



PROSECUTION QUESTIONS MP RENTALS

The Public Prosecutions Office rentals contracted during former prosecutor Ho Chio Meng's tenure are being questioned

P2 COURTS



COUTINHO CALLS FOR SECRETARY'S RESIGNATION

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A 360-DEGREE VIEW OF CHINA'S DEADLY SMOG

For weeks at a time, China's smog transforms cities across the industrial north into quiet, gray shells of their normal selves

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US-CHINA The Trump administration shouldn't abandon long-standing U.S. policy on the status of Taiwan, a prominent panel of China specialists said, calling such a move "exceedingly dangerous." Scholars and former U.S. officials warned in a report that questioning Beijing's "one-China policy" could destabilize the Asia-Pacific and leave Taiwan more vulnerable. More on p11

PHILIPPINES About 15,000 residents of a shantytown beside Manila's port have lost their homes in a fire that raged overnight before being put out yesterday morning. Three evacuation centers were opened, and food and water are being provided to the 3,000 families who lost their homes, Philippine officials said.

MALAYSIA Authorities have seized thousands of paint brushes suspected of containing pig bristles after consumers in this Muslim-majority nation demanded a crackdown. More on p12

AP PHOTO



INDIA-PAKISTAN Pakistan says "unprovoked" Indian fire has killed a civilian in the disputed Kashmir province across the Line of Control dividing the Himalayan region, calling it the latest violation of a 2003 cease-fire agreement.

SRI LANKA says it needs more time to fulfill promises given to the U.N. human rights body to investigate war crime allegations from the nation's long civil war, which ended nearly eight years ago.

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Parliamentary election budget increases 20pct

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New vehicles slump in 2016

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PAULO BARBOSA

COURTS

MP rentals under discussion at Ho Chio Meng's trial



Ho's lawyer, Leong Weng Pun

FOLLOWING the end of the Chinese New Year period, yesterday marked the second day of the post-holiday trial of former top prosecutor Ho Chio Meng. Court procedures continued at Macau's Court of Final Appeal for the 17th session in Ho's case.

The prosecution called witness Lee Hoi Sun, head of the Personnel and Finance Department of the Office of the Prosecutor General, to the stand. Unlike previous witnesses in past trials, Lee was present at the court in both the morning and afternoon hearings.

Lee was involved in activities related to the Public Prosecutions Office (MP)'s property rentals, including renting parking spaces, storage and offices.

With regard to the controversial use of the Hotline Center MP office, Lee said that it was a division directly under the administration of the former Chief of Office of the Prosecutor General of the MP, Lai Kin Ian, who was responsible for selecting the location as an office.

In turn, Lee's department was responsible for appro-

ving the financial support for the office's rental.

Lee was questioned about the owners of the offices. She responded that she only knew two of the owners were her colleagues after reviewing rental references with respect to the office.

■ The prosecution showed receipts of flight tickets to Dubai and questioned why Lee's department would approve the payment of the tickets

According to Lee, the MP initially only rented a section of the floor, and subsequently rented the entire floor after a period of time.

Lee said that while she used to attend training meetin-

gs at the MP office, she had never been to the "Teachers' Resting Room." The witness claimed she was only made aware of the rooms when she reviewed references provided by the department administered by Lai.

Lee said that a shopping list for the resting rooms' amenities had included gym equipment and bedding products. Lee had allegedly questioned her colleagues, having been told that it was the "boss" who had instructed them to purchase the aforementioned amenities. She also said that Ho's former driver, Mak Hak Neng, contributed to rent a specific parking space. She further revealed that Mak had been a technician at the MP besides being Ho's driver.

In her response to the questions later posed by Ho's lawyer, Leong Weng Pun, Lee said that Mak had told her that Ho had instructed him to rent that specific parking space.

Regarding the rental of the MP office, Lee said that Ho was usually the person who approved new rental contracts, while Lai would approve renewals.

involve any form of business with the MP.

Lee responded that the department would make the trip proposals upon confirmation from the MP's former department head, Chan Ka Fai.

Lee said that her department was only responsible for paying the bills, and that another division under Chan's administration was responsible for verifying the expenses.

Lee further stated that while she had noticed there were several companies repeatedly being awarded service contracts by the MP, she did not know that the owners behind the companies were Mak and Wong Kuok Wai, who are accused of having established shelf companies with Ho.

Lee informed the opposing lawyer that Ho had never contacted her about issues related to the making of proposals. She also told him she had never received any reports of poorly completed projects.

A receipt produced in court showed that the MP paid for Ho's spa service during his official trip.

Lee added that she does not recall having handled cases where she requested for someone to pay for personal services after the MP already had paid the bills.

For one of Ho's trips, the MP purchased first-class flight tickets for two people. Lee said that by the city's law, only Ho was qualified to fly in first-class, but claimed that Chan said that there was "no problem" in booking two first-class tickets.

The judge questioned why Lee's department had not questioned Chan regarding the tickets, given this information about the city's law, remarking: "You failed in your duty, then?"

Ho made his statement by the end of the afternoon trial, saying that his office was not the only one equipped with bullet-proof glass, as the entire MP's office at Dynasty Plaza's seventh floor was also equipped with the same.

He further said that the Personnel and Finance Department is equipped with bullet-proof glass. Judge Sam therefore requested the prosecution to provide evidence on whether the seventh floor's Personnel and Finance Department is equipped with bullet-proof glass.

Presiding Judge Sam Hou Fai later questioned Lee about the trip to northern Europe during which Ho attended a conference in Denmark.

Lee responded that she had issued proposals for four Portuguese prosecutors to visit Denmark.

Justice Sam then questioned Lee on whether she had seen an official invitation letter issued by the conference's organizer. Lee said that she had not seen such a letter.

At the conclusion of the morning trial, Ho intended to make a statement but it was declined by Justice Sam as Lee would be present in the afternoon's hearing.

Ho nevertheless had the opportunity to remark that his comments would be helpful for the court's assessment of the events discussed in the morning.

The trial resumed at 3 p.m. with Lee as the only witness in the afternoon.

The prosecution produced receipts of flight tickets to Dubai and questioned why Lee's department would have approved the payment of the tickets when the trip did not

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AL election budget increases 20 percent

Renato Marques

THE Legislative Assembly (AL) election will have a bigger budget, Electoral Affairs Commission (CAEAL) president Tong Hio Fong said yesterday after the commission's first meeting.

While the final figure for the budget has not been calculated, Tong suggested that an increase of 20 percent, in comparison to the last election in 2013, would be necessary.

"There are many reasons for this, including the growth in the number of voters, and also on the number of staff [necessary to handle all the work regarding the voting polls], as well as the addition of new hardware and software and the costs related to price inflation. All this influences the budget," Tong said.

During the meeting, the president also confirmed the staff members who will be responsible for the secretariat, as well as all the works of organization and coordination.



Tong Hio Fong

The CAEAL also discussed production of the election guidebook, which is intended to aid residents' understanding by summarizing the electoral law and procedures.

The official voting date was not announced

Tong declined to provide details on the guidebook content, stating that it was still in the stages of "initial conception".

The CAEAL further discussed its plans to add approximately three "reserve polls" to the 33 standard voting polls. According to Tong, these may be used when "weather or other conditions" such as flooding might disrupt the use of standard voting stations.

A topic of interest for many journalists was the official voting date, which was not announced.

"According to the [Election] law, the [setting of a date] is a duty of the Chief Executive, who must publish it at least 180 days in advance. We [the Commission] are focusing more on the preparatory works," remarked Tong.

The Commission is expected to meet weekly.



Macau Foundation provides MOP727m

The Macau Foundation granted subsidies totaling about MOP727 million during the third quarter of 2016, between October and December of last year, according to information published in the Official Gazette. From this amount, more than half (MOP447 million) was granted to the Macau University of Science and Technology for the education institution's large-scale investments such as the construction of a new block. Other major beneficiaries during the third quarter were City University of Macau (MOP45 million), the foundation behind the University of Saint Joseph (MOP19 million), the Kiang Wu Hospital Charitable Foundation (MOP15.5 million) and the Portuguese School (MOP9 million).

IIM publishes book exploring the PRD



The International Institute of Macau (IIM) has launched its most recent publication "Pearl River Delta - From World Factory to Global Innovator," a book exploring nine main cities of the Pearl River Delta (PRD). Written by the authors Thomas Chan and Louise do Rosário, the illustrated book features a detailed study of each of the cities. The book also focuses on the present and continuing modernization of the cities' industries and infrastructures under China's national 13th Five-Year Plan, as well as the One Belt, One Road initiative, and includes the relevant statistics. The book is available in the IIM office, Macaolink and the Portuguese Bookstore.

Authorities identify 49 illegal workers in Dec

The Public Security Police Force (PSP) said in a statement that it had worked with the Labor Affairs Department (DSAL) and other services to organize 273 investigation operations in December, during which they identified 49 illegal workers. The authorities said they searched construction yards, residences and commercial and industrial establishments, among other locations.

HONG KONG

Shenzhen restrictions lead to fewer tourists



A tourist uses binoculars to look at the view from Victoria Peak as commercial and residential buildings stand in the distance in Hong Kong

A senior official from the Hong Kong Tourism Board told the South China Morning Post (SCMP) yesterday that travel restrictions placed on mainlanders living in Shenzhen had negatively impacted the city's visitor numbers. According to the official, the effect was "greater and longer" than authorities had predicted.

The number of Shenzhen visitors with a one-visit-

per-week permit declined almost 30 percent to 8.88 million people in 2016 when compared with the previous year.

This subsequently impacted the change in the number of total visitors to Hong Kong last year, which declined by 4.5 percent to 56.65 million. According to the SCMP, two-thirds of visitors to Hong Kong in 2016 were from Shenzhen.

The travel restrictions on

Shenzhen residents were implemented by authorities in the mainland municipality with the aim of reducing illegal trade between the two cities. The revision meant that Shenzhen visitors with multiple-entry permits would only be allowed to cross into Hong Kong once per week.

The chairman of the Hong Kong Tourism Board, Peter Lam, told the newspaper that "the visa issue is still affecting the overall visitor numbers. It is hard to quantify its impact on 2017."

He also said that per capita visitor spending in Hong Kong declined by about 5 percent year-on-year to HKD6,600 in 2016.

Public Library launches new catalogue search system

THE Macau Public Library has launched "Enterprise", an updated catalogue search system with new functions and a more user-friendly design, according to a press release issued by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC). Readers will be able to use the system for book renewals and reservations, as well as the management of personal reading lists.

The new system is also

more efficient as it features the same reservation service for books on shelf and books in a specific library.

Readers may log in to their library accounts to view details of their borrowed items, including their borrowing history and overdue fines.

Borrowing history details include the book titles, the author and the borrowing and return dates. Details of overdue

fines include the library fine records of the borrowing due date.

Readers can also create their own reading list and save the book information in the newly launched system.

In addition to the General Mode, "Enterprise" also features an ADA Mode (Accessibility Mode) for residents who require reading assistance while using library computers.



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Student Recruitment 2017-18

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Date of Admission test	PK	March 4 and 18
	JK to Grade 3	March 13 to 27
	Grade 4 to 12	18 March 1pm-4pm
Open House	18 February, 2017	
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Results Notification	April 16, 2017 onwards	

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Meat imported cheaper but retailed higher



per kilo to MOP22.9 (-5 percent) when compared to the equivalent week of 2016 when the price was MOP24.1 per kilo.

A similar tendency can be observed in wholesale prices with 2017 presenting a cheaper price (MOP25.2) than in 2016 (MOP26.60), a decrease of 5.3 percent year-on-year.

Strangely, the retail price paid by the consumer contradicts the decrease, having risen 7.2 percent to MOP80.2 per kilo.

According to a statement from the CC, the prices listed reflect an average across several cuts of pork including pork chop, ribs, pork belly, and lean meat.

Also noteworthy is the difference between wholesale and retail prices, which has more than tripled (318.3 percent), while other meats, like beef for example, only increased by 83 percent. The CC report fails to address and explain this fact.

Renato Marques

ACCORDING to the latest report of the Consumer Council (CC) that surveyed the price of fresh pork, the meat has become cheaper in terms of both imports and wholesales when compared year-on-year to 2016. However, the retail price has risen.

