



SSM ADMITS SMOKING LOUNGES IMPROVEMENT
The establishment of smoking rooms with high air quality standards is acceptable, according to the Health Bureau

P2



SINGAPORE STILL SEES VALUE IN F1
Singapore is still interested in hosting the Formula One race if the terms are right, the Tourism Board head said

P9



NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER FLYNN RESIGNS

P14 USA

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WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA Residents in an oil town near the Russian border protest against a planned aluminum plant over pollution fears, in the latest example of rising demands for clean air among China's citizens.

AP PHOTO



HONG KONG Seven police officers are convicted of a lesser charge in the assault of a pro-democracy activist whose videotaped beating during the height of 2014 pro-democracy protests sparked outrage. More on p11

TAIWAN Investigators are looking into excessive speed as the possible cause of a bus crash in Taiwan that killed 32 people and injured several others in the island's worst road accident in more than three decades. The bus flipped over while cornering on an expressway ramp in Taipei after taking a tour group to view cherry blossoms. More on p11

SOUTH KOREAN prosecutors attempted for a second time to arrest Samsung's de facto leader, who faces bribery allegations in connection with a massive political scandal. More on p12

AP PHOTO



INDONESIA Residents of the Indonesian capital vote today in an election for governor that has become a battleground in a high stakes tug-of-war between conservative and moderate forces in the world's most populous Muslim nation. More on p13

More on backpage

Kim's brother murdered awaiting Macau flight

P3



THE Health Bureau (SSM) has responded to a press conference regarding a study conducted by the University of Macau (UM) on the casino smoking ban, which was commissioned by the six gaming concessionaires. The bureau stated that “the establishment of smoking rooms with high air quality standards complies with the progressive smoking control policies and is a further step into the Legislative Assembly’s procedures [to amend the law].”

The response follows the press conference organized by the gaming concessionaires in which it was claimed that approximately 60 percent of those surveyed expressed support for policies allowing smoking lounges. Close to 90 percent of employees working in gaming areas reported an improvement in air quality in their work environments following anti-smoking measures taken by the concessionaires over the past few years. Such results were cited to persuade the government not to institute plans to roll out a full smoking ban.

While the SSM has said they are “prudently analyzing” the proposals presented by the concessionaires, they also remarked that it was possible to make a few “preliminary comments.”

Firstly, SSM acknowledged the credibility of the study,

Health Bureau admits improving smoking lounges is ‘step forward’

noting that they consider UM to be a credible, “neutral and academic” source. They further acknowledged that the “sample of the study has enough representation since the results cover all gaming concessionaires.”

The bureau also noted that the results reveal that 55 percent of workers interviewed accept or support the installation of smoking rooms, which they considered “a result with great referential value.”

Generally speaking, according to laws currently in force regarding the conditions and specifications of smoking lounges, the “specifications of the smoke rooms presented by the six gaming concessionaires have feasibility,” according to the SSM. Secondly, in response to criticism that the establishment of smoking rooms capitulates to companies’ interests, SSM defended the government for accepting smoking rooms (as proposed by the concessionaires). The bureau noted that on multiple occasions, smoking ban laws had been discussed at the Legislative

Assembly (AL) with several lawmakers presenting contrary arguments against their enforcement and challenging the government’s proposals to authorize the creation of smoking lounges in casinos.

The health authorities recalled that more recently in May last year, the Second Standing Committee of the AL “approved, with 7 votes in favor and 2 against, the creation of smoking rooms in casinos.” At the same time they recalled that “some associations of workers of the gaming sector have stated that the creation of smoking rooms in casinos is considered an acceptable proposal.”

Remarking on the government’s openness to amend the law, SSM reminded that the bill has not been approved by the AL. For that reason, “the measures to control smoking in casinos remain in force – that is, smoking is strictly prohibited in common areas of gaming. However, smoking rooms may be created, and in VIP rooms, smoking areas can be kept as well as previously authorized smoking rooms.” **RM**



LEGAL WISE BY MdME



José Espírito Santo Leitão*

LRT: ROLLING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

To criticize the Transportation and Infrastructure Office (GIT), the public entity charged with managing the construction and operation of the Macau Light Rail Transit, has become almost commonplace. Poor accountability, budget overruns, scathing reports from the Audit Commission telling tales of poor management and general ineptitude, and a number of Court cases brought on by contractors have made it so. It seemed that GIT and the LRT Project were poised to become a cautionary tale on how not to manage a public works project.

However, since Secretary Raimundo do Rosário took office, and, more specifically, since overall management of the Project was handed over to international transportation experts, a new

approach seems to have overtaken GIT. A number of disputes have been settled, pivotal works have been retendered and problems now appear to be tackled with a view to being solved rather than denied.

Following this new approach, GIT has now announced that a public entity in charge of such a complex project must be managed by professionals that cannot be found locally. First and foremost, it should be said that this acknowledgment comes at least 10 years too late. Regardless of the capability of local resources, the fact that Macau has no transportation system even remotely comparable in scope or complexity to the LRT should have been enough to allow - 6 years and hundreds of millions of patacas ago - for the con-

clusion that outside talent would have to be brought in to run the show.

Nevertheless, this decision may have a deeper impact felt throughout the Administration: there is no shame in bringing in the best from the private sector, even if the best are not from Macau. It is a standard practice of sophisticated governments and economies to recruit foreign experts and consultants when local talent is not available, and have them design and implement solutions and train locals in order to create proper local know-how. The Government had long refused to see this and had insisted in a series of casting errors that crippled the LRT Project, compromised its credibility and had no redeeming quality except for promoting local bureaucrats, who were predictably une-

qual to the task.

Similar kudos are to be given to the decision to create a specific legal framework for the LRT, which appears to – finally – recognize the specificities of the Project and the inability of existing legislation to cater to them. The underpinnings of this framework are now in public consultation and provide for the creation of a private concessionaire company (with 100 percent public capital) to manage the LRT’s operation (a solution in line with what is used in a number of other jurisdictions), the implementation of insurance policies with a minimum of MOP200 million, as well as the creation of specific inspection and safety provisions and guidelines. The document shows a clear intention of creating a professional and accountable operation that is at the same time relieved from the burdensome bureaucracy of a Government-operated system. All in all, it’s progress of a kind.

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Kim Jong Un brother murdered while awaiting Macau bound flight

KIM Jong Nam, the older brother of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, was attacked at Kuala Lumpur's airport and died on the way to a hospital, a senior Malaysian official said yesterday.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the incident's diplomatic sensitivity, said Kim Jong Nam was sprayed with a liquid in the shopping concourse on Monday and sought help at an information counter, complaining of pain. He was taken to the airport clinic and then died en route to the hospital, he said. District police chief Abdul Aziz Ali said the man was waiting for a flight to Macau.

Kim Jong Nam reportedly fell out of favor in North Korea after being caught trying to enter Japan on a false passport in 2001, saying he wanted to visit Tokyo Disneyland. He was believed to be in his mid-40s and has reportedly been living in recent years in Macau, Singapore and Malaysia.



Kim Jong-nam

South Korean media reported that Kim Jong Nam was assassinated by two women. TV Chosun, citing unidentified "multiple government sources," said the women were believed to be North Korean agents. It said they fled in a taxi and were being sought by Malaysian police.

Kim Jong Nam and Kim Jong Un have the same father, late dictator Kim Jong Il, but different mothers.

Since taking power in late 2011, Kim Jong Un has executed or

purged a slew of high-level government officials in what the South Korean government has described as a "reign of terror."

Kim Jong-nam, starting from around 2001, spent most of his time living quietly in Macau with his immediate family. He was believed to live in a luxury dwelling between the beaches of Hac Sa and Cheoc Van with a sunflower plaque on its exterior symbolizing loyalty to the North Korean regime.

