commercial and security ties, including approval of the 12-nation Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement that is stalled in Congress and facing strong opposition from the 2016 presidential candidates. The deal, which includes Vietnam, would tear down trade barriers and encourage investment between the countries that signed it.

Critics worry it would cost jobs by exposing American workers to low-wage competition from countries such as Vietnam. They also say it would allow multinational corporations to challenge local laws by saying they violate the trade deal. **AP**

Memories of Hiroshima's suffering fade ahead of president's visit

Shoko Oda and Masatsugu Horie

FOR atomic bomb survivor Sunao Tsuboi, the visit by U.S. President Barack Obama this week to Hiroshima has been a long time coming.

In 2009 when Obama took office, Tsuboi sent a letter to the White House on behalf of seven survivor organizations, inviting the president to visit the city. The invitation was declined.

With months remaining in Obama's second and final term, Tsuboi says he is just grateful that the U.S. leader will pay a visit and deliver a message calling for the world to get rid of nuclear weapons.

"I welcome him with all my heart," Tsuboi said in an interview in Hiroshima. He was 20 when the A-bomb ripped through his hometown and killed

his girlfriend. Now 91, he still carries the scars riven in his body from the blast. He has received treatment for multiple illnesses throughout his life, including cancer.

The two atomic bombs

The younger generations only see these events as history. They can't imagine that these things could actually happen.

MASAKO WADA

dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the final days of World War II killed more than 120,000 people instantly, with thousands more dying and suffering in years that followed from injuries and radiation-related illnesses. Over 183,000 were registered as atomic bomb victims in 2014, but the numbers dwindle each year as the victims age.

Obama's May 27 visit to Hiroshima, the first by a sitting U.S. president, also comes as memories of the war and effects of the atomic bomb are fading even in one of Japan's most war-scarred cities.

A poll conducted by public broadcaster NHK in June last year showed that 44 percent of Hiroshima residents considered the use of the atomic bomb during World War II as "something that

was inevitable," compared with 42 percent in the last poll in 2010. Less than a third thought the bomb was inevitable in a 1975 survey.

"The younger generations only see these events as history. They can't imagine that these things could actually happen," said Masako Wada, vice chairwoman of the Atomic Bomb Sufferers Association in Yokohama.

Katsuhiko Hirano, an elementary school teacher in Hiroshima, said when he asked his sixth graders whether Japan should arm itself with nuclear weapons, half of them said it was necessary to do so because of security threats from China and North Korea.

"I was stunned," the teacher said. "These are children of Hiroshima saying we should use the very weapons that caused so



Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Park

much pain."

Diplomatic ties between Japan and China have been strained over a territorial dispute in East China Sea, while North Korea has held two nuclear tests since Kim Jong-Un's ascendancy to power in 2011 - the most recent test conducted in January. North Korea has urged the U.S. to recognize as it a nuclear power in future negotiations.

In Washington, the Republican's presumptive nominee Donald Trump has said that Japan and South Korea should pay more to the U.S. for Ame-

rican military deployments in their countries or be allowed to develop their own nuclear weapons. Japan spent about 373 billion yen (USD3.4 billion) in 2015 for U.S. military deployment, according to the Japanese Ministry of Defense.

"It's good that Obama's visiting," said Shinichi Onaka, 65, the son of atomic bomb survivors. "But the issue is whether his legacy will be upheld by the next U.S. leader. Whoever succeeds him will need to carry the same attitude towards nuclear disarmament." **Bloomberg**

SYRIA

Multiple blasts in government strongholds kill 80

Sarah El Deeb, Beirut

A series of explosions rocked two normally quiet coastal government strongholds in Syria Monday, killing more than 80 people and wounding 200 others, state media and opposition activists said. The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for the attacks.

The deadly blasts in the peaceful pro-government cities of Tartus and Jableh were the first of their kind targeting civilians in those areas during Syria's civil war, now in its sixth year. The targets included bus stations and a hospital, and marked an escalation in the conflict as world powers struggle to restart peace talks in Geneva.

Several rounds of peace negotiations were held in the Swiss city earlier this year, although there was no breakthrough and the talks never really took off.

The TV reports said at least one suicide bomber, followed by a car laden with explosives, tore through a packed bus station in Tartus, minutes apart. More than 33 people were killed and many injured in the bombings.

Separately, Syria's SANA



In this photo released by the Syrian official news agency, people gather in front of a burning car at the scene where suicide bombers blew themselves up yesterday in the coastal town of Tartus

news agency reported that four explosions rocked Jableh, south of Latakia city. The attacks included three rocket strikes, and a suicide bombing at the emergency entrance of the Jableh national hospital, state media said.

Jableh News Network, an opposition activist media group, said that one of those killed at the hospital is a nurse,

Huda al-Houshi.

Footage aired by the state-run Ikhbariya TV showed several cars on fire and thick black smoke billowing in the air. It also showed the charred remains of cars and minivans in what appears to be a bus station in Jableh.

Russia keeps a naval base in Tartus and an air base in Latakia province. Insurgents

maintain a presence in rural Latakia.

The coordinated and near-simultaneous attacks marked a major security breach of government strongholds that have remained calm throughout the war. Tartus and Jableh are home to thousands of internally displaced people from violence-stricken areas across Syria.