The survey, conducted by the CC on a weekly basis, specifically analyzes the price of fresh pork in both wet markets and supermarkets with the latest report reflecting on the prices of the week of January 20 to 26.

The report states that the price of imported meat has in fact decreased by MOP2.1

ARTS | PHOTOGRAPHY

B&W exhibition marks Barros's first solo outing

CREATIVE Macau will present an exhibition of black and white photographs by João Miguel Barros in his first solo outing.

Titled "Between Gaze and Hallucination," the exhibition will showcase more than 70 of Barros's recent works.

According to Barros, who is a lawyer by profession, his photos explore the contrast between what people observe in their everyday lives (the "gaze") and the iconic moments captured in photographs (the "hallucinations").

Barros regards these as "hallucinations" because they require "genuinely exceptional circumstances [to] reveal them [and] when they no longer portray our gaze rationally, [they] morph instead into representations of our emotions and hallucinations."

"[The exhibition] is a collection of simple clips, some incidental, snapped in the real world and consciously reproduced in black and

white, sometimes charged. They avoid the distraction of colour and the pressure of any form of modernity, encapsulated in our need to focus on the essential in the gaze," continued Barros.

Barros was born in 1958 in the Portuguese capital of Lisbon, but has lived in Macau since 1987.

Barros has a history of involvement in the cultural sector. Between 1979 and 1982, he was co-director of SEMA, a cultural magazine published in Lisbon. Following that, he co-curated a visual arts exhibition titled "Desenhos?" ("Drawing?"), held in Portugal.

In 2013, Barros served on the board of directors of the Foundation for Modern Contemporary Art - Berardo Collection on behalf of the Portuguese government.

"Between Gaze and Hallucination" will open at Creative Macau on February 23 at 6:30 p.m. A book of the same title will be available for purchase during the exhibition.

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Electric motorbike sales expected to increase 15 percent

THE Environmental Protection Bureau (DSPA) hopes its new plan will curb the total number of two-stroke engine vehicles in Macau by "about 30 percent".

DSPA director Raymond Tam said the program aims to remove 9,575 two-wheel vehicles that run on two-stroke engines – which are considered major pollutants – from Macau's roads.

As part of the plan, the government has proposed a financial support measure which will compensate vehicle owners up to MOP3,500 when disposing of such vehicles.

A few motorbike sellers expect electric motorbike sales to increase by 15 percent this year.

According to a report by Macao Daily News, some dealerships say

that this compensation is not attractive enough, although some owners might still consider changing their vehicles.

The report also says that, on the first day after the policy came into effect, several owners of two-stroke engine vehicles visited dealerships for new motors.

Vehicle salesman Tam noted that not many people in Macau own two-stroke engine vehicles, except fans of such motors. He remarked that these drivers did not find the government's proposed MOP3,500 incentive attractive, as they often spent more than that on vehicle maintenance and repair.

Tam expects approximately 3,000 two-stroke engine motors to be replaced. There are currently around 7,000 such motors in Macau.

Vehicle registration slumps in 2016

THE number of newly registered motor vehicles in Macau dropped by more than a third in December 2016, according to information published yesterday by the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC). According to the DSEC, the number of new registrations fell by 35.5 percent year-on-year to 1,208 in December.

Meanwhile, for the whole year of 2016, new registrations of motor vehicles declined by 29.1 percent to 13,935, with that of motorcycles (7,784) and light automobiles (5,395) falling by 23.8 percent and 38.6 percent respectively.

As of the end of December last year, the total number of licensed motor vehicles reached 250,450, up slightly by 0.6 percent year-on-year. The number of motorcycles (131,139) rose by 1.2 percent while that of light automobiles (111,545) edged down by 0.5 percent.

For the whole of 2016, there were 15,342 cases of traffic accidents, down by 2.9 percent year-on-year according to the data published by DSEC. These accidents resulted in some 4,600 casualties, nine of which were fatal.

Also released in yesterday's figures were the cross-border traffic statistics for December 2016 and the whole year.



In terms of vehicle traffic, 405,150 cross-border trips were made in December 2016, down by 9.6 percent year-on-year, driving the annual decline to 1.2 percent year-on-year at about 5.07 million trips. More than three-quarters of cross-border vehicle traffic passed through the Border Gate.

Passenger ferry movements between Macau and both mainland China and Hong Kong rose slightly by 0.9 percent in December, while it declined for the whole of 2016 by 5 percent to 138,164 ferry journeys.

By contrast, although commercial flight movements at the Macau Interna-

tional Airport were down in December by 3.6 percent year-on-year, their frequency increased by 2.7 percent throughout 2016 to 53,617.

Flight movements to and from South Korea, Thailand and Taiwan grew by 38.3 percent, 8.3 percent and 7.7 percent respectively, while movements to and from mainland China and Vietnam dropped by 4.4 percent and 0.5 percent respectively.

Helicopter flight movements increased by 19.4 percent year-on-year to 1,276 in December, while movements for the whole year fell by 17 percent to 11,657. **DB**

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EDUCATION

UM student teams win prizes in regional math modeling contest



TWO student teams from the Department of Mathematics at the University of Macau (UM) were awarded second prizes at the 14th Contemporary Undergraduate Mathematical Contest in Modeling (CUMCM). A total of four UM teams, comprised of six students, participated in the contest.

The CUMCM is a national contest in the mathematical modeling field organized by the China Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics.

According to a statement issued by the UM, this year's contest attracted more than 100,000 students in 31,199 teams, of which 6.9 percent received first or second prizes. The participating teams were from a total of 1,367 universities in China and

Singapore.

For their submission, the two UM teams assessed the effect of open housing estates on traffic conditions on surrounding roads, as well as collected real-time data from both open and closed housing estates in Shanghai and Beijing.

By using simulation software, they

produced indices for quantitative evaluation and provided suggestions to departments responsible for urban planning and transport management based on the results. This year marks the third consecutive year that participating UM teams have been awarded prizes.

This year, the Department of Mathematics established a committee of mathematical modeling. The committee aims to provide consultancy and support to students in the field.

In addition to the CUMCM, students from the Department of Mathematics have won prizes at various other modeling contests held in the United States and China, including third prize in the 2016 University Students' Statistical Project Competition of Macau.

PHD CANDIDATE'S THESIS LEADS TO IEEE PAPERS

PHD CANDIDATE Arshad Husain from the State Key Laboratory of Analog and Mixed-Signal VLSI (AMS-VLSI Lab) at the University of Macau has completed his doctoral oral defense, with external examiners commending his PhD dissertation. The thesis, titled

"High-Resolution Passive and Active-Passive Switched-Capacitor Delta-Sigma Modulator Design Techniques in Nanoscale CMOS", has been featured in an Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) SCI journal paper and two IEEE conference papers.



Sa Sa reports sales increase

Sa Sa International Holdings Ltd has announced the group's retail sales in Macau and Hong Kong during the Chinese Lunar New Year period between January 28 and February 3. During this period, retail sales increased by 3.5 percent year-on-year, accredited to an increase in inbound traffic of mainland tourists. The group recorded 10.7 percent more transactions by mainland tourists, while the average sale per transaction for this group of people decreased by 4.6 percent year-on-year. Sales to local customers decreased by 3.3 percent in the Chinese New Year period. At the same time, the group's same store sales in the two Special Administrative Regions fell by around 1 percent compared with last year.

Local bartender among regional finalists

Four bartenders from the Macau and Hong Kong region have been selected to compete in the Bacardi Legacy regional final in Taiwan on February 20. Three of the finalists are from Hong Kong, namely Timothy Ching from Bibo, Gurung Rajkiran from Zuma and Amanda Wan from The Envoy, while Koko Widyatno from the Ritz Carlton Macau. According to organizers, the competition aims to recognize talented bartenders who can dream up thematic cocktails using Bacardi's Carta Blanca, Carta Oro and Ocho expressions. The finalists were determined during Bacardi Legacy's Hong Kong competition on January 23. After the regional final in Taiwan, the global final will be held in Berlin in late April or early May. Last year, 35 countries participated in the tournament.

AD



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Feb GGR could grow by 10pct

Gaming analysts that have examined Macau's gross gaming revenue (GGR) trends expect February to show on average a 7 percent year-on-year growth. Bloomberg reported that the forecasts of analysts are mostly positive for the month, ranging between 4.5 percent and 10 percent growth compared to the same month last year. Analysts are citing strong VIP business, casino win rates within the normal range and a higher number of overseas visitors during this year's Golden Week for the positive forecast. Gross gaming revenue in January 2017 was up 3.1 percent year-on-year, at MOP19.3 billion, down from the 8 percent annual growth measured in the previous month of December. The Chinese Lunar New Year in 2016 began on February 8, as opposed to being split between January and February, as was the case this year.

'Close attention' is being paid to terrorism

In response to reports published this year over the risk of a terrorist attack in Macau, the Office of the Secretary for Security has assured that the city's security authorities are "paying close attention" to international threats, "including policies adopted by national governments elsewhere." According to a statement issued by the office, Macau's security authorities have been strengthening safety evaluation procedures, as well as enhancing strategies, enforcement efforts and police management in regards to the risk of an act of terrorism in the MSAR. Heightened police checks at border checkpoints, tourist attractions, casinos and other important facilities across the city have been commissioned. Moreover, the police force has widened the scope of intelligence exchange with neighboring countries and territories. Authorities were also keen to stress in a statement issued yesterday that the threat of a terrorist attack remains at a low level.

Illustration contest organized by museums

To celebrate the 2017 International Museum Day, the Communications Museum and the Maritime Museum will organize an illustration contest to encourage artists to record scenes of Macau with their drawing pens. Two themes are available during the competition and participants may submit their work under either category: "The Red Market" or "Drunken Dragon Festival". Submissions must be delivered with a registration form in person to the Communications Museum no later than April 9. The winners of the first, second and third prizes will receive awards. An exhibition of the winning works and an award ceremony will be held during the Macau International Museum Day Carnival in May. According to a statement from the organizers, full-time students and residents of Macau are welcome to participate in the contest.

'Go-slow' protest aiming for 'secretary's resignation'



RENATO MARQUES

Renato Marques

The "Go-slow" protest aims to "call for the secretary's [Raimundo do Rosário] resignation" said lawmaker Pereira Coutinho in a press conference held yesterday at the Macau Civil Servants Association headquarters.

After the press conference was held, the march scheduled for Saturday afternoon was "temporarily canceled" due to lack of consensus with the authorities regarding its route. Authorities failed to accept the proposed route wanting to perform "significant adjustments" that did not find consensus among the protesters. The protest, which is organized by several associations and organizations, and is supported by the office of Coutinho and fellow lawmaker Leong Veng Chai, will now be postponed in order to discuss a new route.

During the press conference, Coutinho commented on the meeting with Secretary for Transport and Public Works Raimundo do Rosário on January 25.

The meeting followed a street demonstration held on January 8, which the organizers claim gathered around 5,000 people marching against the government's proposed fee hike for several services related to the Traffic Affairs

Bureau (DSAT), especially those concerning vehicle removal in cases of irregular parking.

In addition to calls for the government to retract the regulations, the organizers are calling for the resignation or sacking of the secretary. "The meeting last month [with the secretary] was in fact a disappointing one. He looked to be in a rush, and at least from his body language, he looked like he wasn't interested in the meeting," Coutinho said. "Besides that attitude, he hasn't give [us] any reasonable explanation [for the rise of the fees and taxes]. We were very sad and disappointed with his behavior."

Coutinho further said that he had no doubt that the exponential hikes were motivated by "colluding interests between the government and the businessmen," since "right after the regulations entered into force, the prices of the parking fees and rentals rose." "People are tired of this situation," he added.

Coutinho was not able to confirm whether the planned route was final, as the organizers have yet to confer with the police authorities on the topic.

The lawmaker asked for the understanding of Macau residents for possible traffic congestion on the day of the protest, advising

they "find alternative solutions to go to work."

"We don't intend to create trouble for the population. It's the government that is pushing us to the streets [to protest]. We are left without any alternative," he said.