He was also believed to own another apartment in downtown Macau, close to the Military Club.

It was reported by Ponto Final in 2009 that his children were members of the Macau Lusophone Scout Group, though organizers of the association had declined to confirm this.

Kim Jong-nam told Japan's Asahi TV in 2010, shortly before his father died, that he was against "third-generation succession" and that it had only been proposed to support the stability of the secretive regime. "I hope my younger brother will do his best for the sake of North Koreans' prosperous lives," he said at the time. **DB, with AP**

'A CONTINUING SENSE OF PARANOIA'

MARK TOKOLA, vice president at the Korea Economic Institute in Washington, said it would be surprising if Kim Jong Nam was not killed on the orders of his brother, given that North Korean agents have reportedly tried to assassinate Kim Jong Nam in the past. "It seems probable that the motivation for the murder was a continuing sense of paranoia on the part of Kim Jong Un, which may be a well-placed paranoia," Tokola wrote in a commentary yesterday. Although there was scant evidence that Kim Jong Nam was plotting against the North Korean leader, he provided an alternative for North Koreans who would want to depose his brother.



São Tiago Inn to close doors

The Pousada of São Tiago, a five-star hotel installed since 1982 on the former São Tiago da Barra Fortress (dating originally from the 17th century) will close at the end of March. On the sidelines of the Legislative Assembly Spring Lunch, the executive director of SJM, Angela Leong, said that the closure is temporary and due to a lack of guests at the hotel. The heritage facility is being affected by the adjacent construction site of Barra's multi-modal transportation center that will connect the light rail to other public transport systems. Leong said that the hotel will reopen once the construction is finished, noting that all employees currently working for the hotel will retain their jobs and be relocated to other hotels belonging to the group.

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EDUCATION

IPM holds career day to launch new offers



Lynzy Valles

THE Macau Polytechnic Institute (IPM) held its Career Day 2017 on Monday, attracting 39 exhibitors from the public and private sectors.

As approximately 700 IPM students will graduate this June, the event aimed to draw 1,200 potential graduates and students from the local university.

Apart from the exhibition, the institute is also holding 13 seminars and workshops before the end of month to aid students in their career planning.

The sessions and workshops will relate to mock interviews, resume writing and information about the prospects of economic development and youth entrepreneurship in Macau. The career talks will be held by senior representatives of local entities.

Vivian Lei, head of the institute's Academic Affairs Department, told the press that there has been a slight increase in the number of exhibitors and number of job vacancies offered to students compared to the previous year.

"Last year there were 32 exhibi-

tors but this year it's 39 and they [will] provide 1,500 vacancies for the students," Lei said, adding that the exhibitors last year had 1,300 job vacancies.

As the event was held for only one day, Lei said that it would only match students with careers to which they may be suited, however she noted that many students do receive calls from employers after the event.

Lei also said that the institute has received nearly 4,000 local applicants. IPM's Registry stated that more than 250 local students had been recommended for admission by their school principals.

"The course areas of IPM are highly related to local companies. For example, gaming and leisure management, directives related to gaming industry and several courses in management," she said.

Lei also remarked that the institute would launch a new bachelor program which will be recognized by the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau this 2017/2018 academic year, targeting local Portuguese-speaking students who wish to be Portuguese lan-

guage teachers.

Nearly 80 percent of the institution's 2015/2016 graduates found jobs in fields related to their undergraduate programs.

JC Human Resources Consulting, a human resources company, was an exhibitor yesterday for the second time in IPM.

Managing director Jacinto Ho said that yesterday was first time they showcased the firm's theme for 2017, "Sustain the Future", at a local university.

Ho explained that every year the company aims to send out different messages to students and job seekers. The firm's 2017 theme aims to raise awareness about the sustainability of students' careers, the region's economy and the environment.

"These are the major areas of sustainability that we want to showcase and raise awareness amongst students [because] the future of Macau depends on the students," Ho shared.

The human resources firm is seeking between 150 and 200 applications from IPM students. According to Ho, the company has 30 vacancies this year for

fresh graduates. The areas of employment include administration, marketing, retail and design.

Ho also revealed that this is the first time the company is recruiting non-local students.

"We have a few positions because we also do some overseas recruitments. We have some clients who are not in Macau [...] and they are also looking for people who speak good Chinese and good English and have experience and understanding about the gaming industry," she said. Ho recalled that students who do not possess a Macau ID find it difficult to find companies in Macau as a result of quota issues.

Another human resource company, Sun-Career.com, also participated in IPM's career day for the first time. The job site offers a variety of positions, mostly in the retail sector, but also as business sales representatives.

According to the talent acquisition manager, Jess Sou, most of the company's vacant positions are for fresh graduates.

Sun-Career.com is mainly targeting local students and hopes to receive over 200 applications.

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COURTS

Prosecution adds new evidence against Ho Chio Meng

ANOTHER session in the trial of the region's former top prosecutor, Ho Chio Meng, took place yesterday at Macau's Court of Final Appeal, following an adjournment since last Monday. Yesterday's session concluded at 11 a.m., earlier than previous sessions, with only one witness called to court to testify.

The witness, Lo Sio Lan, is currently a technician at the Office of the Prosecutor General. Lo, commonly addressed as Stella, was Ho's former secretary, and also used to assist former Chief of Office of the Prosecutor General, Antonio Lai.

Assistant prosecutor Kuok Un Man raised many questions regarding the northern Europe trip at issue in Ho's case. Lo said that she recalled some details about the trip only when raised by the prosecution. Lo attested that she did not book flight tickets or reserve hotels for departments other than the one she worked for.

She further said that Ho requested that she contact a public relations company and travel agencies for flights to and accommodation in northern Europe. During the process, Lo made no proposals regarding the tickets and hotels.

During previous trial sessions, Lo explained that Lai asked her to sign the flight ticket receipt.

Lo is related to one of the defendants in the case, Mak Im Tai.

The presiding judge, Sam Hou Fai, informed Lo that she was lawfully entitled to refuse to answer questions concerning the shelf companies and the allegedly pro-



Ho Chio Meng

blematic outsourcing of MP contracts, because Mak Im Tai is charged with running some of those shelf companies. As such, Lo declined to answer questions related to those cases due to her relationship with Mak Im Tai.

Ho Chio Meng's lawyer, Leong Weng Pun, interjected that the flight tickets were also related to contract outsourcing. The prosecution thus chose to dismiss Lo Sio Lan as a witness.

Ho made his statement before the court officially concluded the morning hearing.

He said that Beijing's Chinese Culture Promotion Society and the Macau MP have an equal relationship, with both sides paying for each other's hotels and flight tickets whenever events take place.

Judge Song Man Lei informed the parties that, after due investigation, the court decided to add additional facts to the agarwood case.

In particular, the court revealed that one agarwood case was completely handled by prosecutor Wu Hio, while another was jointly handled by Wu and a second prosecu-

tor Lao Ian Chi.

Song clarified that Ho Chio Meng did not interfere in either of those cases, that no written records could be found in the MP which indicated otherwise.

The afternoon session started at 3 p.m. with witness Wong Wai San appearing to testify.

Wong currently works for the MP in the area of public relations. In particular, she helps the department book flight tickets and host guests. Wong previously worked for Chan Ka Fai's department, and also made proposals for the MP's outsourcing of contracts.

Wong said that during Ho's administration, MP's services were generally outsourced through two methods: the MP would either consult three companies regarding the prices of certain services, or would directly outsource work to one specific company without ever making public tenders. According to Wong, Chan would give her blueprints upon which she would base the proposals.

Prosecutor Kuok questioned Wong about the results of the services provided by some of the alleged shelf companies in Ho's case. Wong said that she was only responsible for paper work, and that other issues were overseen by other colleagues.