The bombings unleashed an

immediate backlash against the refugees, with families of the victims attacking IDP shelters. One shelter, al-Karnak, was burned down.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, an opposition monitoring group based in Britain, put the death toll at more than 100. It said that seven explosions ripped through both locations simultaneously: four in Jableh, including three suicide bombings and one car bomb, and three in Tartus, including two suicide bombings and one car bomb.

It said that in Jableh, dozens were killed when a car bomb went off near a bus station, followed by a suicide bomber who detonated his explosive belt inside the station. Meanwhile, two men blew themselves up at the electricity company and outside the emergency entrance of a city hospital.

Dozens more were killed in Tartus when a car bomb went off in the bus station, and then two men blew themselves up when people gathered, according to the Observatory.

"We will not be deterred [...] we will use everything we have to fight the terrorists," said Syrian Cabinet Minister Omran al-Zoubi on Syrian TV.

A news agency linked with the Islamic State group said the group's militants were behind the multiple attacks.

The one-sentence report by the IS-linked Aamaq news agency, which routinely carries the group's news and claims, offered no details. AP

Iraqi forces battle IS militants outside Fallujah

Sinan Salaheddin, Baghdad

IRAQI government forces on yesterday pushed Islamic State militants out of some agricultural areas outside of Fallujah as they launched a military offensive to recapture the city from the extremists, officials said.

Backed by U.S.-led coalition airstrikes and paramilitary troops, Iraqi government forces launched the long-awaited military offensive late Sunday. The city, located about 65 kilometers west of Baghdad, has been under the militants' control since January 2014.

The commander of the Fallujah operation, Lt. General Abdul-Wahab al-Saadi, could not say how long the offensive would take, citing terrain, the number of civilians in the city and bombs planted by the militants. Al-Saadi added that the first phase aims to surround and



Iraqi security forces backed by Shiite and Sunni pro-government fighters preparing to attack Islamic State group positions in Fallujah

bomb IS positions.

Federal police battalion commander, 1st Lt. Ahmed Mahdi Salih, said ground fighting was taking place around the town of Garma, east of Fallujah, which is considered the main supply line for the militants. IS holds the center of Garma and some areas on its outskirts.

Col. Mahmoud al-Mardhi, who is in charge of paramilitary forces, said his

troops recaptured at least three agricultural areas outside Garma. Al-Mardhi added that airstrikes and artillery shelling intensified against IS positions inside Fallujah.

In the early days of the Sunni-led insurgency that followed the 2003 U.S.-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein, Fallujah emerged as the main stronghold for different militant groups opposed to American forces. The

Fallujah has been under ISIS control since January 2014

main group was al-Qaida in Iraq, which later spawned IS. Fallujah was the site of two bloody battles against U.S. forces in 2004.

Flanked by senior military commanders, Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi announced the beginning of military operations in a televised speech late Sunday night. He vowed to "tear up the black banners of strangers who usurped this city" and hoist the Iraqi flag.

Wearing the black uniform of Iraq's counter-terrorism forces, al-Abadi

visited the Fallujah Operation Command and met with commanders yesterday morning.

Addressing military commanders, he said the offensive achieved "more than what planned for" and hailed the "big successes" by the troops on the ground, without elaborating on the operation. He added that the offensive planned to start more than two months ago, but was delayed due to the political infighting and the deteriorating security situation inside Baghdad.

The Shiite-led government has to deal with deepening political and social unrest in the capital over corruption and lack of public services. On Friday, clashes erupted between protesters and Iraqi security forces inside Baghdad's highly fortified Green Zone, home to key Iraqi government ministries and foreign em-

bassies, killing two people and wounding more than 100.

The offensive comes a week after Iraqi forces pushed IS out of the western town of Rutba, located 380 kilometers west of Baghdad, on the edge of Anbar province. Last month, Iraqi forces cleared territory along Anbar's Euphrates river valley after the provincial capital Ramadi was declared fully liberated earlier this year.

IS extremists still control significant areas in northern and western Iraq, including the country's second-largest city of Mosul. The group declared an Islamic caliphate on the territory it holds in Iraq and Syria and at the height of its power was estimated to hold nearly a third of Iraqi territory. Iraq's Prime Minister says the group's hold has since shrunk to 14 percent of Iraq. AP

TRENDS

CEO-class private jets go begging for buyers, crushing prices

Thomas Black

THE private jet Janine Iannarelli is selling for a Russian client has leather seats, wood paneling, a satellite phone and can fly nonstop from Tokyo to Los Angeles. The price has dropped USD3 million since September and is still falling.

Iannarelli today is hawking the 10-year-old Bombardier Global 5000 for \$14.5 million but recommends that her client cut the price further as the market for large-cabin business jets keeps weakening. A new Global 5000 lists for \$50.4 million.

"There's absolutely no evidence of a recovery on the horizon," says Iannarelli, founder of Houston-based aircraft brokerage Par Avion Ltd. "None of the jet models has hit bottom."

Rarely seen bargains abound for big corporate aircraft as tumbling oil wealth, a stronger dollar and a downturn for emerging-market giants from Brazil to Russia cripple demand. As owners from foreign tycoons to Archer-Daniel-Midlands Co. try to sell their planes, Bombardier Inc., General Dynamics Corp.'s Gulfstream unit and other plane makers are cutting



Jets parked at the Macau airport

output and chopping list prices to cope with a glut of new and used business jets.