Right after the regulation entered into force, the prices of the parking fees and rentals rose.

PEREIRA COUTINHO

While Coutinho declined to speculate on the expected number of demonstrators, he remarked that he was "more confident this time than in the last [demonstration]."

Lei Kit Meng, leader of the Workers' Self-help Union Macau and an organizer of the protest, added that at least 500 cars from his association are expected to be involved.

The executive order 526/2016 that entered into force at the start of the new year revised the fees for multiple Transport Bureau (DSAT) related services, including fines for the removal of vehicles parked illegally, which were raised from MOP300 to MOP1,500.

The DSAT replied that the fees had merely been adjusted to an appropriate amount, as they had not been updated for over 10 years.

corporate bits

THE PARISIAN TO PRESENT THREE PHANTOMS



Lloyd Webber's genre-defining musical, The Phantom of the Opera.

With thousands of performances as the Phantom to their names, as well as appearances in many other West End and Broadway shows, Kieran Brown (USA), David Shannon (Ireland) and Earl Carpenter (UK) will deliver an evening of music.

The show will feature songs from well-known productions such as Les Misérables, Miss Saigon, Mamma Mia!, Cats, The Phantom of the Opera, We Will Rock You, Chess and Wicked, Sands China informed in a statement.

Tickets will be on sale today at all Cotai Ticketing box offices.

The Parisian Macao is set to present Three Phantoms, a musical theatre show, from February 28 to March 26.

Three Phantoms is a production featuring three singers who have performed as the male lead in Andrew

MACAO WATER ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF LUCKY DRAW



Winners of Macao Water's "Multiple Rewards for Various Service Applications" lucky draw received their prizes at the Prize Presentation Ceremony held on Tuesday.

The prizes included an iPad Air 2 and coffee machines, according to Macao Water. The campaign received over 5,500 applications.

The water company presented

the "Multiple Rewards for Various Service Applications" promotion campaign from May to December last year. Eligible applicants who successfully applied for the services "Change of Consumership", "Autopay" or "e-Water Bill Service" during the promotion period had the chance to receive a water tariff rebate of MOP20 and to enter the grand lucky draw.

MGM MACAU ANNOUNCES VALENTINE'S DAY OFFERS

MGM Macau has announced its special offers for Valentine's Day, ranging from fine dining to spa treatments.

Aux Beaux Arts is offering a special six-course Valentine's Day menu on February 13 and 14, with themes that range from, "Love at First Sight" to the "Long-lasting Romantic Attraction."

Tria Spa will also offer a two-hour Valentine's Day treatment for couples to relax and indulge in, according to MGM Macau's press release.

The spa options "Sweet Duet Indulgence" and "Ultimate Bliss" will be available throughout February.

Apart from French culinary delights, the Pastry Bar will



also present its new dessert "My Heart", a berry jelly and vanilla mousse raspberry sponge." MGM Macau will offer a Valentine's Day afternoon tea set in the romantic ambience of the Grande Praça Café.

Hermes sales advance, adding evidence of luxury recovery



Corinne Gretler

HERMES International SCA added to evidence of a luxury rebound as shoppers in Asia buy more silk scarves and Birkin handbags while tourists who were deterred by terrorism return to its stores in Europe.

Revenue climbed 7.6 percent to 1.5 billion euros (USD1.6 billion) in the fourth quarter, the Paris-

based company said yesterday, meeting analyst expectations. Growth was led by Japan and Europe, excluding France, but Hermes said its domestic market and all-important China also showed signs of a turnaround.

"I see an improvement in China and much higher appetite for our industry generally since the second half," Chief Executive Officer Axel Dumas said on a call with reporters. "We see a lot of

appetite for a diverse range of our products, from shoes to ready-to-wear, bags and silk."

Hermes joins other luxury-goods companies in reporting gains after several years of ebbing demand in China and a slowdown in tourism in Europe. Christmas-season sales and earnings at Louis Vuitton-owner LVMH beat analyst estimates, while British trenchcoat maker Burberry Group Plc said business in the

Asia-Pacific region is rebounding. Richemont, the maker of Cartier jewelry, reported a return to growth.

■ **For the year, revenue growth was 7.4 percent, the slowest annual increase in at least five years**

At Hermes, revenue growth in Asia-Pacific, excluding Japan, slowed to 4 percent from 14.2 percent the previous quarter. The slowdown is due to lower inventories in leather goods after the company ramped up output and sales with new production sites earlier last year, said Zuzanna Pusz, an analyst at Berenberg.

"This led to slower deliveries of

leather goods, primarily in the Asia-Pacific region, where regional performance was said to have been particularly penalized by the timing of that," Pusz wrote in a note after an analyst conference call.

While growth in sales of leather goods slowed to 8.5 percent from a 16.3 percent increase in the third quarter, silk ties and scarves showed an 11 percent gain, recovering from a 4.1 percent slide. Dumas said the silk and textiles business benefited from easier comparisons, with growth returning in France and China. The unit had been particularly affected by terrorist attacks in Europe.

"Tourism in France is better than last year, but not yet at the level it used to be," Dumas said. "I see some recovery. The other countries in Europe did well, especially Italy and the U.K."

For the year, revenue growth was 7.4 percent, the slowest annual increase in at least five years. Hermes in September abandoned a mid-term annual forecast for sales growth of about 8 percent, saying it aims for "ambitious growth."

The company, which is due to report full-year earnings March 22, said its operating margin improved slightly in 2016, as it had forecast. It was 31.8 percent in 2015. **Bloomberg**

Icahn plans to sell shuttered Trump Taj Mahal



Christopher Palmeri

INVESTOR Carl Icahn plans to sell his shuttered Trump Taj Mahal casino in Atlantic City, New Jersey, even after Governor Chris Christie vetoed a bill that would have stripped the billionaire of his casino license.

Icahn will sell the Taj Mahal, possibly at a loss, instead of investing the USD100 million to \$200 million it needs to keep going, according to a statement on his website Monday.

"I believe other large investors will similarly have no interest in investing significant amounts in Atlantic City or New Jersey as long as Sweeney is in control of the Senate,"

he added in the statement, referring to the state's Senate president Stephen Sweeney.

New Jersey legislators last year passed a bill that would have disqualified individuals who closed a casino since January 2016 from continuing to hold a gambling license for five years. The measure appeared to be specifically aimed at Icahn, who shuttered the Taj in October after fighting with unions over labor contracts and health-care costs.

The legislation was sponsored by Sweeney, a Democrat. Christie, a Republican, vetoed the measure Monday, calling it a "transparent attempt to punish the owner of the Taj Mahal casino for making the bu-

siness decision to close its doors after its union employees went on strike and refused to negotiate in good faith."

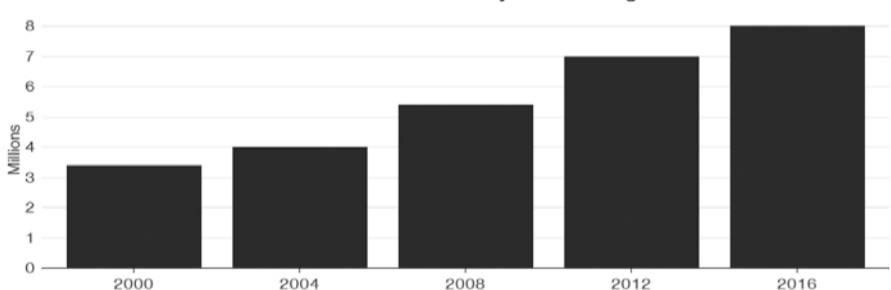
The Taj Mahal was once the flagship of President Donald Trump's casino empire, which at its peak had four properties, three of them in New Jersey. Trump lost control of the casinos through a series of bankruptcies with Icahn ultimately emerging as the sole owner of the Taj. The casino is owned by Icahn Enterprises, the investment firm controlled by Icahn.

Trump named Icahn as a special adviser to his administration in December, tasked with helping him overhaul federal regulations.

Five of Atlantic City's 12 casinos closed since 2014, victims of increasing competition from neighboring states. Citywide gambling revenue rose 1.5 percent to \$2.6 billion last year, the first increase in a decade, bolstered by online gambling, which was introduced in 2013. **Bloomberg**

Barcelona Tourist Boom

Number of visitors has more than doubled as the city moves to regulate tourist accommodation



Source: Spain's National Statistics Office

Bloomberg

Barcelona rejects Airbnb plan to limit rentals

Maria Tadeo

BARCELONA'S city hall rejected a proposal by Airbnb Inc. to limit the number of home rentals in the city, setting off a fresh clash between the platform and local authorities vowing to clamp down on unregulated tourism.

The city hall said the plan to limit home listings in the central Barcelona area of Ciutat Vella doesn't go far in enough in tackling the use of unlicensed rentals for tourists. While Airbnb hoped the new limits would ease tensions after a year marred by sanctions and public backlash from lo-

cals complaining about crowds in central Barcelona, the city hall said Airbnb must stop advertising all properties without a license while adding that it would keep sanctions against the home-rental platform unchanged.

"Airbnb's response is a joke," said Agusti Colom, Barcelona's councilor for companies and tourism, at a press conference on Tuesday after the plan was made public. "The law is clear. You can't advertise tourist apartments on these platforms if they don't have a license number, so what Airbnb needs to do is to remove them."

Airbnb's business in the city has almost dou-

bled in two years, rising to 20,000 listings from 11,000 in 2014. Barcelona is now the fourth-biggest city for Airbnb rentals in Europe behind Paris, London and Rome and the ninth-biggest in the world. As many as 900,000 people used Airbnb to arrange accommodation in Barcelona in 2015, according to the company.

Even so, its rapid growth has aggravated city authorities who slapped a 600,000-euro (USD644,160) fine on Airbnb in November for advertising what they deemed to be illegal room rentals, becoming the first city to do so. Barcelona accused the company of posting 3,812 unlicensed rentals, a practice the city's Mayor Ada Colau described as intolerable. Airbnb will appeal the fine. **Bloomberg**

A 360-degree view of China's deadly smog

Helene Franchineau
& Nomaan Merchant, Beijing

WHEN the smog descends over northern China, turning blue skies gray and thickening the air, Cai Fujian can feel his lungs tightening and he begins to cough.

The 65-year-old retiree says he's too old to take steps to combat the heavy pollution like wearing a mask, but he does watch television news reports about the particles in the air that damage lung tissue and kill thousands of people each year.

For weeks at a time, China's smog transforms cities across the industrial north into quiet, gray shells of their normal selves.

The Associated Press visited several spots in Beijing during and after a December "red alert," the highest level in China's four-tiered smog warning system. The AP used a 360-degree camera to record the difference the smog makes at each location.

AP journalists first took video when levels of PM2.5 — the microscopic particles that clog and destroy lung tissue — were more than 15 times the level considered safe by the World Health Organization.

Nearly half a billion people were affected during the December red alert, according to Greenpeace East Asia.

Outside Beijing's Forbidden City, the sprawling home of ancient emperors, streets normally bustling with vendors were largely empty.

Inside the Temple of Heaven to the south, only a few tourists were standing atop its marble altar, and wide views of the city had been obliterated.

And along the city's busiest roads, traffic was thin and the tops of nearby skyscrapers were all but lost in the encircling miasma.

Then the AP visited the same spots days later, after the smog had dispersed.

At the Temple of Heaven, couples were dancing to Chinese tunes blaring from a portable loudspeaker, looping and circling around a plaza. Cai, the retiree, sat with friends nearby, engaged in a card game.

As he walked through the park, Cai related his experience with smog, describing lines of coal-burning factories along the massive highways circling Beijing, belching out flames and smoke like "dragons of fire."

The heavy reliance on coal

to power those factories and the surfeit of older, inefficient cars on the roads are widely acknowledged as the main reasons for China's problems with pollution.

Beijing has made robust efforts to retire aged vehicles and move heavily polluting industries to outlying provinces, yet the problem persists. The sheer size of the city's population, now at almost 22 million, and geographic conditions that surround it on three sides with smog-trapping mountains seem to require that further measures are needed.

While many residents install expensive air filtration machines and wear masks, Cai doesn't do that.

"We don't take many protective measures because we are old," he said.