Kuok also observed that many of Wong's accommodation and hotel proposals did not carry the names of those intended to use them, instead being addressed to MP employees. However, one proposal clearly reads that the MP booked a room in a hotel in Zhuhai for an 18-year-old person. Kuok noted that this person could not have been a

member of MP staff.

Wong explained that she reported the situation to Chan, and that she did not approve the invoice for that booking. Wong claims she assumed Chan might have forwarded the invoice to a third colleague in order to obtain approval.

She believed that the companies would only request payment if they had actually provided services.

Wong told Kuok that the MP would sometimes label services "confidential" or "urgent" to outsource them to a specific company directly.

Wong did not dispute the price of a remote service in a proposal she made, which was presented as evidence by the prosecutors. Wong said that her superior gave her the quotes according to which she made the proposal.

Wong also told Ho's lawyer, Leong Weng Pun, that, on several occasions when booking flights for the MP, she did not always know who the tickets were intended for because she booked the flights through a public relations company.

Wong told Leong that her former higher official, Chan Ka Fai, had been her colleague before he was employed by the MP. Chan later invited her to work for the MP. Prior to being hired, Wong said that Lai Kin Ian interviewed her for a position at the MP.

Wong hosted mainland prosecutors in the past, including those from the Supreme People's Procuratorate of China. However, Wong was unaware of whether these guests had been to the Hotline Center's 16th-floor Teachers' Resting Room, or to the Cheoc Van's accommodation villa.

The witness said that she never received any complaints regarding the MP's outsourced services.

Presiding Judge Sam Hou Fai remarked that Wong did what Chan asked of her without attempting to verify the authenticity of the contents of each contract.

The trial continues at 9.30 a.m. today.

THE deputy director of the Health Bureau (SSM) and Director of Conde de São Januário Central Hospital (CHCSJ), Kuok Cheong U, said that a health program launched by the SSM last November diagnosed five people with early colorectal cancer.

Kuok revealed this while attending an event on Sunday organized by the Association of Friends of Charity of Macau.

HEALTH

SSM cancer test program diagnosed five cases

The event was themed World Cancer Day and sought to raise the public's awareness of cancer.

Last November, the SSM introduced a colorectal cancer-testing program, which until

Sunday recorded that more than 1,490 people joined the program.

Approximately 120 people had positive fecal occult blood tests. Forty-nine of these patients conducted a follow-up colorectal screening,

with the results showing that five of the patients had colorectal cancer.

Kuok said that in Macau and in particular among men, the most common type of cancer is lung cancer, followed by liver and colorectal

cancer.

Among women, the top three most common types of cancer are lung cancer, colorectal cancer and breast cancer.

According to a report by Macao Daily News, one cancer specialist from

CHCSJ said that each year, more than 700 deaths in Macau are caused by cancer.

The World Health Organization data shows that 8.2 million people lose their lives because of cancer annually.



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GAMING

Goa seeks legal opinion on Macau model casino rules



Goan Carnival and Leisure Pvt. Ltd.'s Casino Carnival sit on Mandovi river close to Panjim, Goa

The state government of Goa has sought legal opinion on newly-drafted gaming rules, which the state has framed along the Macau model.

The gaming rules were earlier repealed by the home department from the law department to be re-drafted based on the Macau casino rules, The Times of India reported.

Officials from the Indian state of Goa are seeking the legal opinion of advocate general Saresh Lotlikar regarding the draft rules before they are brought into force.

If approved, the rules prohibit the entry of Goans into casinos except for employment.

Recently, the state cabinet defined several terms such as area, casino, electronic gaming, live gaming, offshore, offshore casino, onshore casino and passenger capacity in the Goa Public Gambling (Amendment) Act 1976, as reported by the media outlet.

In December, a senior home department officer told the media outlet that the decision to redraft the new rules along the lines

of Macau casino rules was due to the government's aim "to monitor onshore and offshore casino operations in the Goa, the western state of India."

The officer explained, "We have redrafted rules based on Macau casino rules to specify how to maintain the record of customers visiting the casinos, what should be the quality of CCTV cameras, how many days CCTV footage should be stored, among other things."

The gaming commission file has been sent to the advocate general, and a senior official noted that they are "waiting for his opinion before the rules are amended."

Under the draft rules, the state home department has given power to the state government to appoint a gaming commissioner, which could either be a private or a government officer.

Goa is one of the three Indian states that allow live casinos to operate within its borders. The coastal state, which was administered by Portugal until 1961, plays host to 11 land-based gaming venues and five floating casinos.

EDUCATION

DSEJ to implement bilingual classes in official schools

The Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) will create bilingual classes to combine Chinese - and Portuguese - language material.

The revamp aims to "give priority to the training of bilingual talents for the government" under the development strategy "One Center, One Platform," and comes in response to the high demand for professionals with bilingual skills. The new scheme will take effect during the academic year of 2017 and 2018 for two official schools - Flora Primary School and Zheng Guanying.

DSEJ hopes that the scheme will better prepare students to pursue their studies locally or abroad in higher education courses where fluency in Chinese and Portuguese are required, such as law, translation and interpretation, foreign relations, public administration and commerce, among others.

For the coming academic year, DSEJ

will introduce bilingual classes in the first year of primary and secondary (Form 1) education at the Zheng Guanying Official School, and in the first year of primary education at the Luso-Chinese Primary School of Flora. It is expected that the program will be progressively expanded to include other year levels in the future.

According to DSEJ, these bilingual classes "will be able to break with traditional teaching methodology, adopting a flexible curriculum and pedagogic design, with Mandarin and Portuguese vehicular languages."

In addition, schools will provide special curriculums and other supplementary measures for beginner Portuguese language learners who enroll in the bilingual classes in the first year of secondary education, taking note of their existing Portuguese language knowledge. **RM**

BNU records 10pct rise in net income

BANCO Nacional Ultramarino (BNU) announced yesterday its unaudited financial results for 2016, recording a 9.8 percent increase in net income to MOP560.5 million for the year. During the same period, the results also showed a 2.1 percent increase in customer funds and a loan-to-deposit ratio that shrunk from 53 percent in 2015 to 51 percent last year.

According to a statement issued by BNU, the bank's net interest margin "performed well" in 2016, surging by 11.1 percent year-on-year, attributable to business growth and improved liquidity management.

The average number of products per active customer increased to 3.49, compared with 3.41 in 2015. The bank's overall card revenue increased by 3.3 percent, partly as a result of an increase in product cross-selling.

Meanwhile, personnel costs as a whole increased

by 2.5 percent in 2016 over the previous year, with the number of employees increasing by about 2 percent. On the other hand, administrative costs decreased last year by almost 5 percent due to strict budgetary control in the procurement area despite inflationary pressures and the opening of two new branches.

Last month, BNU became the first international banking group to operate in the Hengqin Free Trade Area after the inauguration of a new Hengqin branch.

"The Hengqin branch is an innovative step in following our Macau clients to mainland China, catering to their needs for cross-border financial services, as well as bridging the investments between mainland China and the Portuguese speaking countries," said BNU's Chief Executive Officer Pedro Cardoso in the press release issued yesterday.

"Welcoming the 115th anniversary of BNU, we



will continue to extend our branch network by opening another branch in Taipa in 2017," added Cardoso.

The banking sector in Macau continued to perform at a stable level in 2016 with several institutions channeling their investments into increasing their market share. **DB**

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Singapore still sees value in F1, tourism chief says

Melissa Cheok

SINGAPORE is still interested in hosting the Formula One race if the terms are right, and discussions on keeping the event in the Southeast Asian nation are under way, according to the Singapore Tourism Board.

"I think the event is still a good one and I think it's something we're interested to look at provided the terms and conditions are right," Lionel Yeo, chief executive officer at Singapore Tourism Board, told Bloomberg Television yesterday, when asked if hosting the event makes sense. "The discussions are still ongoing."