The slump extends even to the Gulfstream G650 - just two years ago an aircraft so coveted by well-heeled buyers that some would pay \$10 million above list for a used jet rather than wait four years for a new model. Now there are 19 G650s for sale, about 11 percent of the global fleet in operation.

With many emerging markets faltering, oil companies trimming costs and commodities prices trending down, the tables have turned. Prices of used, large-cabin business jets fell 16 percent last year, according to AircraftPost Inc., which

compiles data on the industry. Business-jet sales tumbled 16 percent to \$3.53 billion in the first quarter, the biggest drop in almost five years, according to the General Aviation Manufacturers Association. Large-cabin jets led the decline.

"Have prices come down? Yes. Have they come down quicker than usual? I'd say yes," says Steve Varsano, an aircraft broker in London who is helping to sell three preowned G650s. "But the activity level is still there."

Gulfstream has reduced production and prices of its G450 and G550 models but doesn't intend to cut prices for new G650s, said Phebe Novakovic,

chief executive officer of parent company General Dynamics. The jet remains a "hot plane," with about a two-year wait for a new one, she said on a conference call last month.

Wynn Aircraft II LLC wants to unload an extended range G650ER that sells for more than \$70 million new. A spokesman for Wynn Resorts Ltd., the casino company run by Steve Wynn, declined to comment on the sale.

ADM is selling a 2010 Dassault Falcon 7X for \$25.5 million in an effort to reduce executive travel expenses. "Commercial airlines offer options for long-range, nonstop flights which can provide significant savings

on our overall costs," says Steve Schrier, a spokesman for the world's largest corn processor.

General Electric Co. is selling a 2003 Gulfstream G550, part of an effort to shed assets of its finance unit as the company focuses on industrial operations.

The price on a 2008 Gulfstream G550 registered to Gulf States Toyota Inc., a Houston-based car dealership, has dropped \$750,000 to \$24.95 million in about six months, according to plane broker Mesinger Jet Sales.

The average value of a used jet currently falls about 8 percent to 10 percent a year, compared with a 3 percent to 4 percent drop before the market slumped, says Jay Mesinger, who is based in Boulder, Colorado. The steeper decline may last for years, he says. "This is going to take a while to correct itself."

Prices have dropped most sharply for older models, says Neil Book, chief executive of JSSI, which manages 1,800 corporate, commercial and private jets. A Gulfstream GV - one of the largest, longest-range corporate jets - fetches about \$10 million now, down from \$18 million two years ago, he says. **Bloomberg**

FILM

Jaclyn Jose becomes first Filipino to win Cannes best actress

VETERAN actress Jaclyn Jose has become the first Filipino to win the best actress award at the Cannes Film Festival for her performance in "Ma' Rosa" as a mother who falls prey to corrupt police after she was forced to sell drugs to survive.

The movie was directed by Brillante Mendoza, who in 2009 became the first Filipino to win best director at the festival for "Kinatay."

"I am so surprised. I just went to have the red carpet walk with my daughter, my real-life daughter and my daughter in the movie also," Jose said as she accepted the award Sunday, referring to her daughter Andi Eigenmann. "To Cannes, thank you so much, thank

you to the jury, thank you that you liked our film."

The actress, who had appeared in previous films by Mendoza, said she was sharing the award with her director, her daughter and the cast of the film, as well as all Filipinos.

ABS-CBN network reported that Jose beat big-name actresses including Charlize Theron, Kristen Stewart and Marion Cotillard.

"Ma' Rosa" is about a mother of four who owns a small convenience store in a poor neighborhood of Manila. To make ends meet, Rosa and her husband resell small amounts of illegal drugs on the side. When they get arrested, she and her children become desperate and are ready to do anything to buy

her freedom from corrupt police.

Mendoza told a news conference in Cannes prior to the award ceremony that the movie was based on a true story and his personal experience with a main character of the film four years ago.

The director, who has become known for ta-

ckling dark social issues in his films, said, "It happened, that's why it has to be told."

"As an artist, as a filmmaker, you have to share it with the rest of the world for them to realize and also for them to think about it, that such situation should not happen," he added. **AP**

KEN LOACH WINS PALME D'OR

VETERAN BRITISH director Ken Loach won his second Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival Sunday for "I, Daniel Blake" — a stark portrayal of a disabled man's struggle with the crushing benefits system in northern England. Accept-

ing the award, the silver-haired Loach punched his fists in the air in victory and said that he hoped his gritty, social realist movie would hold a mirror up to the impact of Europe's policies of austerity on the poorest in society.