He blamed businesses and factories for flouting anti-pollution regulations. He also said government officials need to better promote electric cars and bicycles, as well as other conservation measures.

"Developed countries such as Germany, France and the UK are doing fine, and we should learn from them," Cai said. "It takes time to deal with smog." AP



A couple wearing protection masks visits the Temple of Heaven in Beijing

CHINA'S property developers are in far better shape than their rock-bottom stock valuations would have you believe. So say top analysts from firms including Goldman Sachs Group Inc. and Citigroup Inc.

As curbs to cool property prices have pushed equity values down near record lows, Goldman Sachs said the market is pricing in a "deep downturn" and that investors are too pessimistic on expected income, especially from some leading developers. Citigroup cites the investment appeal of large developers as the industry enters an era of "mega consolidation." And China International Capital Corp. said builder stocks may surge more than 20 percent in the first quarter as "palpably better-than-expected" home sales act as a catalyst.

A Bloomberg Intelligence index tracking 22 mainland developers listed in Hong Kong surged 5.7 percent yesterday, the biggest increase in more than 11 months. Country

Chinese developers priced for disaster are bargain to Goldman, Citi



Garden Holdings Co. soared 9 percent, the largest gain since April 13, 2015. China Resources Land

Ltd. advanced almost 7 percent in its largest move since December 2015.

Despite an overhang

from further government restrictions, some property stocks "are just way too cheap," said Alan Jin, a property analyst at Mizuho Securities Asia Ltd. in Hong Kong, who has upgraded China Overseas Land & Investment and Guangzhou R&F Properties Co. to buy ratings. "Now that valuations are near distressed levels, there may be a sector-wide rally lasting three to four months," he said.

Chinese regulators in March started embarking on a series of restrictions as they sought to rein in frenzied demand for homes, sending developer shares down last year by the most since 2011. The Bloomberg Intelligence real estate index plunged 11 percent in 2016 and through Tuesday was trading at 0.6 times book value, near an all-time

bottom in 2008, when China's property market had its biggest downturn in a decade.

Yet, despite valuations near a historical trough, contracted sales at leading developers are expected to jump another 15 percent this year from a record 2016, thanks to their strategic positioning in metro areas and stable home prices even with tightening, according to Citigroup analysts. Morgan Stanley analysts earlier this week upgraded the property sector to "attractive," citing low valuations and a tight supply of land that will support home prices.

The nation's top three builders by sales had a strong start to the year. China Evergrande Group, China Vanke Co. and Country Garden Holdings saw contracted sales jumping 90 percent, 274

percent and 75 percent in January, respectively, according to private data provider China Real Estate Information Corp.

Citigroup is among at least 12 brokerages that have upgraded Chinese property stocks traded in Hong Kong this year. Analysts led by Hong Kong-based Oscar Choi wrote last month that 2017 will be a "watershed" year for the industry as some of the largest developers increase market share. China Resources Land and Sunac China Holdings Ltd. are among Citigroup's top picks.

Downside risk for share prices is limited, unless the financial performance and liquidity for the whole sector deteriorates quickly, said Philip Tse, a Hong Kong-based property analyst at ICBC International Research Ltd. **Bloomberg**

Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

STRAIT POLITICS

Amid tensions, Beijing planning policies to attract Taiwanese

CHINA is drafting policies to attract Taiwanese to live and work on the mainland, a government spokesman said yesterday, in a direct appeal to the island's population amid a deepening political standoff between the governments in Taipei and Beijing.

The Cabinet's Taiwan Affairs Office said yesterday that residents of the self-governing island democracy will be offered incentives in employment, education and government benefits.

Speaking at a bimonthly news conference, spokesman An Fengshan said the measures, to be rolled out at a time yet to be determined, aim to boost "economic and social integration between the sides."

Beijing froze government-to-government contacts with Taiwan in June over Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen's refusal to endorse the concept of a single Chinese nation. Since then, Beijing has been increasing diplomatic and economic pressure on the island it claims as its own territory.

The latest measures appear to represent the carrot to that stick, although previous attempts to win over Taiwanese through the pocketbook have had little effect. Around 1 million Taiwanese are believed to live in China, either full or part time, mainly for work and study.

An also lashed out at plans to visit Taiwan by the exiled leader of a Chinese ethnic minority regarded by Beijing as seeking independence for the vast northwestern region of Xinjiang.



AP PHOTO
Job seekers look for vacancy information at a job fair in Beijing

President of the World Uyghur Congress Rebiya Kadeer plans to travel to the island at the end of next month at the invitation of a minor pro-independence political party, the Taiwan Solidarity Union, which is allied with Tsai's Democratic Progressive Party.

"We are resolutely opposed to Rebiya Kadeer engaging in activities in Taiwan in any form. In inviting this person to visit Taiwan, Taiwan independence forces are seeking to create an incident which is sure to undermine relations

between the sides," An said.

Kadeer was imprisoned for more than five years in China for her advocacy of rights for Xinjiang's native Muslim Uighurs, also spelled Uyghur, and was exiled to the United States in 2005. She denies China's accusation that she backs a violent campaign to overthrow Chinese rule in Xinjiang.

China already affords Taiwanese considerable advantages, including the right to enter the mainland and remain as long as their "Taiwan Compatriots Pass" — a

quasi-passport — remains valid.

Drawn by linguistic and cultural affinity, Taiwanese were among the biggest investors in China as it opened its economy in the 1980s and 1990s. China absorbs about two-thirds of Taiwan's outward investment and around 40 percent of its foreign trade.

Yet as China's economy grew into the world's second largest, young Taiwanese especially became increasingly wary of the economic threat posed to the island. Many blame China for stagnating

■ The latest measures appear to represent the carrot to [the diplomatic] stick, although previous attempts to win over Taiwanese through the pocketbook have had little effect

wages and a comparative loss of competitiveness as the mainland moved from cheap manufactured products into high-tech realms that Taiwan had long specialized in.

Such concerns helped put Tsai in power in last year's election and she has responded with a push to expand Taiwan's economic links with Southeast Asia. AP

US panel warns Trump change on one-China policy 'dangerous'

THE Trump administration shouldn't abandon long-standing U.S. policy on the status of Taiwan, a prominent panel of China specialists said, calling such a move "exceedingly dangerous."

Before taking office, President Donald Trump questioned Washington's "one China policy" that shifted diplomatic recognition from self-governing Taiwan to China in 1979. He said it was open to negotiation.

But former U.S. officials and scholars said in a report that such an approach could destabilize the Asia-Pacific and leave Taiwan more vulnerable.

U.S.-China relations are at a "precarious crossroads" and the two world powers could be on a "collision course," it said,

describing a rivalry that is growing amid Beijing's assertion of territorial claims in the disputed South and East China Seas.

The report is the product of an expert task force convened by the Asia Society and the University of California San Diego. It includes former officials who have served both Democratic and Republican administrations — two key Asia policymakers for the Obama administration among them: Kurt Campbell, who served as top diplomat for East Asia during Obama's first term, and Evan Medeiros, who was White House senior director for Asian affairs.

China has bristled at the "one China" comments by Trump, who wants to

pressure Beijing to narrow its huge trade surplus with America. Beijing also warned of instability in East Asia after Trump's defense secretary, Jim Mattis, said last week on a trip to the region that a U.S. commitment to defend Japanese territory applies to an island group that China claims. The Trump administration has cast its China policy as part of a "peace through strength" approach.

"The incoming administration should be mindful of lessons from the past," the report said. "It would be exceedingly dangerous to unilaterally abandon our long-standing 'One China policy' — an understanding that has served as the basis for the U.S. relationship with China [...] for almost four

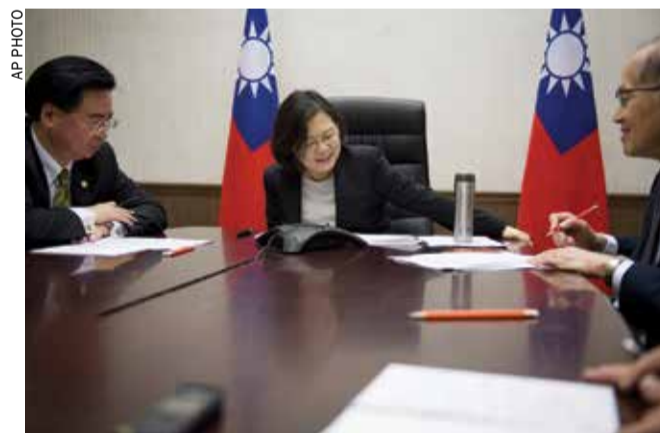
decades."

Medeiros said it would undermine U.S. standing in the region.

"The rest of Asia looks at what the administration's doing on Taiwan, and nobody agrees with it," he said as the report was released. "The rest of Asia does not want to follow the U.S. to war with China over the question of Taiwan."

On Barack Obama's watch, the U.S. cooperated successfully with China on climate change and the Iran nuclear deal, but failed to curb Beijing's island building in the South China Sea.

The report said "greater firmness" is needed when China impinges on U.S. interests. It said Beijing is acting more assertively in Asia, its market-ope-



AP PHOTO
Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen (center) speaks with then U.S. President-elect Donald Trump through a speaker phone in Taipei

ning economic reforms have virtually halted, and its domestic politics are more authoritarian.

In the South China Sea, it said the U.S. should support diplomacy among territorial claimants and maintain active naval and air presences to show it will respond resolutely to China's use of force against the U.S. or its allies.

Trump should immediately engage China's President Xi Jinping on North Korea, where the Obama administration tightened

sanctions but failed to curb its weapons development, the report said.

A formal peace ought to be negotiated for the divided Korean Peninsula in return for a verified freeze of North Korean nuclear and missile programs, and a pledge to get rid of nuclear weapons.

If China doesn't exert pressure on North Korea, it said the U.S. should impose sanctions on Chinese banks and companies doing business with Pyongyang. AP

Matthew Pennington, Washington

ANALYSIS

Visa changes could stunt budding US-India ties under Trump

THE U.S. and India seem like a natural fit in the Trump era: rambunctious democracies, led by populists, focused on economic growth and fighting radical Islam. It's a budding partnership that could be set back by a nuts-and-bolts dispute over employment visas.

As President Donald Trump looks to help American workers, his administration is considering a broad review of a visa program used heavily by India's massive technology and outsourcing industries to send programmers and other computer specialists to the United States.

Speculation about tougher rules on so-called H-1B visas sent tech stocks tumbling in India last week, and compounded concerns about the protectionist direction of U.S. policy after Trump temporarily suspended immigration from seven Muslim-majority countries.

The technology sector is vital for India's economy and creating jobs for a fast-growing, young workforce — a top priority for Hindu nationalist Prime Minister Narendra Modi. America is the main customer: It accounted for more than 60 percent of India's USD108 billion in foreign tech and outsourcing sales last year, according to the National Association of Software and Service Companies, an Indian industry lobby group.

"There is a general sense of anxiety in the industry," said Dipen Shah, an IT analyst at Kotak Securities in India. He said it seemed likely that the cost of hiring people on H-1B visas would increase, hurting tech companies' bottom lines.

A draft executive order prepared by Trump's team is short on specifics. It calls for a report within nine months on the injury caused to U.S. workers by several working visa categories, including H-1B, and a re-consideration of how to allocate the visas to ensure they go to "the best and the brightest."

The U.S. government grants up to 85,000 of these visas each year. They're open to a broad range of occupations and recipients who can stay in the country for up to six



Employees of Infosys Technologies, the Indian technology outsourcing giant, move inside the company headquarters during a break in Bangalore

years. First Lady Melania Trump, who comes from Slovenia, had one as a fashion model in the 1990s.

The top occupations, however, are tech-related and about 70 percent of the recipients are Indian.

Critics say the program is abused, with many companies contracting out jobs to consulting firms that bring in lower-paid workers from overseas. Employees on H-1B visas are unable to change employers. Critics say that leaves them with little leverage to negotiate their salaries. Trump's nominee for attorney general, Sen. Jeff Sessions, has long opposed the program, and there's bipartisan congressional support for reform.