Then-Formula One head honcho Bernie Ecclestone suggested the Singapore Grand Prix wouldn't be extended when the five-year deal expires this year, Today newspaper reported in November, citing an interview with German magazine Auto Motor Und Sport. The F1 has since been taken over by Liberty Media Corp.

Ecclestone, a former used-car salesman, turned a disparate collection of races into a premium global sporting property, drawing millions of television viewers and a branding opportunity for new race hosts like Bahrain, Russia and Azerbaijan. The race has been a highlight of the tourism calendar in Singapore, where the tourism board is now forecasting slower growth in tourist arrivals this year amid global economic and political uncertainties and stiffer competition from neighbors in the region.

Visitors may increase zero percent to 2 percent in 2017, according to the Singapore Tourism Board. Growth was 7.7 percent last year with a record 16.4 million tourists led by visitors



A aerial view of part of the Singapore Grand Prix's Marina Bay City

from China, India and Indonesia.

"We want to temper our expectations because we are fully cognizant of the fact that there are political and economic uncertainties which may have an impact on outbound travel," Yeo said at a briefing yesterday.

Singapore plans to remake Orchard Road, its main shopping district, develop more family-friendly attractions and boost marketing, the tourism board said in a statement. Tourism has been one of the bright spots in an economy hit by a slump in global trade. The industry makes up about 4 percent of gross domestic product and has grown since the city-state opened its first two casino resorts in 2010.

Tourism receipts rose 13.9 percent to a record SGD24.8 billion (USD17.4 billion) in 2016. The introduction of the Michelin Guide Singapore as well as events which Singapore hosted, including the inaugural HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series and music festival Ultra Singapore, helped boost spending.

Singapore forecast tourism receipts may rise 1 percent to 4 percent this year to as much as SGD25.8 billion. The government last week unveiled a slew of strategies aimed at driving growth in the next decade. **Bloomberg**

HONG KONG

TVB sweetens buyback offer; shares soar

Joe Mayes, Prudence Ho

TELEVISION Broadcasts Ltd. sweetened the terms of its share buyback offer after Hong Kong's dominant free-to-air TV broadcaster received an unsolicited bid for 29.9 percent of the company from TLG Movie & Entertainment Group. The shares jumped to the highest since August 2015.

It's obvious TVB's move is trying to increase the acquisition cost, hoping to fend off TLG.

CASTER PANG
CONSULTANT

TVB, which announced plans to repurchase as many as 138 million shares on Jan. 24, boosted its offer price to HKD35.075 from HKD30.50 and cut the amount of shares to be purchased to 120 million, according to a filing Monday. The stock gained 9.2 percent to HKD33.15, the highest close in more than 17 months, yesterday.

Improving the terms of the buyback may ward off TLG Movie's approach, which is conditional on shareholders rejecting the buyback of the shares. TVB has attracted new investors including Li Ruigang's China Media Capital, which took a stake in 2015 through an investment group, after the late media mogul Run Run Shaw



sold control to buyers including HTC Corp. Chairwoman Cher Wang in 2011.

"It's obvious TVB's move is trying to increase the acquisition cost, hoping to fend off TLG," said Caster Pang, head of research at Core-Pacific Yamaichi in Hong Kong.

Alex Chow, TLG Group's chief executive officer and founder, told local media that TLG has sufficient funds for the acquisition and it's not a shell company. "Our bid isn't a hostile takeover, definitely not. It's a friendly takeover," said Chow. He added that TVB using borrowed money for the share buyback would hurt cash flow and isn't ideal for minority shareholders. TVB issued USD500 million of bonds in October.

The surge in TVB shares yesterday has added about HKD1.23 billion (USD159 million) to the broadcaster's market value, raising it to HKD14.4 billion. Planned spending on the repurchase of as much as HKD4.21 billion is unchanged from the initial level, according to TVB's statement yesterday.

The revision to the previous buyback offer ensures the free public float of shares would not fall below the 25 percent minimum, TVB said yesterday in the statement.

TVB last week said it was seeking

more information on TLG Movie, particularly whether it has financial resources to support TVB's six-year investment plan. The broadcaster is obtaining information on the offerer, TVB spokesman S.Y. Tam said yesterday.

Calls yesterday to TLG's Beijing office were not answered. The company says it's "engaged in the cultural industry and real estate development and investments" and will make an announcement related to its offer during the week of Feb. 20, according to its Feb. 8 filing in Hong Kong.

TVB, battling declining advertising revenue and competition from streaming services such as Netflix, warned in December that profit for 2016 could fall by as much as 65 percent. Its stock rose 3.2 percent Feb. 9 on the news of the bid from TLG Movie, suggesting investors may welcome an influx of funds.

The new terms of the share buyback would raise the combined stake of TVB's biggest shareholders, including Li's China Media Capital, Chairman Charles Chan Kwok Keung and non-executive director Mona Fong, to about 41 percent from currently 30 percent, according to the filing. Their stake would have risen to 44 percent under the original buyback plan. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

MGM RESORTS INTERNATIONAL TO SUPPORT HONG KONG ART PROJECT



MGM Resorts International will support Art Basel's public art project in Hong Kong, strengthening its ongoing partnership with the world's premier international art show.

The company's multifaceted arts program, MGM Resorts Art & Culture, is a partner of the

5th edition of Art Basel in Hong Kong, held from March 23 to 25, and will support "Twenty-Five Minutes Older" by local artist Kingsley Ng.

"Twenty-Five Minutes Older" will turn two of Hong Kong's iconic public trams into moving camera obscuras, creating an alte-

red reality and allowing passengers to experience Hong Kong in a new way: in reverse.

Moving images of Hong Kong's city life will be accompanied by spoken extracts from Liu Yichang's popular novella 'Tête-bêche,' according to a press release issued by MGM Resorts Art & Culture.

The art project follows the success of its first presentation as part of 'Human Vibrations: The 5th Large-Scale Public Media Art Exhibition,' which celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Arts Development Council in Hong Kong in 2016. This year, MGM Resorts and Art Basel will reintroduce the artwork to audiences during Art Basel in Hong Kong by commissioning a nine-day public exhibition presented free of charge. "Twenty-Five Minutes Older" will be presented from March 20 to 28, 2017.

The British Business Association of Macau (BBAM) presented a cheque for MOP60,000 to the School of The Nations Scholarship Fund.

The money was raised at BBAM's 10th Anniversary Ball held last year.

The school's principal, Vivek Nair, accepted the cheque addressed to a special scholarship account, established by the school to assist one local Macau resident student identified as needing financial support to complete his or her studies.

The donation will assist the realization of this student's dream of attending university upon reaching 18 years of age, stated BBAM in a press release.

BBAM organizes a variety of events throughout

BBAM DONATES MOP60,000 TO LOCAL SCHOOL'S SCHOLARSHIP FUND



the year, from networking evenings to business lunches, focus group working

lunches to hosting visiting delegations, and arranging business matching services.



Banners advertising the high-end toilets made by Shenzhen Trump Industrial Co. on display at the company's offices in Shenzhen

Recent Trump win on China trademark raises ethics questions

Erika Kinetz, Shanghai

PRESIDENT Donald Trump is poised to receive something this week that he has been trying to get from China for a decade: trademark rights to his own name. After suffering rejection after rejection in China's courts, he saw his prospects change dramatically after starting his presidential campaign.

Trump's late triumph in the fight to wrest back his brand for construction services could prove to be the first of many intellectual property victories in China during his presidency. Each win creates value for Trump's business empire, and ethics questions about his administration.