AP PHOTO



Jaclyn Jose poses for photographers after winning the Best Actress award

what's ON

RUBBER DUCK MACAU TOUR

UNTIL: May 29, 2016

• THEME GAMES

TIME: 10am-6pm (Saturdays and Sundays)

VENUE: Outside the Macao Science Centre

• RUBBER DUCK GARDEN

TIME: 10:30am-8pm (Fridays to Sundays)

VENUE: Macau Fisherman's Wharf

ADMISSION: Free to all activities

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2870 6222

SOU PUI KUN'S WORK "MUSIC BOX"

IN EXHIBIT OF CONTEMPORARY SCULPTURE

TIME: 10am-7pm

(no admittance after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: June 19, 2016

VENUE: The Handover Gifts Museum of Macau,

Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

PAINTINGS AND CALLIGRAPHY DONATED

BY JAO TSUNG-I

TIME: 10am-6pm Daily (No admission after 5:30

pm; Except on Mondays, open on public holidays)

VENUE: Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de

Almeida, No. 95 C-D, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2852 2523

ARTS IN THE MANDARIN'S HOUSE

TIME: 10am-6pm daily

(No admission after 5:30 pm, closed on

Wednesdays, opens on public holidays)

ADMISSION: free

VENUE: Travessa de António da Silva, No. 10

(near Lilau Square)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2896 8820

Offbeat

12-YEAR-OLD CALIFORNIA STUDENT
READY TO START UNIVERSITY

A 12-year-old Sacramento student who already has three community college degrees and has been accepted to two University of California campuses says he plans on studying biomedical engineering and becoming a doctor and medical researcher by the time he turns 18.

Tanishq Abraham has been accepted to UC Davis and

received a regents scholarship to UC Santa Cruz, but he has yet to decide which university he'll attend, reported Sacramento television station CBS 13 Sunday. "I think I'll be 18 when I get my M.D.," he said.

Tanishq started community college at age 7 and last year he received associate's degrees from American River College, a community college in Sacramento, in general science; math and physical science; and foreign language studies.

Professors at the college didn't initially want him in their classes because of his age. But finally a professor agreed to let him attend if his mother, a doctor of veterinary medicine, also took the class. "There were times when I had to explain general relativity and special relativity to my mom," he said.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
15:00	RTPi Live
18:00	Helena's Shadow (Repeated)
18:50	TDM Sport (Repeated)
19:50	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Non-Daily Portuguese News
21:10	TDM Interview
21:50	Happy Endings S3
22:10	Helena's Shadow
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Drama
00:2	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:50	RTPi Live

cinema

CINETEATRO

19 MAY - 25 MAY



X-MEN: APOCALYPSE

ROOM 1

(2D) 2.00, 4.40, 9.50 pm

(3D) 7.15 pm

Director: Bryan Singer

Starring: James McAvoy, Michael Fassbender,

Jennifer Lawrence

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 144min

MONEY MONSTER

ROOM 2

2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Jodie Foster

Starring: George Clooney, Julia Roberts,

Jack O'Connell

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 98min



TERRA FORMARS

ROOM 3

2.30, 4.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Takashi Miike

Starring: Hideaki Ito, Tomohisa Yamashita,

Shun Oguri

Language: Japanese (Cantonese/English)

Duration: 109min

CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR

ROOM 3

6.45 pm

Director: Anthony and Joe Russo

Starring: Chris Evans, Robert Downey Jr.,

Scarlett Johansson, Sebastian Stan

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 147min

MACAU TOWER

19 MAY - 1 JUN

X-MEN: APOCALYPSE

ROOM 3

1.15, 4.00, 6.45, 9.30 pm

Director: Bryan Singer

Starring: James McAvoy, Michael Fassbender,

Jennifer Lawrence

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 144min

this day in history

1975 JOURNALISTS LEAVE
FALLEN SAIGON

A group of 80 reporters and cameramen - including nine Britons - have been allowed to fly out of Saigon to Vientiane in Laos.

They are the first Westerners to leave the capital of South Vietnam since it fell to communist forces on 29 April.

That day there were chaotic scenes in Saigon as desperate South Vietnamese citizens tried to board overcrowded US helicopters in a bid to flee their own country.

The next day, North Vietnamese tanks rolled in and forced a humiliating surrender. There are still 16,000 foreign passport holders, including thousands of Vietnamese with French passports, waiting anxiously for exit visas and a way out.

After weeks of failed promises and delays, the Western journalists boarded a Russian-made plane belonging to the North Vietnamese Air Force to Vientiane in Laos, the only Indo-Chinese country that still has diplomatic ties with the US.

The fall of Saigon has been marked by victory parades by the communist forces over the last few days. Posters of Ho Chi Minh, leader of the Viet Minh, have been placed on public buildings and marching bands paraded the streets.

Some South Vietnamese welcomed the victory - others loyal to President Thieu who could not get away committed suicide. Most are relieved that the war is finally over.

The communist authorities have so far been lenient on Thieu supporters and are more concerned with "re-educating" former soldiers and young people, tackling growing crime and food shortages in an attempt to bring some sort of order to the streets of Saigon.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Saigon was renamed Ho Chi Minh City, and North and South Vietnam were unified in 1976.

This was preceded by three decades of bitter independence wars, which the communists fought first against the colonial power France, then against US-backed South Vietnam.

The US had entered hostilities to stem a perceived "domino effect" of successive nations falling to communism.

The jungle war produced heavy casualties on both sides, atrocities against civilians, and the indiscriminate destruction and contamination of much of the landscape.

In 1986, the communist government allowed in elements of market forces and private enterprise.

But some party leaders still fear that too much economic liberalization will weaken their power base and introduce "decadent" ideas into Vietnamese society.