Advocates say the visa program allows companies to fill skills shortages and encourages students

with hi-tech degrees to stay in the U.S. and set up companies of their own.

There is a general sense of anxiety in the [IT] industry.

DIPEN SHAH
IT ANALYST

Vinson Palathingal, who runs a mid-sized, U.S.-based IT consulting company, said the administration's priority should be training American workers to address skills shortages, and developing a qui-

cker path to permanent residency for Indian talent. Without those steps, he said, restricting H-1B visas would mean tech jobs leaving the U.S.

India's government wants more of the visas to be issued, not less. After visa fees were hiked in late 2015, India challenged the U.S. at the World Trade Organization — a rare instance in which one WTO member contended that another's immigration laws violated international trade rules.

"Limitations on this visa are sure to cause of a lot concern in Delhi and that will be conveyed in fairly strong terms to Washington," said Rick Rossow, an India specialist at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

"The question is how much is the

Indian government willing to put on the table to represent corporate interests in its discussions with the U.S.," said Bharath Gopalaswamy, director of the South Asia program at the Atlantic Council, another Washington-based think tank. "I don't think they will bet all their chips on this."

Over the past decade, India shifted from a Cold War-era foreign policy of non-alignment to become more comfortable as Washington's partner. Its military, long reliant on Russian weaponry, is being modernized with U.S. help. Modi has called the U.S. an "indispensable partner."

India hopes Trump's vow to take a harder line on Islamic extremism will mean a tougher stance on Pakistan over militants that India blames for launching attacks on its territory. It also shares Washington's concern about a rising China and would favor an effort by Trump to improve ties with Russia.

But economic interests are paramount.

India's Foreign Ministry spokesman Vikas Swarup said last week that it had raised the visa issue with Trump's administration and Congress at "senior levels." The heads of India's biggest IT companies plan to visit Washington this month to make their case to U.S. officials and lawmakers.

N.R. Narayana Murthy, co-founder of the Indian tech giant Infosys, cautioned that the Indian software industry's role in building and maintaining the information infrastructure of major U.S. corporations is critical to their success. "Tampering with it is not going to be easy," he said.

He said Indian tech businesses will have to adapt by depending less on visas for Indian workers and hiring more Americans. **AP**

MALAYSIA

Authorities seize pig-hair brushes after Muslims complain



A domestic trade enforcement officer checks on the paint brushes that are believed to be made from pig bristles at a hardware store outside Kuala Lumpur

MALAYSIAN authorities have seized thousands of paint brushes suspected of containing pig bristles after consumers in this Muslim-majority nation demanded a crackdown, officials said yesterday.

Pigs and dogs are considered unclean by many Muslims, who make up some 60 percent of Malaysia's 30 million people. It is illegal in the country to

sell products made from any part of a pig or a dog, unless the goods are labeled and kept separately.

Zarif Anwar, an enforcement official with the domestic trade and consumer ministry, said that since Tuesday, officials nationwide have been inspecting shops selling paint brushes for art and commercial use.

He said the brushes seized were not labeled and

found to have a different texture from other brushes and frayed ends, signs that they could be made from pig bristles. In some cases, the brushes had a "halal" certification that had expired, he said. The halal tag is issued by an Islamic government body to certify products safe to be used by Muslims.

The seized brushes will be sent to a lab to be ex-

amined, Zarif said.

"We want to protect consumers and we want traders to be aware of the religious sensitivity involved. This is a big offense," Zarif told The Associated Press.

He warned that traders who flout the rule face up to three years in jail, a fine of 100,000 ringgit (USD22,522) or both.

Conservative attitudes have been on the rise in Malaysia. A wide range of products have been certified halal, from mineral water to a newly launched internet browser, to appeal to Muslims. **AP**

JAPAN-US

With golf and gifts, Japan's Abe cuts own path with Trump



Donald Trump (right) stands on the 14th fairway during a pro-am round of the AT&T National golf tournament and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (left) at the golf course in Yamanakako village, west of Tokyo

Ken Moritsugu, Tokyo

JAPAN is charting its own course to deal with a radically different U.S. president, an approach that will be tested at the end of this week when Prime Minister Shinzo Abe meets Donald Trump in the White House and on the golf course in Florida.

Some other leaders of America's closest neighbors and allies, from Mexico to the United Kingdom,

have been singled by their encounters with Trump. Japanese officials are optimistic the invitation to visit Trump's "Winter White House," an exclusive club he owns in Palm Beach, signals a more positive outcome.

"We hope that the two leaders can deepen relations and trust in Florida," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told reporters in announcing the trip.

Abe, who departs today, has moved quickly since the U.S. elec-

tion to try to win Trump over. He was the only world leader to meet him before the inauguration, and will be the second to do so since Trump took office, after British Prime Minister Theresa May. Abe and Trump will hold talks in Washington, D.C., tomorrow before flying to the president's Mar-a-Lago Club in Florida.

"We're going to have a round of golf, which is a great thing," Trump told a sports radio interviewer, according to a transcript released Sunday by the White House. "That's the one thing about golf. You get to know somebody better on a golf course than you will over lunch."

In a culture where gift-giving is often obligatory, Japan also may come bearing presents. Abe gave the president-elect a high-end golf driver at their November meeting in New York. This time, according to media reports, the government is trying to put together a package of investments and loans that would create jobs in America.

"They think that they have to bring something to please Mr. Trump, because his pledge is America first, and bring all the employment to the United States, as well as business investment to the United States," said Mieko Nakabayashi, a former lawmaker who teaches at Waseda University in Tokyo.

The strategy seems to be an update of Japan's playbook from

the U.S.-Japan trade wars in the 1980s and 1990s, said Aurelia George Mulgan, a Japan expert at the Canberra campus of the University of New South Wales in Australia.

Frankly, I have doubts about the idea of him playing golf. It may not be a good idea to get too close or friendly with someone like Mr. Trump.

MAKOTO KOGA
RETIRED LAWMAKER

"Japanese prime ministers and ministers often went to the United States [...] bearing a package of such offerings," she wrote in a commentary posted online yesterday. "Gift diplomacy could also be twinned with the tactic of substitution compensation, where Japan would not agree with a particular U.S. demand but would offer some other kind of concession instead." She added in an email exchan-

ge that the golf outing may help Abe replicate another element of the 1980s: the close "Ron-Yasu" relationship that then-Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone built with President Ronald Reagan.

The outreach to Trump carries risks.

"Frankly, I have doubts about the idea of him playing golf," Makoto Koga, a retired lawmaker from Abe's party, said on a weekly TV political talk show last weekend. "It may not be necessarily a good idea to get too close or friendly with someone like Mr. Trump, who seems to be impulsive or simple-minded."

Britain's May was criticized at home for inviting Trump to visit, shortly before Trump announced a travel ban on people from seven predominantly Muslim countries. Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto and Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull are smarting from phone calls with Trump. Nieto canceled his planned visit over a disagreement about the wall Trump has pledged to build along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Trump has attacked Japan's trade and exchange rate policies, and during the campaign, demanded that Japan and other allies pay more of the cost of stationing U.S. troops in their countries.

Japan's has responded firmly but politely, taking issue with Trump's assertions when it disagrees, but avoiding comment on issues such as the travel ban.

As the meeting with Trump approaches, it is the unpredictability of America's new leader that worries government officials and analysts the most.

"We never know whether Mr. Trump would do some kind of a surprise," Nakabayashi said. "And we're not sure whether Mr. Abe is prepared for that." AP

AUSTRALIA

Mail chief makes ten times more than the PM

AN Australian Senate committee has revealed that that country's mail chief is the nation's highest paid public servant and made 5.6 million Australian dollars (USD4.3 million) last year. The disclosure came despite objections from Australia Post that making the salary information public could attract media attention and damage its brand.

The Communications and Environment Committee announced that Ahmed Fahour, managing director of the national mail service, was paid AUD4.4 million salary plus an AUD1.2 million bonus in the last fiscal year — more than 10 times

the prime minister's salary of AUD507,000.

By contrast, U.S. Postal Service Chief Executive and Postmaster General Megan Brennan's salary was \$286,137 last year.

Australia Post had argued that revealing the salary package was not in the public interest. Australia Post and its top executives "may become targets of unwarranted media attention," the agency said in correspondence with the committee.

"This may lead to brand damage for Australia Post which when operating in a competitive market, may be significantly detrimental to our business and future profitability," Australia



Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull

Post said.

Committee chairman James Paterson said yesterday that no senator on his committee agreed with Australia Post that the disclosure was contrary to the public interest.

Chief executives of publicly listed Australia companies are required to disclose their compensation at shareholder annual meetings and public sector executives should not be held to a lower

standard of transparency, Paterson said.

"It's a matter for the Australia Post board and their remuneration committee and I trust them to make those decisions, but it's not appropriate to shield those decisions from public scrutiny," Paterson told Australian Broadcasting Corp.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, a former merchant banker with a personal fortune estimated at exceeding AUD200 million, said he had told Australia Post Chairman John Stanhope "that remuneration is too high."

"As someone who spent most of his life in the business world before I came

into politics, I think that is a very big salary for that job," Turnbull told reporters.

Stanhope said Australia Post was "not trying to hide anything" and complied with the government's reporting conditions.

Australia Post made a profit of AUD36 million in the last fiscal year that ended June 30, 2016. The previous year, it lost AUD222 million due to the decline of traditional mail in Australia, a nation of 24 million people.

The highest paid Australian public servant after Fahour was Bill Morrow, chief executive of Australia's government-owned NBN Co., who was paid AUD3.6 million last year, including an AUD1.2 million bonus.

The company is rolling out Australia's national broadband network and is required to report its chief executive's compensation. AP

THE U.N. political chief urged the world's nations to share information about airline passengers as part of a stepped up response to the growth of "transnational terrorism" sparked by the Islamic State group's expanding areas of attack.

Jeffrey Feltman also told the U.N. Security Council that it is "critical" to improve the global response to "foreign terrorist fighters" leaving Syria and Iraq, even though many are still in conflict zones.

He was briefing the council on Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' latest report on IS — also known as ISIL and Daesh. It said European member states have reported that between 15 percent and 40 percent of their nationals and residents who traveled to Iraq and Syria to fight have returned — and some governments highlighted a rising number of female returnees.

"A proportion of those returning present a significant threat and are facing appropriate legal and control measures," the secretary-general's report said. "Other returnees are reported to have become disillusioned with the fighting and the distorted ideology of ISIL and therefore represent a lower threat."

In a separate report to the Security

UN urges more airline passenger info in anti-terror fight



A relative of a victim of the Russian airliner which was blown up last October over the Sinai Peninsula in an attack claimed by the Islamic State

ty Council circulated yesterday [Macau time], a panel of experts that monitors sanctions against IS said it has received various estimates of the current number of fighters for the extremist group. They range from 12,000 to 20,000 in Syria and Iraq to 33,000 fighters in the wider Middle East, "including 15,000 foreign terrorist fighters," the report said.

In December, the Security Council urged all 193 member states to address "the gravity of the threat" posed by IS by adopting laws and sharing intelligence, biometric, biographical data and financial information related to extremist groups — and by requiring airlines operating in their territories to

provide advance information on passengers to national authorities.

According to the report, only 56 nations have shared advance passenger information to date, and implementation of the council's call for countries to share passenger name records "continues to be uneven." While some countries have voluntarily provided passenger name records from ocean and sea traffic and cruise ships, "a lack of appropriate regulation continues to represent a significant vulnerability," the report said.

Feltman reiterated that although the Islamic State group's income and the territory under its control are shrinking, it "still appears to have sufficient funds to continue fighting." Moreover, he said, the group has expanded its attacks from Iraq and Syria to their neighbors and continues encouraging followers in Europe, Africa and elsewhere to perpetrate attacks.

The United States, France and

Britain, all part of the coalition fighting IS, reiterated their determination to defeat the extremist group.

U.S. Ambassador Nikki Haley told the council in closed consultations after Feltman's briefing that while IS extremists are losing ground, the United States will maintain pressure on its safe havens, continue to restrict its finances, and work with partners to take aggressive action where possible to defeat the group and its global threat.