At stake are 49 pending trademark applications — all made during his campaign — and 77 marks already registered under his own name, most of which will come up for renewal during his term. The construction-services case also raises the possibility that the president could claw back control of more than 225 Trump-related marks held or sought by others in China, for an array of things including Trump toilets, condoms, pacemakers and even a "Trump International Hotel."

Ethics lawyers from across the political spectrum say the trademarks present conflicts of interest for Trump and may violate the emoluments clause of the U.S. Constitution, which bars public servants from accepting anything of value from foreign governments unless explicitly approved by Congress.

Countries could use Trump's desire to consolidate control over his brand to extend — or withhold — favor, especially a nation such as China where the

courts and bureaucracy are influenced by the ruling Communist Party and by design reflect the leadership's political imperatives. While China recently has shown greater interest in protecting intellectual property rights in general, simply the possibility that it could use trademarks as leverage has drawn concern.

It is a terrible idea for Donald Trump to be accepting the registration of these valuable property rights from China while he's a sitting president.

NORMAN EISEN
FORMER CHIEF WHITE HOUSE ETHICS
LAWYER

"There can be no question that it is a terrible idea for Donald Trump to be accepting the registration of these valuable property rights from China while he's a sitting president of the United States," said Norman Eisen, who served as chief White House ethics lawyer for President Barack Obama. "It's fair to conclude that this is an effort to influence Mr. Trump that is relatively inexpensive for the Chinese, potentially very valuable to him, but it could be very costly for the United States."

Richard Painter, chief White House ethics lawyer under Pre-

sident George W. Bush, called the situation "highly improper." Since foreign governments know Trump cares deeply about his family's business, Painter said, "they will give him what he wants and they will expect stuff in return."

Eisen and Painter are involved in a lawsuit alleging that Trump's foreign business ties violate the U.S. Constitution. Trump has dismissed the lawsuit as "totally without merit."

The precise value of the trademarks is a matter of debate, but the billionaire president himself has said he considers the Trump brand to form a major part of his fortune, and he has long fought to protect his trademarks in China.

"I spent hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees to secure my own name and globally recognized brand from Chinese individuals who seek to trade off my reputation," Trump wrote in 2011 to then-U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke about a trademark dispute in Macau, an autonomous region of China.

In May 2009, he dispatched a team with 300 pounds of audiovisual evidence that Donald Trump was, in fact, famous. It didn't work. Trump railed against the courts as "faithless, corrupt and tainted."

"The Trump name resonates throughout the entire world," Trump wrote. "According to their ignorant council of judges, it appears the only two places in the world I am not well known are" China and Macau.

As president, Trump's elevated profile in China will likely make it easier to protect his brand, said Zhou Dandan, a lawyer with Unitalen Attorneys at Law in Beijing, which has worked for Trump

since 2006. Trademark authorities will almost certainly reject new "Trump" applications from unrelated parties, she said, and may take back rights from existing "Trump" trademark holders.

That's what happened in the case nearing completion this week.

Trump applied for rights to the Trump mark for construction services on Dec. 7, 2006, but a man named Dong Wei had filed a similar application about two weeks earlier. China works on a first-come-first-served basis for trademarks, and the Trademark Office rejected Trump's application.

Trump appealed to the Trademark Review and Adjudication Board, then to the Beijing Intermediate People's Court, and finally to the Beijing High People's Court. He lost, lost and lost again.

Separately, he tried to invalidate Dong's trademark, but failed, and failed again on appeal, according to Matthew Dresden, a China intellectual property attorney at Harris Bricken in Seattle, who has studied the case.

The last time courts ruled against Trump in the construction-services case was May 2015, the month before he declared his candidacy.

Then Trump's lawyers made what Dresden described as "an odd choice."

They simply went back to the Trademark Review and Adjudication Board, which had already rejected their case, and again asked them to invalidate Dong's trademark, Dresden said.

This time it worked. On Sept. 6, 2016, the Trademark Office published its invalidation of Dong's trademark for construction services. Dong could not be reached for comment.

That decision cleared the way for Trump's own claim to move ahead. Trump's mark was published in China's Trademark Gazette on Nov. 13, less than a week after he won the presidential election. Interested parties have three months to object. If no one does, the trademark will be registered to Trump this week.

Why is Trump winning in China's bureaucracy now, after years of failure? China's State Administration for Industry and Commerce and its foreign ministry did not reply to requests for comment.

People use Trump toilets some 100 million times a year

Alan Garten, chief legal officer of The Trump Organization, portrayed the company's efforts to enforce its trademarks as part of a long-standing pattern of vigilance.

"The company has been zealous

sly protecting its valuable brand internationally for more than 20 years," he said in an email. He did not answer questions about the ethical dilemmas Trump's China trademarks present for his presidency.

Some lawyers point to a general hardening in China's stance on trademark squatting. In January, China's Supreme People's Court released a legal interpretation stipulating that names of "political, economic, cultural, religious, national and other public figures" should not be trademarked. That notice came after a December ruling that returned the Chinese version of Michael Jordan's name from Qiaodan Sports Co. to the basketball star. In Chinese, Qiaodan sounds like Jordan.

Others say politics almost certainly played a role. By 2016, the nature of the dispute had changed. Chinese authorities were now ruling on case that pitted a guy from Liaoning province against a man running for president of the United States.

"Particularly something of this scale, where there are international repercussions for a given decision, it would be hard to imagine that the judges, the Trademark Office and/or the Trademark Review and Adjudication Board were acting without some kind of guidance," said Dan Plane, a director at Simone IP Services, a Hong Kong intellectual property consultancy.

He added that the outcome of future cases could depend on Trump's relationship with Beijing.

"If there's a clear decision made by an angry Chinese government to stop giving broad protection to the Trump name in China, Trump's ability to defend or enforce his name could be quite limited," Plane said.

If Trump is able to seize broad control of his brand in China, it could be bad news for Shenzhen Trump Industrial Co., which makes high-end Trump-branded toilets. Zhong Jianwei, one of the founders, said the company will defend its brand if challenged by the U.S. president.

The company applied for its Trump mark in 2002. The Chinese name brings together ideas of innovation and popularity and has nothing to do with President Trump, said Zhong Jiye, another founder. And in English, the "U" makes a nice toilet-seat shape for their logo.

Trump toilets for the home can do pregnancy tests, while models for public use have disposable seat covers for improved hygiene. The company says sales were up more than 50 percent last year and an international expansion is in the works — perhaps under a different brand now that Trump is president.

People use Trump toilets some 100 million times a year, said Zhong Jiye.

Among them, he added, are customers at Zhongnanhai, the official residence of Chinese President Xi Jinping. **AP**

INVESTIGATORS were looking into excessive speed as the possible cause of a bus crash in Taiwan that killed 32 people and injured several others in the island's worst road accident in more than three decades, an official said yesterday.

The bus flipped over Monday evening while cornering on an expressway ramp in Taiwan's capital Taipei after taking a tour group to view cherry blossoms.

Highway police spokesman Ma Ling-wen said the speed limit on the ramp was 40 kph but it was not clear how fast the bus had been going. Ma said speed had not yet been ruled out as a cause of the crash.

The bus was carrying 44 people, mainly senior citizens, many of whom were trapped under the crushed wreckage. Rescuers were forced to use a crane to pry the vehicle open.

Thirty-two people, all Taiwanese, were confirmed dead and the remaining passengers were sent to hospitals for treatment. Both the bus driver and tour guide were among the dead.

Taiwan's Premier Lin Chuan told reporters the government would provide assistance to the bereaved families and conduct a "tho-

TAIWAN

Speed a possible factor in bus crash that killed 32

rough review" once the immediate work had been completed, the official Central News Agency reported.

The agency said the accident was the worst ever on Taiwan's highway network and the island's deadliest since a tour bus crashed into a ravine on a winding mountain road on Oct. 8, 1986, killing 42 people.