In November 2000 President Bill Clinton's visit to Vietnam was presented as the culmination of US efforts to normalize relations with the former enemy.

YOUR STARS

Aries

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Have a yen for something special today? A business-like approach won't do the trick. You'll have to pour on the charm to get what you want, and you have what it takes to do just that.

Gemini

May 21-Jun. 21

You and your partner are getting ready to get ready. It's a bit early to be feeling overwhelmed, so enjoy the high energy and good feelings of the preliminary stages. Then get ready for work.

Leo

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Whether it's friendship or a real date, you'll be sharing some good feelings for a change. The rarity of them may or may not be due to work, so give their frequency some thought.

Libra

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Socializing, romance, flirting - it's a super day. If only your work days could be as packed. But wait, they can be! Rephrase that: If only your work week could be as packed with fun!

Sagittarius

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

You'd love to spend the day relaxing, but you need some preparation time. You have a long week ahead of you, even if the workweek is a short one.

Aquarius

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Don't let personal issues ruin your day. You're getting a deeper appreciation for how professional restrictions make the workday go smoothly. But connect when things go sour, as opposed to being aloof.

Taurus

April 20-May 20

It's a good day to spend on yourself, but that doesn't mean you should be lazy. Get some exercise. If it helps, you can think of it as making up for your sedentary office job.

Cancer

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Things are not going smoothly around the house. That makes working all the more attractive. But work on things at home instead of hiding your head in the sands of work.

Virgo

Aug. 23-Sept. 22

The last thing you need today is a deep and meaningful conversation. Or is it? You may get more out of it than your partner for a change, and it would be more helpful than you think for your work.

Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

Sometimes being at home is more work than being at the office. It's one of those kinds of days. Consider giving in to the other person, just to make life a bit easier.

Capricorn

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

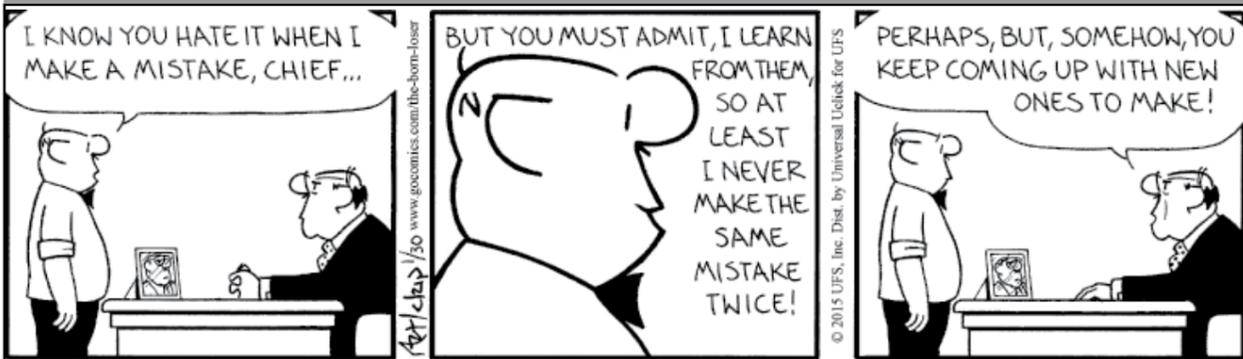
If you're the type who needs challenges to feel useful, then you may be happier at the office. But if you're stuck at home, cook something up to keep yourself busy.

Pisces

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Home improvement doesn't mean dumping your partner when problems arise. If you don't have an 'out with the old, in with the new' attitude at work, why have one at home?

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

	4	9	2	8				
8	2	7						
3			5	7				
	7	1	2		9			
2	5					3	6	
	7	4						9
				3	5	4		
1	3	5	7					

Easy+

7		9	2					
1	8	3						
6		1		9	8			
			6	1	4			
	1	4	9	5				
4	6	1						
5	3		4			1		
				3	8		4	
2		7					3	

Medium

1			5	4				
6			1	2	7			
	2	8	9					
			9	3	1			
5		7		2				
4	3	5						
	3	4	8					
	8	2	9				4	
6	8							2

Hard

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	13	29	shower/clear
Harbin	13	18	thundershower/rain
Tianjin	18	30	drizzle/cloudy
Urumqi	9	20	clear/drizzle
Xi'an	15	27	clear
Lhasa	7	21	clear/cloudy
Chengdu	15	27	cloudy
Chongqing	17	29	cloudy
Kunming	14	22	shower
Nanjing	16	26	overcast/cloudy
Shanghai	20	25	drizzle/overcast
Wuhan	17	27	overcast
Hangzhou	20	24	shower/drizzle
Taipei	25	30	moderate rain
Guangzhou	24	33	cloudy
Hong Kong	25	30	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	12	20	drizzle
Frankfurt	10	19	moderate rain/drizzle
Paris	8	14	drizzle/clear
London	7	16	cloudy/clear
New York	16	22	drizzle