Britain's deputy U.N. ambassador, Peter Wilson, said that "Daesh is on the back foot" and the next step for the 68-country coalition is to attack the extremist group in its headquarters in the Syrian city of Raqqa and in Iraq's second-largest city, Mosul.

French Ambassador Francois Delattre said collective efforts "have produced significant results with important military and financial setbacks for Daesh over the past year." AP

AD

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FRANCE

17 charged after violent protest rages in Paris suburb



Armed police officers patrol in the courtyard of the Louvre museum in Paris, near where a soldier opened fire after he was attacked last week

Alex Turnbull, Aulnay-Sous-Bois

PROTESTERS burned cars and menaced security forces in an eruption of violence in a Paris suburb over a young black man allegedly being raped by a police baton, and authorities said 17 people were being charged.

Six adults were tried in immediate hearings in a suburb court under charges of "ambush" or "acts of violence and gathering with weapons," while 11 minors were to be presented to a juvenile court judge for alleged ambush,

the prosecutor's office in Bobigny said yesterday.

Police initially detained 26 people during the pre-dawn outburst in which a police car and other vehicles were set afire in Aulnay-sous-Bois, a working class suburb northeast of Paris. At one point, police encircled by an angry crowd fired warning shots into the air using real bullets, according to French press reports. No injuries were reported.

Firefighters raced to restore order after several shops were reported damaged and garbage bins burned in Aulnay-sous-

Bois, which has a large minority population.

Authorities are wary of unrest in France's poor towns, remembering the fiery 2005 riots that spread through France — beginning in the Paris suburb of Clichy-Sous-Bois and hopping through social housing around the country.

The latest violence was a show of outrage in support of a young black man who authorities allege was sodomized with a police officer's baton last week during a spate of identity checks as part of a police operation targeting drug

traffickers. One officer was charged Sunday with aggravated rape and three others were charged with aggravated assault.

President Francois Hollande visited the alleged victim, identified only by his first name, Theo, at the suburban hospital where he has been treated since the incident, the Elysee Palace said.

In a video posted on Twitter page of the newspaper Le Parisien, Hollande stood talking to Theo, who was lying on a hospital bed. The president told him that "the legal process is underway" and that "we must trust it to get to the bottom of this."

Then, speaking to the camera, Hollande said, "We are also thinking about Theo who has always been known for his exemplary behavior in a family [...] with good relations with police."

With Hollande standing beside him, Theo called for young people in Aulnay-sous-Bois to be calm.

"My town, you know that I love it very much. I would like to find it just as I left it. So guys, stop making war, be united, trust in the justice system and justice will be done," Theo said. "Pray for me so I can return as soon as possi-

ble among you and be together. Thank you, thank you, Mister President."

Earlier, Prime Minister Bernard Cazeneuve called for "the greatest firmness" should any of the four police officers implicated be proven guilty.

Frederic Gabet, a lawyer for the officer charged with rape, has said that any injury inflicted was done accidentally.

After the early morning violence, Police Alliance spokesman Frederic Lagache said one officer narrowly escaped being burned when a protester set his vehicle on fire with a Molotov cocktail. "The objective is to kill cops and this is unacceptable," Lagache said in an interview with Europe-1.

Local youths claim police habitually target them without cause.

"Frankly, it's pathetic. The kid [Theo, he plays football, he's serious. He never was in trouble with the police," said Sofiane Hajjobi, a 21-year-old resident. "It's not normal. We're all frustrated. Now we're at war with the police."

Theo, 22, told his story to the BFM television channel Monday. He said officers beat him and peppered him with racist insults. At one point, one of the officers took his truncheon and "he drove it into my buttocks," he said.

The Associated Press does not typically identify victims of sexual assault. But, in this case, the victim and his family gave interviews to the media, and the French president publicly used the young man's first name in his presence and in front of a camera. **AP**

JOVENEL Moise was sworn in yesterday [Macau time] as Haiti's president for the next five years after a bruising two-year election cycle, inheriting a chronically struggling economy and a deeply divided society.

The 48-year-old entrepreneur took the oath of office in a Parliament chamber packed with Haitian lawmakers and foreign dignitaries from countries including the U.S., Venezuela and France. He smiled slightly as the Senate leader slipped Haiti's red and blue presidential sash over his left shoulder.

In his inaugural address during the day of prayer and platitudes, Moise gave a rough outline of his government's priorities and pledged to bring "real improvements" to the economically strapped nation, particularly the long-neglected countryside.

He urged unity and promised to strengthen institutions, fight corruption

HAITI

Jovenel Moise sworn in as new president

and bring more investments and jobs to one of the least developed nations in the world.

"We can change Haiti if we work together," Moise said to applause on the grounds of what used to be the national palace, which was one of many buildings obliterated during a devastating earthquake that hit outside the capital in January 2010.

There's little expectation among citizens that Moise's new government can overcome Haiti's deep problems of poverty and economic malaise in the next five years, but he does have a majority in Parliament and some are hopeful the businessman-turned-politician will make steady advances.

"What we still really need in this country are

the basics: working hospitals, better schools and security. I think it can be done," said Maxime Cantave, owner of a car wash and propane business in the Port-au-Prince district of Delmas 48.

“We can change Haiti if we work together.”

JOVENEL MOISE

Nearby, Charles Bichotte agreed but said he'd wait and see if Moise was sincere with his various vows. "We've heard so many pledges from our presidents but here we are, still struggling," said

the houseplant vendor.

Robert Fatton, a Haitian-born politics professor at the University of Virginia, described the many challenges facing Moise as "herculean."

"He has to revive domestic production, increase foreign and local investments, rebuild the moribund agricultural sector, create a sense of national solidarity, and generate a sorely lacking political stability," he said, adding that all this will have to be achieved amid diminishing international assistance.

But Fatton suggested that Moise might actually benefit from citizens' low expectations of political leaders following many years of broken promises and failed policies.

"If he manages to deliver a modicum of change



Haiti's President Jovenel Moise sits with his wife Martine during his swearing-in ceremony at Parliament in Port-au-Prince

he may restore a sense of hope for the future," he said.

The Tuesday inauguration was the concluding step in Haiti's return to constitutional rule a year after ex-President Michel Martelly left office wi-

thout an elected successor in place amid waves of opposition protests and a political stalemate suspending elections. A caretaker government was quickly created to fill the void and pave the way for elections. **AP**

what's ON

SPRING BREEZE TO THE SOUTHERN GREENLY LAND – EXHIBITION OF THE LUNAR NEW YEAR TRADITIONS OF GUANGDONG PROVINCE, HONG KONG S.A.R. AND MACAO S.A.R.
TIME: 9am-7pm
UNTIL: February 19, 2017
VENUE: Temporary Exhibitions Gallery of IACM
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4100

LOVE OF MACAU – PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEE KUNG KIM
TIME: 10am-7pm (Last admission at 6:30pm, closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: July 9, 2017
VENUE: Macao Museum of Art, Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
MUSEUM ADMISSION: MOP5 (Free on Sundays and public holidays)
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

AD LIB- RECENT WORKS BY KONSTANTIN BESSMERTNY
TIME: 10am-7pm (no admission after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: May 28, 2017
VENUE: Macao Museum of Art, Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
ADMISSION: MOP5 (free on Sundays and public holidays)
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

THE STAMP FESTIVAL
TIME: 9am-5:30pm (no admission after 5pm, closed on public holidays)
UNTIL: April 7, 2017
VENUE: Communication Museum of Macao / Estrada D. Maria II, No. 7
ADMISSION: MOP10
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2871 8063 / 2871 8570

SAILING FOR DREAMS - WORKS BY KWOK WUON
TIME: 10am-7pm (Closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: April 23, 2017
VENUE: Navy Yard No.1, Rua de S. Tiago da Barra
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4000

Offbeat

GUANGDONG AWARDS CITIES FOR 'TOILET REVOLUTION' IN TOURISM SECTOR

The China National Tourism Administration recently held a discussion of the country's "toilet revolution" in the tourism sector this year. The meeting took place in the city of Guangzhou on the second day of the Chinese New Year, according to a report by Macao Daily News.

In 2015 and 2016, the Guangdong province invested RMB 1.2 billion in the construction of public toilets, having built a total of 4,505 new toilets in the province during that period.

He Zhong You, the deputy governor of Guangdong, said that 2017 marks the third year of "China's tourism toilet revolution", with the province now focusing on renovating toilets in rural areas. He said that the Guangdong government will push for a technological revolution in its public sanitation this year.

During 2015 and 2016, China built 50,016 public toilets in popular tourist areas, comprising 79.33 percent of its national three-year toilet revolution goal. 26,197 public toilets will be built across mainland China this year.

During the meeting, several cities received awards for advances in public sanitation, including six cities in Guangdong: Guangzhou, Meizhou, Chaozhou, Zhanjiang, Jieyang and Shaoguan.

He Zhong You said that Guangdong will also improve infrastructure in both urban and rural tourist areas.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	RTPi Live
17:40	Happy Endings Sr.3
18:20	Precious Pearl (Repeated)
19:10	Non-Daily Portuguese News (Repeated)
19:40	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:30	Castle S6
22:10	Precious Pearl
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:05	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:40	RTPi Live

cinema

CINETEATRO

9 FEB -13 FEB

RESIDENT EVIL: FINAL CHAPTER

ROOM 1
2:30, 4:30, 9:30pm
Director: Paul W. S. Anderson
Starring: Milla Jovovich, Ali Larter, Shawn Roberts, Ruby Rose
Language: English
Duration: 103min

RESIDENT EVIL: FINAL CHAPTER

ROOM 1 (3D)
7:30pm
Director: Paul W. S. Anderson
Starring: Milla Jovovich, Ali Larter, Shawn Roberts, Ruby Rose
Language: English
Duration: 103min

JOHN WICK: CHAPTER TWO

ROOM 2
2:30, 4:45, 9:30pm
Director: Chad Stahelski
Starring: Keanu Reeves, Ian McShane, Ruby Rose
Language: English (Chinese)



LA LA LAND

ROOM 2
7:15pm
Director: Damien Chazelle
Starring: Ryan Gosling, Emma Stone
Language: English
Duration: 128min

THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE

ROOM 3
2:30, 4:30, 7:30pm
Director: Chris McKay
Starring: Jenny Slate, Will Arnett, Ralph Fiennes
Language: Cantonese (English)
Duration: 104min

H2 HZ, I LOVE YOU

ROOM 3
9:30pm
Director: Wei Te-Sheng
Starring: Van Fan, Chic Tanaka, Min-Hsiung
Language: Mandarin (Cantonese & English)
Duration: 104min

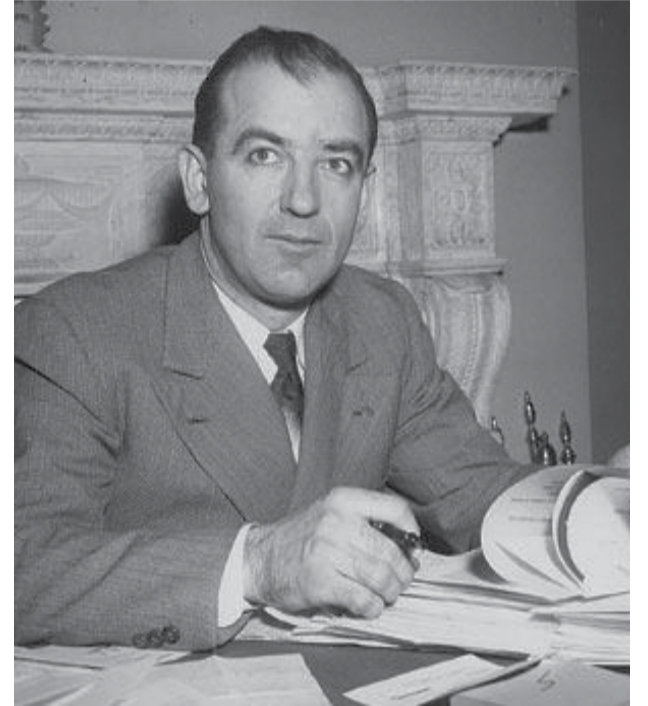
MACAU TOWER

28 JAN - 15 FEB

JOURNEY TO THE WEST: THE DEMONS STRIKE BACK

2:30, 4:30, 7:30, 9:30pm
Director: Hark Tsui
Starring: Bei-Er Bao, Mengke Bateer, Kenny Lin
Language: Cantonese
Duration: 109min

this day in history

**1950 McCarthy Launches Anti-Red Crusade**

United States Senator Joe McCarthy has accused more than 200 staff in the State Department of being members of the Communist Party.