The bus belonged to the private Yongli Keyun transit company and had been turning off the No. 5 freeway onto the No. 3 freeway in the eastern Taipei district of Nangang when it crashed at about 9 p.m.

A bus accident in Taiwan last July killed 26 tourists from mainland China, prompting an across-the-board review of tour bus safety. Investigators said the driver in that crash was drunk and had intentionally set the bus alight as it traveled to Taiwan's main airport. **AP**



AP PHOTO

HONG KONG

Seven police guilty in activist's 2014 filmed beating

AP PHOTO
Five of the seven Hong Kong police officers arrive at the District Court in Hong Kong yesterday

Kelvin Chan, Hong Kong

SEVEN Hong Kong police officers were convicted yesterday of a lesser charge in the assault of a pro-democracy activist whose videotaped beating during the height of 2014 pro-democracy protests sparked outrage.

A judge found the seven officers guilty of one joint count of assault occasioning actual bodily harm in their attack on Ken Tsang. He was part of a group of protesters involved in a pre-dawn clash with police over Beijing's plans to restrict elec-

tions for the semiautonomous Chinese city.

The officers, who are due to be sentenced later, face up to three years in prison.

During the scuffle on Oct. 15, 2014, TV news cameras caught officers kicking and punching a handcuffed Tsang in a dark corner of a nearby park.

Tsang himself was convicted last year of assaulting police and resisting arrest in relation to the incident and sentenced to five weeks in prison.

Prosecutors in that case accu-

sed Tsang of splashing liquid from a bottle on police as they tried to clear protesters from an underpass next to government headquarters, while Tsang said the charges were politically motivated. The incident occurred during the "Umbrella Movement" protests that brought streets in the Asian financial hub to a standstill for 79 days.

District Court Judge David Dufton said he was satisfied with the prosecution's case that officers carried Tsang by his arms and legs and took him behind a park building, "where he was dumped on the ground and immediately assaulted" by five officers stamping and kicking him while two others watched, according to a press summary of the ruling.

Dufton said Tsang's injuries, including circular reddish bruises on his neck and back, did not amount to grievous bodily harm, a more serious charge that carries a maximum life sentence.

When Tsang was later taken to a police station, he was slapped twice by one of the officers, who was convicted of a separate charge of common assault, which is punishable by up to one year in prison. **AP**

HUNAN

Eight dead, three missing after coal mine blast

A coal mine explosion yesterday in central China has left eight people dead and three injured, state media reported.

The blast occurred at about 1:30 a.m. at the Zoubao mine in Hunan province. Eighteen people escaped, only one of them injured, according to the official Xinhua News Agency and a statement from China's national safety regulator, the State Administration of Work Safety.

The administration did not immediately identify the cause of the blast, but said the site was considered a "high gas mine." Gas explosions inside mines are often caused when a flame or electrical spark ignites gas leaking from the coal seam. Ventilation systems are supposed

to prevent gas from becoming trapped.

China is the world's largest producer and consumer of coal. Its mining industry has long been one of the world's deadliest, with hundreds of deaths annually. The work safety administration has acknowledged that struggling coal mines might be likely to overlook basic maintenance.

Authorities have announced shutdowns of outdated mines and cuts in the number of work days to improve safety conditions and reduce the smog smothering many Chinese cities. However, the measures also threaten to increase energy prices in the midst of an ongoing economic slowdown, taxing the willingness of authorities to enforce them strictly. **AP**

Grace Brown, Ulaanbaatar

MONGOLIA

Gov't nationalize mine, prompts warning on investors

MONGOLIAN lawmakers have told the government to revoke a private company's purchase of a stake in a major copper mine, prompting the president to warn they might scare away investors as the country tries to reverse an economic slump.

The move highlights the political sensitivity of Mongolia's copper, gold and other mineral wealth, the source of more than 90 percent of the North Asian country's export revenues.

Legislators approved a resolution last week calling on Prime Minister Jargaltulgyn Erdenebat to revoke a Mongolian investor's USD400 million purchase of a Russian state company's 49 percent stake in Erdenet Mining Corp. They want the government, which owns the rest of Erdenet, to take full control.

Investor confidence has been shaken by previous disputes over the role of foreign mining companies and complaints too little of Mongolia's mineral wealth makes its way to the poor majority.

Pressure to perk up the economy has mounted as weak global demand for Mongolia's minerals dragged down growth to a 1.6 percent contraction in the latest quarter.

Mongolia's national debt stands at about \$23 billion, or twice annual economic output, and a \$580 million payment to foreign bondholders is due March 21. Mongolian leaders are deciding whether to pursue a potential emergency loan from the International Monetary Fund.

Last week's vote followed a change of government in June elections and a parliamentary inquiry that concluded the real buyer was a Mongolian bank that violated lending rules by hiding how much money it put up.



A worker shows a geological core sample containing copper and gold from the mine site to visitors at the Oyu Tolgoi mine site in Khanbogd village

It was the first time parliament has called for the government to take over a company since the end of Soviet-style communist rule in the early 1990s, when Mongolia sold off state assets.

Approval of the Erdenet sale was announced June 28 by then-Prime Minister Chimediiin Saikhanbileg. But the next day, his Democratic Party lost control of parliament to the rival Mongolian People's Party in national elections.

It was unclear whether Erdenebat was obliged to act on parliament's demand, but President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj, a Democratic Party member,

warned the vote might hurt the economy.

"The resolution could drive away foreign investors and entrepreneurs" and "further isolate Mongolia," Elbegdorj said in a statement.

Still, Elbegdorj said authorities should root out the "hidden and illegal business operations" of Erdenet.

Earlier, global miner Rio Tinto Ltd. delayed development of a gold and copper mine, Oyu Tolgoi, due to disagreements over revenue sharing and the foreign role in mining.

After that dispute was settled, Rio Tinto announced last May

it was ready to go ahead with a \$5.3 billion expansion. Saikhanbileg said that showed Mongolia was "back to business."

Erdenet, Mongolian for "Treasure," operates a mining complex about 150 miles (240 kilometers) northwest of the capital, Ulan Bator. Until last year's sale, it was one of Russia's biggest as-

tors.

However, a report by parliament concluded the money came from TDB, which put up \$354 million, and a bank owned by a TDB shareholder, which put up \$55 million.

That violated rules that should have limited TDB to lending about \$70 million, according to Jargalsaikhan Dambadarjaa, an economist and journalist.

Parliament also found the central bank lent money to a company in Purevtuvshin's investment group without official approval. The central bank governor at the time was a former TDB board member.

Purevtuvshin denied violating financial rules and said only about \$75 million came from TDB.

"We strongly reject these findings and action by parliament," he said in a phone interview.

TDB's chairman and CEO, Orkhon Onon, also denied wrongdoing. In a written statement, he said his bank's role was limited to "partial financing" and investment advice.

"All the allegations made against TDB by the parliamentary working group are misleading, baseless, politically motivated and deliberately fabricated," said Orkhon's statement.

Dambadarjaa opposed the Erdenet sale but criticized parliament's latest action as a possible threat to property rights.

"The government must protect both private and public property," he said. AP

The resolution could drive away foreign investors and entrepreneurs [and] further isolate Mongolia.

TSAKHIAGIIN ELBEGDORJ
PRESIDENT, MONGOLIA

sets in Mongolia.

Controversy over the sale was fueled by complaints a Mongolian bank, Trade Development Bank LLC, was the real buyer and violated lending rules by financing the acquisition.

The purchase was led by a 28-year-old lawyer, Tsooj Purevtuvshin, owner of Mongolian Copper Corp. Purevtuvshin, also known by the nickname Tush, said MCC bought Erdenet using financing from a group of invest-

SOUTH KOREA

Investigators seek arrest of Samsung heir again



SOUTH Korean prosecutors are attempting for a second time to arrest Samsung's de facto

leader, who faces bribery allegations in connection with a massive political scandal.