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Conger; 4- Fang, e.g.; 9- Ethereal; Prefix; 13- ___ degree; 14- The Jetsons' dog; 15- Burning of another's property; 16- Twofold; 18- Babble; 19- Ford flop; 20- Outbuilding; 22- Blind alley; 25- Big gulp; 26- Aconcagua's range; 28- Sayings; 32- Prohibition; 35- "Inferno" writer; 37- Blank look; 38- Corrida cheers; 40- Refreshment stand; 42- View from Catania; 43- Wrist bones; 45- Melody; 47- Night school subj.; 48- Choose by divine election; 50- I cannot ___ lie; 52- Final Four org.; 54- Dirty rat; 58- Festival; 62- Composer Ned; 63- Some Art Deco works; 64- Ace; 67- Caterpillar competitor; 68- Blow one's top; 69- Taxpayer's ID; 70- Effortless; 71- Rot; 72- Paris possessive;

DOWN: 1- Finished; 2- Musical study piece; 3- Tibet's capital; 4- Final part; 5- CIA predecessor; 6- Baseball's Mel; 7- The Stooges, e.g.; 8- Hoax; 9- Ascribe; 10- Biblical birthright seller; 11- Goes bad; 12- Arrow poison; 15- Plant pests; 17- Mother of Helen of Troy; 21- Defunct airline; 23- Mont. neighbor; 24- Strong blue cotton fabric; 27- Corpulent; 29- Movable barrier; 30- Sea birds; 31- Marine mammal, secure something; 32- ___ Raton; 33- Greenspan of the Fed; 34- Adopted son of Claudius; 36- Curved letters; 39- Spinning mill; 41- Metric weight; 44- Cut into; 46- Lucidity; 49- The last letter of the Hebrew alphabet; 51- Soon; 53- Oohed and ___; 55- Refuse; 56- Psychics claim to have a sixth one; 57- Signs; 58- Sign away; 59- Calculus calculation; 60- Hwys.; 61- Traditional passed-down knowledge; 65- Director Jean-___ Godard; 66- Ecol. watchdog



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- Emergency calls 999
- Fire department 28 572 222
- PJ (Open line) 993
- PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
- PSP 28 573 333
- Customs 28 559 944
- S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
- Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
- Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
- IACM 28 387 333
- Tourism 28 333 000
- Airport 59 888 88
- Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
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How it works: a look at the retests of Olympic drug samples

Stephen Wilson, Graham Dunbar

INSIDE a non-descript concrete building in a Swiss parking lot lies evidence that could take down dozens of Olympic athletes.

The anti-doping laboratory in Lausanne holds the stored urine and blood samples from the 2008 and 2012 Olympics that are being retested with improved techniques to catch drug cheats who escaped detection at the time and to keep them out of this summer's games in Rio de Janeiro.

So far, 31 unidentified athletes in six sports from 12 countries have been caught during retests of samples from the 2008 Beijing Games. Results on tests of 250 samples from the 2012 London Olympics will be known soon.

Some things to know about the retesting program:

THE LAUSANNE LAB

It's officially called the Swiss Laboratory for Doping Analyses, or by its French acronym LAD. It's one of 34 labs around the globe accredited by the World Anti-Doping Agency and is affiliated with the University Hospital of Lausanne. The lab is located in a drab building near a small Coop supermarket, beside a main road and at the end of the M2 metro line. Visitors have to be buzzed in to take the elevator up the three-story building.

The lab director is Martial Saugy, a Swiss scientist with long hair and a soul patch above his chin that gives him the look of a jazz musician. Saugy and his lab have often been caught up in major doping cases. Lawyers for Lance Armstrong tried to undermine Saugy's evidence about the cyclist's suspect samples from the 2001 Tour de Suisse. Saugy also met with Armstrong's entourage ahead of the 2002 Tour de France when he was a witness for anti-doping authorities in their case against the American rider.

THE RUSSIAN CONNECTION

Links between Russia and the Lausanne lab were questioned by the World Anti-Doping Agency inquiry team that detailed state-sponsored cheating in a report last November. Panel chairman Dick Pound said the lab did not have a convincing explanation for destroying 67 samples that were sent from Moscow in 2013.

An inquiry witness in Rus-



Urine samples from Chinese athletes are recorded upon arriving at the China Anti-Doping Agency in Beijing

sia implicated Moscow lab director Grigory Rodchenkov in a plot to retain clean samples for 67 athletes ahead of the London Olympics. If any of the athletes later produced a positive sample, it would be replaced by their clean sample and the athlete would pay Rodchenkov.

In late 2012, WADA asked for all 67 samples to be retested in Lausanne. One tested positive for low levels of a banned substance, 54 were clean and 12 had too little volume for proper testing. The Lausanne lab destroyed the samples after a standard three-month storage period despite a request from WADA to keep them.

An investigation by the Lausanne hospital, opened within days of the Pound report, cleared the lab of wrongdoing. Rodchenkov is now at the center of a scandal over Russian doping at the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi. He says he helped Russian athletes dope before Sochi and switched their tainted samples for clean ones during the games. Sochi samples are also stored at the Lausanne lab and the International Olympic Committee says it plans to retest those as well.

SAMPLE PROCESS

By the end of any Olympics, IOC testers are in control of as many as 5,000 urine samples.

Samples are divided into "A" and "B" bottles, and the "B" samples are available in case they're needed to corroborate a positive result in the "A" bottle.

The initial tests take place in the lab located in the Olympic city. Because of the huge number of samples and tests that need to be conducted in a short period of time, not every sample is tested for every drug. Experts take educated guesses on which set of athletes are more likely to use certain drugs and run the according tests.