He made the startling allegation in a public speech in Wheeling, West Virginia, saying the State Department was infested with communists and brandished a sheet of paper which purportedly contained the traitors' names.

Senator McCarthy told the Ohio county women's Republican Club that Secretary of State Dean Acheson knew the names of 205 people who were in his words still "working in and shaping the policy of the State Department".

His comments brought an immediate denial from Lincoln White, press officer at the State Department.

Mr White said: "If he is correctly quoted, his allegation that the Secretary of State has a list of 205 Communist Party members who are working and shaping policy in the State Department is entirely without foundation.

"We know of no Communist Party members in the department and if we find any they will be summarily dismissed. We did not furnish Senator McCarthy with any such list and we would be interested in seeing his list."

Senator McCarthy has made his claims against a background of growing anti-Communist feeling.

Alger Hiss, a former senior public servant, was convicted and jailed last month of perjury after being accused of being an accomplice to a self-confessed former member of an underground Communist network.

Senator McCarthy's speech also coincides with the collapse of the Kuomintang regime in China and the establishment there of a Communist government, adding to American fears about the global spread of Communism.

Mr McCarthy was defeated for the Republican nomination for the Senate in 1944 but two years later was able to win the Republican nomination away from veteran Senator, Robert La Follette.

In the election he beat his Democrat opponent after a campaign of continuous misrepresentation of Professor Howard McMurray as a Communist sympathiser.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Two days after this initial outburst, Senator Joe McCarthy wrote to President Harry Truman saying he had been able to compile a list of 57 Communists.

On 20 February he delivered a six hour speech to Congress in which he referred to 81 individuals - not by name but nevertheless identifiable - who he said were members of the Communist Party or loyal to it.

By the time an investigating sub-committee was set up to look into his claims, his list of communists had dwindled to 10 names. He named Dr Owen Lattimore as "the top Russian espionage agent".

His claims were not substantiated, but many lost their jobs or reputations. He used a combination of intimidation and hearsay evidence to browbeat the accused.

His Communist witch-hunt did win him popular support. At its height, 25 states passed legislation outlawing communist organisations.

The conviction in March 1951 of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg for passing atomic secrets to the Russians also helped fuel his campaign.

His downfall came when he turned his attentions to the US Army. His methods were finally exposed to the public during a televised cross-examination of army personnel following further unsubstantiated allegations.

In 1954 he was censured by the Senate committee. His health declined through heavy drinking and he died in 1957.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19
If there's something out there you've hankered for, you won't be willing to wait until it's half price.

Taurus April 20-May 20
Use your instinct - which has yet to let you down, if you think about it - and just do it.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21
Some quality time alone. And that means doing something that's particularly tough for you.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22
But if you do decide to go, make your plans now. It's a terrific time to do something totally spontaneous.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You've been struck by a strong dose of duty and responsibility, and you're already starting to worry about being ready for the workday.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22
Don't hold back your feelings for a single second longer. Everyone wants to hear all about them.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22
Order in some rich, sinful food, get yourself a nice bottle of wine and choose some romantic movies.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
You may be tired, but you're ready to move on and concentrate on an entirely different subject.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Believe it or not, you - yes, you - will wake up in the mood to make lists, check them twice and get things done.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Now here's a day you can live with. Everyone will be acting solid, practical and responsible.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Clearly, you adore your family. And your friends are very, very special to you, too.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20
Each and every word you utter right now will have a solid, grounded tone to it.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a 'Yesterday's solution' grid with filled-in words.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

List of useful telephone numbers including Emergency calls, Fire department, Police (PJ), Customs, S. J. Hospital, Kiang Wu Hospital, Commission Against Corruption (CCAC), IACM, and Tourism.



Real estate advertisement for JML Property, featuring 'FOR SALE' and 'FOR RENT' sections with details for various properties like Nova Taipa Tower, Taipa Warehouse, and Nam Long (J Unit).

Graham Dunbar, St. Moritz

SKI

Kenyan Simader on fast track to 2018 Olympic downhill

KENYAN skier Sabrina Simader's ambitious path to the 2018 Olympic downhill went through St. Moritz yesterday [Macau time].

The 18-year-old Simader was the only African starter in the women's super-G race at the world ski championships. She placed last of 39 finishers, more than eight seconds behind champion Nicole Schmidhofer of Austria.

Still, one month after her World Cup debut in Slovenia — and one year after her four-race Winter Youth Olympics program in Norway — it's a key stage in Simader's route to earning her place in the Olympic lineup next year in Pyeongchang, South Korea.

The Austrian-based teenager's quest is unusual because few racers outside traditional Alpine teams qualify in the more challenging speed events of downhill and super-G. Simader races all disciplines and plans to have a busy program at the two-week worlds in the high-end Swiss resort.

"It's really emotional. I enjoyed it," she said after completing the race to loud cheers from the Swiss crowd and her fan club from Austria waving several Kenyan flags. "The weather is nice, the slope was cool. I hope I will be faster next time."

AP PHOTO



Kenya's Sabrina Simader speeds down the slope during a women's super-G, at the Alpine Ski World Championships, in St. Moritz, Switzerland

Simader's exuberance was matched by her mother Sarah in the finish area, who trained a camera on the giant screen broadcasting the second half of a 90-second run down the 1.95-kilometer course.

"It's super. It makes me feel very proud," Sarah Simader told

The Associated Press.

Born in Kenya, Sabrina Simader came with her mother to Austria and began skiing when she was 3. Her stepfather, Josef, runs a ski lift in Hansberg.

"When she turned 13 she won a local championship," Simader's advisor, Armin Kolb, told the

AP. "She went to Schladming to ski school with other Austrian racers and really learned ski racing."

Simader has scored top-10 finishes in downhill and slalom events at the third-tier FIS (International Ski Federation) race level.

In her World Cup debut in January, in giant slalom, she was eight seconds behind first-run leader Mikaela Shiffrin of the United States.

Simader has sponsors including broadcaster Sky and the Planai ski resort in Austria to help cover costs, including hiring her private coach, Christian Reif. She is eligible for funding from the Kenyan Olympic committee, whose officials she met at the Youth Olympics in Lillehammer.

"Until now, no money is coming," Kolb said.

It has not helped that Kenya's government disbanded the national Olympic body last August citing corrupt behavior by team officials linked to the Rio de Janeiro Games.

In her adopted home Austria, one fan is Hannes Reichelt, who trained with Simader in Reiteralm during one of his returns from injury.

"She is really funny," Reichelt told the AP. "It's nice to see her on the slopes." **AP**

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OLYMPICS

Political scandal overshadows South Korea 2018 games prep

Hyung-Jin Kim, Seoul

WHEN Pyeongchang was awarded the 2018 Olympics six years ago, many South Koreans felt that the first Winter Games on home snow would herald their entry into the top tier of rich nations.

One year before the Olympics, however, the country is in political disarray, and winter sports are the last thing on many people's minds. To say that South Koreans are distracted from what had been billed as a crowning sports achievement is an understatement.

After protests that saw millions take to the streets, South Korea's president, toppled from power, languishes in her mountainside palace as a court ponders whether to approve her impeachment and trigger early elections. A toothless prime minister, thrust into leadership by the country's biggest corruption scandal in recent memory, struggles with huge economic, social and diplomatic tensions.

And then there's rival North Korea, which relishes the chance to insert itself into the picture — often with missile tests and threats of annihilation — whenever global attention turns to its southern rival.

This is not the atmosphere jubilant organizers thought they'd face when Pyeongchang, an alpine ski resort town of 43,000 people about 180 kilometers east of Seoul, closed in on its moment of glory.

Despite the political turmoil, the Pyeongchang Olympics will likely be well-organized and ready to go, especially when compared with the recent games in Rio de Janeiro and Sochi, Russia, which saw swirling human rights, environmental and political crises.

Still, the upheaval in government will likely dominate headlines throughout the year and add to worries about Pyeongchang's preparations, enormous costs and a lack of public buzz.

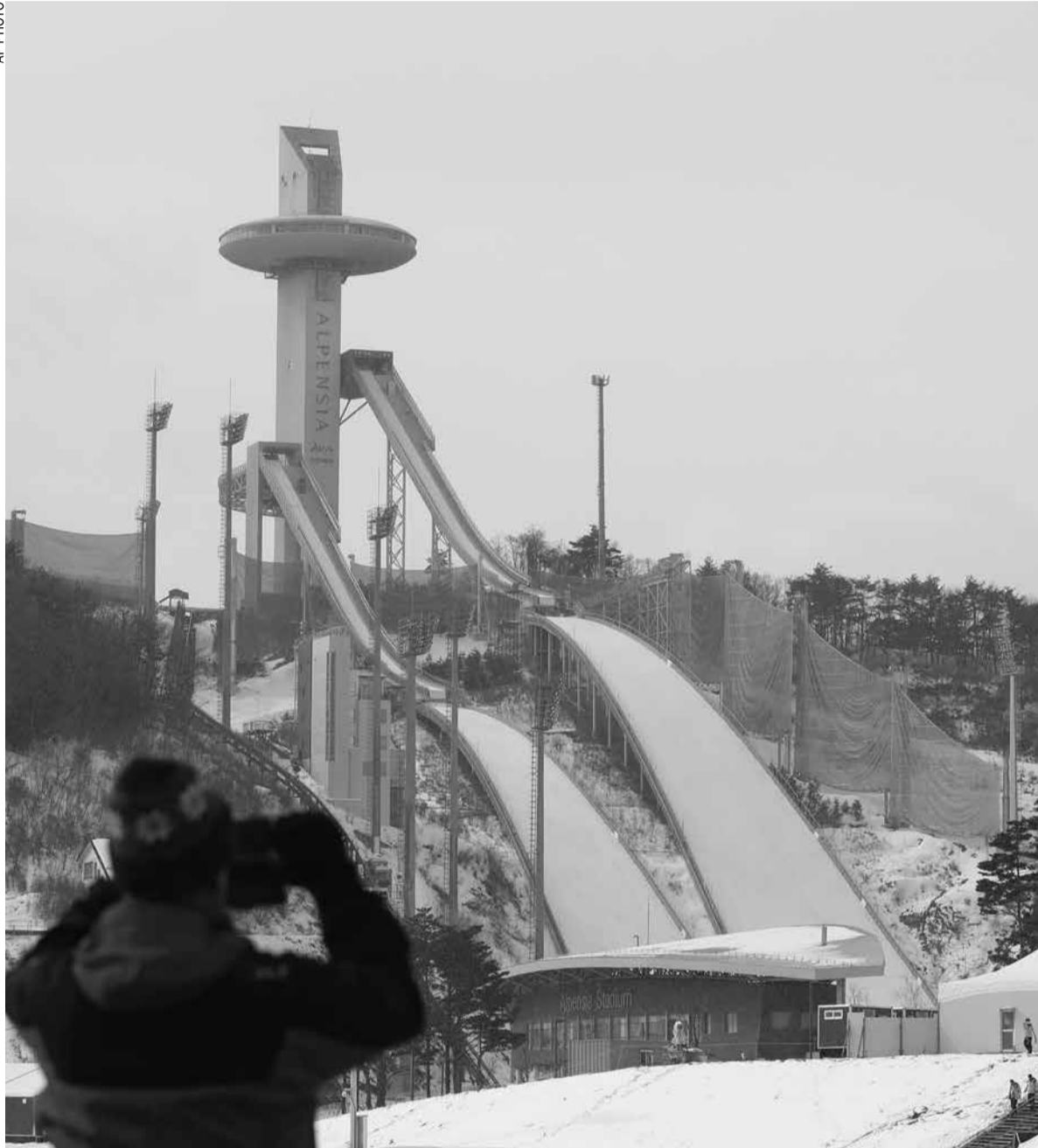
A look at some of the major issues facing the country, and the state of its Olympic dreams, a year ahead of the Pyeongchang Games, which are set for Feb. 9-25, 2018:

“AN ADVANCED NATION”

Even with the political mess, there are still high hopes for the second Olympics to be held in South Korea, whose capital, Seoul, hosted the 1988 Summer Games.