Special prosecutors investigating the influence-peddling scandal that led to the impeachment of the president said yesterday they have asked a court to issue an arrest warrant for Lee Jae-yong, the vice chairman of Samsung Electronics. They also are seeking an arrest warrant for Samsung Electronics president Park Sang-jin, who oversees the company's external relations.

Seoul Central District Court said it will hold a hearing tomorrow to re-

view the arrest request.

This is the second attempt by prosecutors to arrest Lee, the heir to the Samsung Group. Last month, a court said there was not enough evidence to justify Lee's arrest at that point.

The prosecutors argued that the 48-year-old billionaire offered a bribe of \$36 million to President Park Geun-hye and her long-time friend to win government backing for a controversial merger.

The merger of Samsung C&T and Cheil Industries in 2015 was opposed by minority shareholders, who said it would benefit

the Samsung founding family while hurting other shareholders. Samsung narrowly secured shareholder approval, thanks in part to support from the National Pension Fund, its key investor. The pension fund's current chief was arrested last year on suspicion of pressuring the fund to back the merger, which helped Lee increase his influence in Samsung Electronics without spending any of his money.

Lee admitted that Samsung transferred funds to a company and foundations controlled by Choi Soon-sil, President Park's secretive friend, but denied

allegations that he expected to win any government favors.

The court's rejection last month of the arrest request dealt a blow to the prosecutors, who have until Feb. 28 to investigate unless parliament extends the deadline.

In seeking Lee's arrest for the second time, the prosecutors said the Samsung heir faces new charges in addition to bribery, embezzlement and lying under oath. They did not elaborate.

South Korean media reports said the prosecutors are looking at whether Samsung purchased

a costly horse for Choi's daughter, who is an equestrian, an allegation that Samsung has denied.

The investigators are also reportedly looking at whether South Korea's fair trade commission gave any favors to Samsung related to a complex cross shareholding structure that allows the Lee family to exert an outsized influence on Samsung Electronics and its dozens of affiliates, while holding a small stake. The anti-trust regulator was raided earlier this month by prosecutors.

Samsung did not respond to a request for comment. AP

UN Security Council strongly condemns North Korea missile test

AP PHOTO



US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley (right) arrives for a Security Council consultation on North Korea

Edith M. Lederer &
Eric Talmadge, United Nations

THE U.N. Security Council strongly condemned North Korea over its latest ballistic missile launches and warned of "further significant measures" if Pyongyang doesn't stop nuclear and missile testing.

A council statement agreed to by all 15 members followed strong condemnation by Secretary-General Antonio Guterres of the latest launch and U.S. President Donald Trump's pledge to deal with North Korea "very strongly."

The Security Council yesterday [Macau time] condemned Saturday's launch and a previous test Oct. 19, saying North Korea's activities to develop its nuclear

weapons delivery systems violate U.N. sanctions and increase tensions. It called on all U.N. members "to redouble their efforts" to implement U.N. sanctions.

North Korea has repeatedly flouted six Security Council resolutions demanding an end to its nuclear and ballistic missile activities and imposing increasing tougher sanctions.

The latest missile test is seen as an implicit challenge to Trump, who has vowed a tough line on North Korea but has yet to release a strategy for dealing with a country whose nuclear ambitions have bedeviled U.S. leaders for decades.

"North Korea is a big, big problem and we will deal with that very strongly," Trump said at a joint news conference with Canadian Prime Minister Justin

Trudeau.

Nikki Haley, his U.N. ambassador, said in a statement later: "We call on all members of the Security Council to use every available resource to make it clear to the North Korean regime — and its enablers — that these launches are unacceptable."

"It is time to hold North Korea accountable — not with our words, but with our actions," she said.

There was no indication of what "actions" the Trump administration has in mind, and Ukraine's U.N. ambassador, Volodymyr Yelchenko, the current council president, and Japanese Ambassador Koro Bessho wouldn't comment on possible "further significant measures."

Those same words were used in the last Security Council statement on the unsuccessful Oct. 17 missile test by North Korea. That was followed by the latest sanctions resolution Nov. 30 targeting North Korea's hard currency revenues by placing a cap on coal exports, cutting them by at least 62 percent or by an estimated USD800 million.

The council statement issued Monday was almost exactly the same as the one adopted Oct. 17 — a practice that makes it much easier for members to reach quick agreement.

Guterres called the latest launch

"a further troubling violation" of council resolutions and urged North Korea to comply with its international obligations, U.N. deputy spokesman Farhan Haq said.

It is time to hold North Korea accountable — not with our words, but with our actions.

NIKKI HALEY
US AMBASSADOR

"The secretary-general appeals to the international community to continue to address this situation in a united manner," Haq said.

The United States, Japan and South Korea requested the urgent Security Council meeting.

Japan's Bessho told reporters the key is implementing sanctions to get North Korea to change course.

"I think we need to keep pushing because we're not looking for a military solution," he said. "We have to have a peaceful solution, and the Security Council ... is the body that is

most suited for that role."

Monday's council statement stressed "the importance of maintaining peace and stability on the Korean peninsula and in northeast Asia at large" and expressed members' "commitment to a peaceful, diplomatic and political solution to the situation."

South Korea earlier condemned what it called "serious military and security threats" and predicted more such tests. Prime Minister Hwang Kyo-ahn, who is also the acting president, said his country would punish North Korea for the missile launch.

In previous Security Council actions on North Korea, the United States and China, a neighbor and ally of Pyongyang, have been the key negotiators.

China said Monday that the root cause of North Korean missile launches is friction with the United States and South Korea. Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said China opposed the launch.

North Korea already has a variety of land-based missiles that can hit South Korea and Japan, including U.S. military bases in those countries. It has also successfully tested a submarine-launched missile and development of such missiles would add a weapon that is harder to detect before launch. **AP**

INDONESIA

Defeat for Ahok in Jakarta would further embolden hard-liners

RESIDENTS of Jakarta vote today in an election for governor that has become a high-stakes tussle between conservative and moderate forces in the world's most populous Muslim nation. Religion and race, rather than the slew of problems that face a car-clogged and sinking Jakarta, have dominated the campaign.

The Jakarta vote is by far the most heated of the more than 100 elections for mayors and governors that will be held in Indonesia today. Voters are polarized about incumbent Jakarta Gov. Basuki "Ahok" Tjahaja Purnama, a minority Christian and ethnic Chinese,

who is on trial for allegedly blaspheming the Quran.

Ahok, the first ethnic Chinese governor of Jakarta and the first Christian in more than half a century, had seemed unassailably popular until the accusation of blasphemy, a criminal offense in Indonesia, surfaced in September. Protests against him in November and December, organized by hard-line Islamic groups, drew hundreds of thousands to Jakarta's streets and shook the centrist-minded government of President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo.

Ahok's blasphemy trial and the ease with which hard-liners attracted huge



Incumbent Jakarta Governor "Ahok" Purnama (right) and his deputy and also running mate Djarot Saiful Hidayat pose for photographers

crowds to protest against him have undermined Indonesia's reputation for practicing a moderate form of Islam. Calls for Ahok to be killed and anti-Chinese sentiment were disturbing elements of the protests, one of which turned violent, with dozens injured and one person dying from the effects of tear gas.

Defeat for Ahok would

further embolden hard-liners, who say a non-Muslim should not lead Muslims, though also deprive them of the cause celebre that has allowed them to capture a national stage. The governorship is also seen as a launching pad into national politics and possibly the presidency.