After those tests, the leftover urine is placed into a cargo container that's refrigerated, then loaded on an airplane that goes to Geneva. From there, the samples are transported to the lab in Lausanne and stored in a large vault, where they can be stored in a locked freezer at one of two temperatures — minus 20 or minus 80 Celsius, depending on the type of freezers the lab buys.

"Chain of custody" is a critical part of the anti-doping process, and every time the bottles

change hands, or locations, forms must be filled out to acknowledge who has been in contact with the bottles. A missing link in that process can invalidate a positive test.

Under new rules, the IOC can hold the bottles for up to 10 years, and can thaw the urine for a retest any time during that window.

The limit was recently raised from eight years, which gives scientists more time to identify new drugs, then develop new tests to identify them. Also, scientists can develop more sensitive tests for metabolites — residue — of known drugs that are found in urine. And, if a test for a certain drug wasn't completed at the Olympics, it can be done in a retest years later.

"The anti-doping guys have an arsenal that they don't make public," said Tom Brenna, a Cornell University professor and an expert on anti-doping laboratories.

An example Brenna gave was the discovery of a test for plastic residue from the bags some cyclists used for EPO-laden blood transfusions. Because EPO has been notoriously difficult to detect, the test for the

"plasticizer" gave the drug-fighters a back-door method to prove someone was using the drug.

MEDAL REALLOCATION

The IOC is notifying the 12 national Olympic committees whose athletes have been caught in the Beijing retests. Names and details have been kept confidential for legal reasons. If athletes are found guilty of doping and stripped of medals, any reallocation won't take place immediately. The IOC will retest the samples of those athletes who stand to move up in the medals to make sure they were clean.

BY THE NUMBERS

The 31 new cases from Beijing represent by far the highest number of positive tests from a single Olympics. Beijing had already produced 14 doping cases during the games, plus six cases involving doping of horses. Retests of Beijing samples in 2009 produced five more cases for the blood-boosting drug CERA. The new retests bring the overall total to 56. The previous high was held by the 2004 Athens Olympics, with 26 cases. **AP**

opinion

Our Desk

Daniel Beitler



ONE COUNTRY, TWO STRAITS

In the wake of Tsai Ing-wen's ascension to the presidency of Taipei, the long-held desire in Beijing that the semi-autonomous models of Macau and Hong Kong would serve as stepping stones to Taiwan's gradual integration is undoubtedly being called into question again, on both sides of the strait.

For Beijing, the 'One Country, Two Systems' policy implemented in the two Special Administrative Regions has always been guided by the idea that a successful application of this policy might woo Taiwan over to the possibility of national integration. Indeed, it was first conceived by Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s as the answer to the troublesome questions posed by the island state.

But the Chinese experiment with local autonomy in Macau and Hong Kong has never managed to entice the Taiwanese as Beijing might have hoped. Instead, Taipei notes with some worry the brazen violations of this policy, particularly in China's rebellious elder 'child,' Hong Kong, and to a lesser extent in its well-behaved younger sibling, Macau.

An increasingly hostile and separatist movement in Hong Kong warranted a visit from Zhang Dejiang this month, accompanied by an assurance that the HKSAR would retain its autonomy as long as it continues to refrain from seeking independence. The senior Chinese leader assured citizens that the 'One Country, Two Systems' policy was here to stay.

Recent incidents, such as the numerous abductions of booksellers and publishers over the past two years, might beg to differ, illustrating the extent to which China is prepared to violate the terms of the Joint Declarations.

Even within Macau and Hong Kong, where freedom of expression is enshrined in the SARs' respective Basic Laws, Taiwanese citizens must be astonished when they find themselves refused entry to the territories for adorning their travel documents with pro-independence stickers.

They must conclude that the long arm of China's influence has extended down into the depths of Macau and Hong Kong's immigration services, or the services themselves have assumed some bizarre and gratuitous practice of self-censorship.

If Taiwan is watching these developments – and they surely are – what might they be thinking about the prospects of their own island nation adopting the same kind of dual-policy system while preserving their cherished democracy?

They are probably thinking that the 'One Country, Two Systems' policy, like most of the Central Government's mantras, is ill-defined and not well understood outside of Beijing's corridors of power, and willfully and nonchalantly flaunted in practice.

Beijing, which has done so much to emphasize its shift to soft power in recent decades, has done just as much to undo that progress in the last few years alone. This shift coincides with the rise of 'Papa Xi,' a staunch communist of the worst kind: one who actually believes in communism.

Macau and Hong Kong's external role as prototypes for Taiwan's integration into the mainland is flagging, and becoming ever more unconvincing for the Taiwanese people.

In the two SARs, the lack of a representative democracy means that the policy can only be probed outside the public sphere. If the people in Macau and Hong Kong are skeptical that the policy is being applied in earnest, there is little that they can do to restrain or pressure their leaders. In Taiwan, they can force their government to change course; they can elect DPP candidate Tsai Ing-wen.

THE BRAGA BEATS PORTO ON PENALTIES TO WIN PORTUGUESE CUP

Braga defeated Porto 4-2 in a penalty shootout to win the Portuguese Cup yesterday [Macau time], 50 years after its only previous title.