South Korea used the Seoul Olympics to highlight its economic rise from the rubble of the 1950-53 Korean War. The country has since staged two Asian Games, co-hosted the soccer World Cup in 2002 with Japan and held

AP PHOTO



The Alpensia Ski Jumping Center is a venue for the troubled 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics

other high-profile international events, including the 2010 Group of 20 economic summit.

“The Winter Olympics will let us show that we have reached the level of an advanced nation,” said Choi Kwang-shik, a former minister of culture, sports and tourism who teaches at Korea University.

Pyeongchang supporters say the 2018 Games will boost South Korea's image because only advanced, rich countries usually host Winter Olympics.

Critics, however, question the need to host costly international events and waste taxpayers' money when many South Koreans are struggling economically.

SCANDAL

The Pyeongchang Olympics, like much else in South Korea, have been drawn into the country's biggest political scandal in decades.

Prosecutors say President Park Geun-hye and her longtime friend Choi Soon-sil plotted to pressure businesses to donate tens of millions of dollars to two nonprofit foundations controlled by Choi, one of them sports-related.

As investigations widened over the scandal, officials arrested and indicted several top sports and culture ministry officials, including Cho Yoon-sun, who resigned as minister after her arrest. Media have speculated that a jailed senior sports official aided Choi — who is jailed and currently on trial — in alleged attempts to land Olympic construction deals.

Lee Hee-beom, head of the Pyeongchang organizing committee, told reporters recently that comprehensive reviews of all Olympic-related contracts found that none has been found “contaminated.”

Some of the companies implicated in the political scandal were reluctant to sponsor the Olympics, according to local media reports. Still, organizers say they collected about 90 percent of their domestic sponsorship target of 940 billion won (USD826 million) by the end of last year.

VENUE CONSTRUCTION

Spending for the Pyeongchang Games will likely be about 14.2 trillion won (\$12.4 billion), with

11.4 trillion (\$10 billion) of that for building competition venues, roads and a new high-speed rail line designed to link the country's main gateway of Incheon International Airport with Pyeongchang in about 90 minutes.

Organizers say the infrastructure will help promote Gangwon province, which governs Pyeongchang and shares a border with North Korea. The goal is to use the Olympics to turn the region into a new Asian hub for winter sports.

There have been worries about construction delays. Organizers say the main Olympic stadium, where the opening and closing ceremonies will be held, is about 40 percent complete. They promise completion by September.

They also say the construction of the 12 competition venues is about 96 percent complete on average.

BUZZ

The winter sports industry in South Korea is relatively young and searching for star athletes after the retirement of beloved Olympic figure skating champion Yuna Kim.

About 6,500 athletes, coaches and sports officials from about 95 countries are expected to attend the Pyeongchang Games. Foreigners will also be streaming in to watch, but organizers hope that 70 percent of ticket sales will be local. That means creating buzz at home is crucial.

But there's worry about low ticket sales, which are set to start in South Korea on Thursday.

To attract locals, popular South Korean athletes are needed. “But many people don't know any local athletes, so they won't go” to Pyeongchang, said Jung Moon-hyun, a sports science professor at Chungnam National University in South Korea.

A series of test events that began in November will continue until April. Among them are the Four Continents Figure Skating Championships and the Ski Jumping World Cup, both this month.

NORTH KOREA

North Korea's participation in the 2018 Games would certainly bring attention. Pyeongchang was partially sold to the world as a way to perhaps prod North Korea into reaching out more to the international community.

But nothing is ever easy between the rival Koreas.

The North boycotted the 1986 Asian Games and the 1988 Olympics, both held in Seoul. Then it attended South Korea-hosted events in recent years, including the 2014 Asian Games in Incheon. Athletes from the two Koreas also marched together in the opening ceremonies of several major international sports events, including the 2000 and 2004 Olympics.

Current ties between the Koreas are extremely bad after Pyongyang conducted two nuclear weapons tests last year. Analysts say the North's participation at Pyeongchang will likely hinge on what kind of overture Seoul might offer the North.

But with the presidency in limbo, that, like much else in South Korea, is up in the air.

A FRESH START?

President Park, whose single five-year term was to last until Feb. 24, 2018, was originally supposed to oversee the Olympics' opening ceremony. Her successor was to then attend the Feb. 25 closing ceremony.

If the country's Constitutional Court approves Park's parliamentary impeachment — a ruling that could come by March — she'd be permanently driven from office. A presidential by-election would then follow within two months. Even if Park stays in office, presidential elections will happen in December.

Come February 2018, regardless of who's in charge, many here will look to the Olympics for a fresh start. **AP**

opinion

Made in Macao

Jenny Lao-Phillips



POST-HOLIDAY BLUES?

After long Christmas and Chinese New Year holidays in the last two months, everything seems to be back to normal. Schools have started, most people are back to work, even traffic between 8a.m. and 9a.m. is back to its normal congestion. So what follows? We have a term called "looking like the fourth day of the New Year".

In Macao and Hong Kong, the Spring Festival has always been the longest mandatory holiday in the year. The holiday runs from the afternoon of the New Year's Eve to the third day of the Chinese New Year, as everyone living here would know. So, what does the fourth day of the year look like? The holidays are over, pockets are lighter from spending on entertainment or giving out lai see, but our weights have often increased due to over-eating – which is why the fourth day of the New Year usually doesn't look good, and is probably the greyest work day of the year. Although some people may feel upset about having to go back to school or work, I believe people in Macao are mostly blessed with immunity from post-holiday blues. Why?

According to the many articles on post-holiday depression from the Huffington Post, Psychology Today and the BBC News, to name a few, some causes of post-holiday blues include missing one's family after spending several days together, the feeling of loneliness after a busy holiday, dark and cold weather, missing the extra sleeping time, unmet expectations during the holidays and probably hangovers. So let's see why these hardly affect us tough "Macaoians".

Firstly, family gatherings are a big tradition in our culture, with the majority of people spending a couple days or more with their extended family during the holiday seasons – but we don't normally miss them terribly after the holidays. This is because family gatherings are extremely regular activities in our culture. Plenty of families actually meet weekly or monthly. So, post-holiday depression caused by missing one's family does not apply here.

Secondly, the feeling of loneliness. This seems to be quite the opposite here in Macao. While in most places, young professionals seldom have time to meet up with friends except during the holidays, Macao is small enough that regularly hanging out with friends is possible every day. We don't have to wait for long holidays. In fact, many shops and restaurants were closed during the holidays, so the complaints have been that there was nothing to do during the Spring Festival. Therefore, it is not surprising to hear quite a few people saying they are happy to be back to work; at least there are bars and restaurants open for happy hour after work to look forward to.

Another cause of post-holiday depression is the dark and cold months after the holiday season. It's true that in plenty of places February is gray and cold and stormy. Having to get up and go to work in this weather does cause depression. However, we are blessed with cool and sunny post-holiday weather in Macao. In fact, it always seems to be sunny after any holiday, thanks to the South China weather.

One thing that may cause a certain level of sadness or guilt is unmet holiday expectations. We may have planned to visit some old friends, or work out rigorously to lose those extra pounds, or maybe finish writing those poems or painting that picture – but then, by the last hour of our holiday, none of those goals have been accomplished. Perhaps these unmet goals could be the cause of the slight feeling of guilt from thinking that we have wasted a good holiday – but not many people seem to set ambitious targets during their long breaks.

Finally, as for missing time to sleep or feeling hungover from drinking too much during the holiday, well, most of us are probably used to that feeling whether it's post-holiday or not. Thus, we are immune.

THE BUZZ EU FINES THREE BATTERY RECYCLING COMPANIES FOR FORMING CARTEL

The European Union has fined three battery recycling companies a combined USD72 million for forming a cartel that artificially kept the purchasing price for used car batteries low.

EU Antitrust chief Margrethe Vestager said yesterday the companies were purposely "reducing competition in this essential link of the recycling chain."

The U.S. company Johnson Controls received full immunity because it revealed the cartel to the EU, but British firm Eco-Bat Technologies was ordered to pay 32.7 million euros and Recyclex from France 2.7 million euros. Campine of Belgium has to pay 8.1 million euros.

The EU recycles practically all of its car batteries.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	35-55 Good
High Density Residential Area	30-50 Good
Ambient	30-50 Good

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

RUSSIA A court yesterday found opposition leader Alexei Navalny guilty in the retrial of a 2013 fraud case, which formally disqualifies him as a candidate for president next year.



SOMALIA's groundbreaking presidential election moved into a second round yesterday as the number of candidates dropped from 21 to three, while a security lockdown closed the capital's international airport and cleared major streets.

ROMANIA's prime minister says there was no good reason to file a motion of no-confidence in the government, following days of massive protests against a government measure to ease off on the corruption fight.



VATICAN Participants at a Vatican conference on organ trafficking challenged China to allow independent scrutiny to ensure it is no longer using organs from executed prisoners, saying Chinese assurances aren't enough to prove the transplant program has been reformed.

FRANCE Rioters have again set fire to cars and garbage bins overnight in spreading violence in the suburbs of Paris over the alleged rape of a young black man with a police baton. Police said yesterday that they made 17 arrests. More on p15

US-VENEZUELA A bipartisan group of 34 U.S. lawmakers has sent a letter to President Donald Trump urging him to step up pressure on Venezuela's government by immediately sanctioning officials responsible for corruption and human rights abuses.

'Soul Mate' leads Hong Kong Film Awards with 12 nominations



Actress Zhou Dongyu, right, and Ma Sichun hold their award for Best Leading Actress at the 53rd Golden Horse Awards in Taipei, in November

ROMANCE drama "Soul Mate" has charmed the Hong Kong Film Awards.

The coming-of-age tale of two girls falling for the same boy received 12 nominations, with Zhou Dongyu and Ma Sichun both getting nods in the best actress category. Their dual nominations are not unprecedented – the co-stars both won the category at Taiwan's Golden Horse Awards last year.

The film, its screenplay and director Derek Tsang also received nominations, which were announced this week by two of last year's winners, "Port of Call" co-stars Aaron Kwok and Elaine Jin.

Trailing closely with 10 nominations is the cop thriller "Cold War II," nominated as best film, screenplay, cinematography and best actor, Tony Leung Ka Fai.

In the best film category, both films will compete alongside the comedy "Mermaid," the baseball film "Weeds on Fire" and crime thriller "Trivisa."

The best directory category is a battle between veterans and new talent. Three-time winner Johnnie To is nominated for crime drama "Three" while 2002's best actor and director winner Stephen Chow is nominated for "Mermaid." Director Derek Tsang from "Soul Mate," Wong Chun from "Mad World" and Frank Hui, Jeffery Lau and Vicky Wong from "Trivisa" are all just beginning to make their mark in film direction.

In the best actress category, Zhou and Ma face competition from Tang Wei for "Book of Love," Kara Wai in "Happiness" and Nina Paw from "Show Me Your Love." Leung is joined in the best actor category by Francis Ng in "Shed Skin Papa," Shawn Yue in "Mad World" and "Trivisa" co-stars Richie Jen and Lam Ka Tung. Kwok expressed pride in Leung's performance, even though he wasn't nominated for his own role in "Cold War II."

The Hong Kong Film Awards ceremony is on April 9. AP

"I never doubt myself, but I think the jury members have their point of views, their preferences and angles," he said at the news conference. "It's not a problem that I'm not nominated. I'm still very confident in myself."

The Hong Kong Film Awards ceremony is on April 9. AP

The Hong Kong Film Awards ceremony is on April 9. AP

The Hong Kong Film Awards ceremony is on April 9. AP

The Hong Kong Film Awards ceremony is on April 9. AP

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Virginia Zoo via AP



Red alert. Two weeks have passed since a red panda named Sunny escaped the Virginia Zoo without a trace and the raccoon-like animal is still missing. The above picture was taken on Oct 6.