Goalkeeper Jose Carlos Marafona saved two penalties in the shootout to give Braga the upset win after the teams drew 2-2 following extra time.

Rui Fonte and Josue put Braga ahead in the 12th and 58th minutes, but Andre Silva scored in the 61st

and with a remarkable half-bicycle kick in the 90th to keep alive Porto's chances of winning a title this season.

After a third-place finish in the Portuguese league, Porto was trying to win its 17th Cup title. Braga lost last year's Cup final to Sporting Lisbon. It had been runner-up three other times since winning the trophy in 1966.



Fraud in USD4 trillion trade finance has banks turning digital



Chanyaporn Chanjaroen and Darren Boey

THE risk posed by fraud in the USD4 trillion trade-financing industry has prompted banks to start exploring distributed-ledger technology like the one that underpins bitcoin.

Standard Chartered Plc, which lost almost \$200 million from a fraud at China's Qingdao port two years ago, has teamed up with DBS Group Holdings Ltd. to develop an electronic ledger of invoices that uses a parallel platform to the blockchain employed in bitcoin transactions. Lenders such as Bank of America Corp. and HSBC Holdings Plc say they're looking at blockchain for trade finance and other banking applications.

Blockchain proponents argue that the technology will

change the face of banking, helping lenders cut billions of dollars in costs. Trade financing, a centuries-old banking mainstay, may become ground zero for blockchain adoption because it promises to do away with paper invoices and the fraud that accompanies them - if banks can come together around a joint platform.

For blockchain applications, "invoices should be considered a leading candidate here, given the high potential for fraud," said Henry Balani, global head of strategic affairs at Accuity, which provides technology to monitor trade-based money laundering.

Lenders typically don't publish their losses from trade fraud, though almost 20 percent of banks in a 2015 survey by the International Chamber of Commerce re-

ported an increase in fraud allegations.

In the Qingdao case, companies controlled by a Chinese-born, Singaporean businessman are alleged to have used invoices for the same metals stockpiles several times to bilk banks out of hundreds of millions of dollars. Standard Chartered wrote down \$193 million in commodity assets in 2014 because of the incident. In another example, a trans-Atlantic fraud conspiracy that used fictitious purchase orders and fake invoices to get loans for metal shipments was estimated in 2008 to have cost banks including JPMorgan Chase & Co. close to \$700 million.

"Because there is no common platform for banks to screen transactions financed by other banks due to confidentiality concerns, there is a possibility that customers may capitalize on this information-sharing gap to obtain financing from multiple banks using the same invoice," said Lum Yin Fong, one of the DBS executives who oversaw the bank's ledger tie-up with Standard Chartered. **Bloomberg**

Aston Villa wins HK Soccer Sevens

Robert Carroll, Hong Kong

HONG Kong Soccer Sevens may be overshadowed by the rugby sevens which put that sport's sevens tournaments on the world map but in terms of a great show it deserves to just get bigger and bigger.

As China moves up in the world and football fan President Xin Xiping's campaign to make the country a world power in football an international tournament like this drawing several English Premier League teams surely has only fair winds behind it.

The tournament organized by the Hong Kong football club is not only a reminder of the region's distant colonial past - the club was founded in 1886 - but looks solidly to the future serving, as it does, as a training ground for tomorrow's EPL stars; a whiff of the past and a whiff of the future.

At the three-day event the Cup was won once again by EPL team Aston Villa, beating West Ham in a crowd-pleasing 2-0 victory, with goals from the Sevens



top scorer Harry McKirdy and striker Rushian Hepburn-Murphy.

Villa claimed their sixth championship here coming back from a five year drought to lift the trophy because they had stuck to a tried and tested formation skills and quite simply the boys have fire in their bellies, as Aston Villa legend, coach Gordon Cowans told the Times.

As the European Cup (Champions League pre-1992) and league cup winner explained: "I'm very pleased with the lads they're very talented [and showed] their qualities. They've got [the right] attitude". But where does that come from? "Motivation" "Lads need [the winning attitude] as well as skills. Moreover, "The two-three-two formation has worked well for us in the past few years and it worked for us today."

Station	Air quality
Roadside	45-65 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	70-100 Moderate
Ambient	70-100 Moderate

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

YEMEN A pair of suicide bombings killed at least 45 people in Yemen's southern city of Aden yesterday, security officials said. They said the bombings targeted young men seeking to join the army.

EGYPT's tourism minister said last week's EgyptAir plane crash is unlikely to affect government plans to attract millions of visitors next year. The ministry is maintaining its projection that 10 million tourists will visit the North African nation in 2017, generating USD12 billion in revenue.



AUSTRIA Left-leaning candidate Alexander Van der Bellen won the election to become Austrian president yesterday, but his right-wing rival was only narrowly behind, a result that reflects the growing strength of Europe's anti-EU political movements.

GERMANY Violent crimes motivated by right-wing political opinions rose more than 40 percent in last year as the country saw a large influx of migrants.



BURKINA FASO Across the country's capital, even the wealthiest neighborhoods, typically spared from such shortages, are suffering without water amid an unprecedented heat wave. Already the short supply has increased the price of a barrel of water more than 10 fold from just a few months ago.