Ahok rose from deputy governor in 2014 after

Jokowi, who was Jakarta governor at the time, won the presidency. Middle class Jakartans adored Ahok, 50, for his campaign against corruption and efforts to make the city livable. But brutal demolitions of some of the slum neighborhoods that are home to millions and ill-considered outspokenness on sensitive issues would become his Achilles' heel. Opponents seized their moment last year when a video surfaced of Ahok telling voters they were being deceived if they believed a specific verse in the Quran prohibited Muslims from electing a non-Muslim as leader. That led to the blasphemy charges and mass protests that sunk him in the polls, though his support has risen again following a series of televised debates.

Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono, a former army major is the son of ex-President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyo-

no. Local media say he was instructed by his father to resign from the army and campaign for governor. The photogenic 38-year-old surged to a lead in opinion polls during the anti-Ahok protests in November and December, which were also given vocal backing by his father. He performed poorly in the televised debates and recent polls show his support melting away. He attended mass prayers Saturday at Jakarta's Istiqlal Mosque, where clerics urged people to vote for Muslim candidates.

Anies Rasyid Baswedan is a political party hopper who was education minister in Jokowi's government until being dumped in a reshuffle last July. Baswedan, 47, unsuccessfully sought to be the candidate for Yudhoyono's Democratic Party in the 2014 presidential election and then joined Jokowi's campaign team. **AP**

USA | PROFILE

Flynn, fired once by a president, now resigns to another

Stephen Braun &
Robert Burns, Washington

FIRED by one American commander in chief for insubordination, Michael Flynn has now delivered his resignation to another.

President Donald Trump had been weighing the fate of his national security adviser, a hard-charging, feather-ruffling retired lieutenant general who just three weeks into the new administration had put himself in the center of a controversy. Flynn resigned yesterday [Macau time].

At issue was Flynn's contact with Moscow's ambassador to the United States. Flynn and Ambassador Sergey Kislyak appear to have discussed U.S. sanctions late last year, raising questions about whether he was freelancing on foreign policy while President Barack Obama was still in office and whether he misled Trump officials about the calls.

The center of a storm is a familiar place for Flynn. His military career ended when Obama dismissed him as defense intelligence chief. Flynn claimed he was pushed out for holding tougher views than the Obama administration about Islamic extremism. But a former senior U.S. official who worked with Flynn said the firing was for insubordination, after the Army lieutenant general failed to follow guidance from superiors.

Once out of government, he disappeared into the murky world of mid-level defense contractors and international influence peddlers. He shocked his former colleagues a little more than a year later by appearing at a Moscow banquet headlined by Russian President Vladimir Putin. Given a second chance by Trump, Flynn, a lifelong if apolitical Democrat, became a trusted and eager confidant of the Republican candidate, joining anti-Hillary Clinton campaign chants of "Lock Her Up" and tweeting that "Fear of Muslims is RATIONAL."

As national security adviser, Flynn required no Senate confirmation vote or public vetting of his record, and his tenure was brief but turbulent.

The Washington Post and other U.S. newspapers, citing current and former U.S. officials, reported last week that Flynn made explicit references to U.S. sanctions on Russia in conversations with Kislyak. One of the calls took place on Dec. 29, the day Obama announced new penalties against Russia's top intelligence agencies over allegations they meddled in the U.S. election process to help Trump win.

While it's not unusual for incoming administrations to have discussions with foreign governments before taking office, the repeated contacts just as the U.S. was pulling the trigger on sanctions suggests Trump's team might have helped shape Russia's response. They also contradicted denials about such discussions of the sanctions by several Trump administration officials, including Vice President Mike Pence.

Flynn later backed off his adamant denials. On Friday, he said he "no recollection" of discussing sanctions policy but "can't be certain," according to an official, who wasn't authorized to speak publicly on the matter and demanded anonymity.

He apologized to Pence, who, apparently relying on Flynn's denials, vouched for him on television. In his resignation letter, Flynn said he held numerous calls with the Russian ambassador to the U.S. during the transition and gave "incomplete information" about those discussions to Pence.

For days, Trump was publicly and unusually quiet on the matter. While his aides were declaring the president had confidence in Flynn, Trump privately told associates he was troubled by the situation, according to a person who spoke with him recently.

Flynn's sparkling military resume had included key assignments at home and abroad, and high praise from superiors.

The son of an Army veteran of World War II and the Korean war, Flynn was commissioned as a second lieutenant in May 1981 after graduating from the University of Rhode Island. He started in intelligence, eventually commanding military intelligence units at the battalion and then brigade level. In the early years of the Iraq war, he was intelligence chief for Joint Special Operations Command, the organization in charge of secret commando units like SEAL Team 6 and Delta Force. He then led intelligence efforts for all U.S. military operations in the Middle East and then took up the top intelligence post on the Joint Staff in the Pentagon.

Ian McCulloh, a Johns Hopkins data science specialist, became an admirer of Flynn while working as an Army lieutenant colonel in Afghanistan in 2009. At the time, Flynn ran intelligence for the U.S.-led international coalition in Kabul and was pushing for more creative approaches to targeting Taliban networks, including use of data mining and social network analysis, according to McCulloh.

"He was pushing for us to think out of the box and try to leverage technology better and innovate,"



Resigning adviser Michael Flynn speaks during a news briefing at the White House

McCulloh said, crediting Flynn for improving the effectiveness of U.S. targeting. "A lot of people didn't like it because it was different."

■ The center of a storm is a familiar place for Flynn. His military career ended when Obama dismissed him as defense intelligence chief

It was typical of the determined, though divisive, approach Flynn would adopt at the Defense Intelligence Agency, which provides military intelligence to commanders and defense policymakers. There, he quickly acquired a reputation as a disruptive force. While some applauded Flynn with forcing a tradition-bound bureaucracy to abandon old habits and seek out new, more effective ways of collecting and analyzing intelligence useful in the fight against extremist groups, others saw his efforts as erratic and his style as prone to grandstanding.

In the spring of 2014, after less than two years on the job, he was told to pack his bags.

According to Flynn's telling, it was his no-nonsense approach to fighting Islamic extremist groups that caused the rift.

A former senior Obama administration official who was consulted during the deliberations disputed that account. Flynn was

relieved of his post for insubordination after failing to follow guidance from superiors, including James Clapper, Obama's director of national intelligence, said the official, who asked for anonymity to discuss personnel matters.

Plunged into civilian life for the first time in 33 years, Flynn moved quickly to capitalize on his military and intelligence world connections and experience. He did so in an unorthodox way.

"I didn't walk out like a lot of guys and go to big jobs in Northrup Grumman or Booz Allen or some of these other big companies," Flynn told Foreign Policy magazine in 2015.

Instead, he opened his own consulting firm, Flynn Intelligence Group, in Alexandria, Va. He brought in his son, Michael G. Flynn as a top aide, and began assembling a crew of former armed forces veterans with expertise in cyber, logistics and surveillance, and sought out ties with lesser-known figures and companies trying to expand their profiles as contractors in the military and intelligence spheres.

One "team" member listed on the firm's site was James Woolsey, President Bill Clinton's former CIA director. Woolsey briefly joined Flynn on Trump's transition team as a senior adviser, but quit in January. Another was lobbyist Robert Kelley.

Kelley proved a central player in the Flynn Group's decision to help a Turkish businessman tied to Turkey's government. At the same time that Flynn was advising Trump on national security matters, Kelley was lobbying legislators on behalf of businessman Ekim Alptekin's firm between mid-September and December last year, lobbying documents show.

It was an odd match. Flynn has stirred controversy with dire warnings about Islam, calling it a "po-

litical ideology" that "definitely hides behind being a religion" and accusing Obama of preventing the U.S. from "discrediting" radical Islam. But his alarms apparently didn't extend to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government as it cracked down on dissent and jailed thousands of opponents after a failed coup last summer. Erdogan's power base is among Turkey's conservative Muslim voters and many affected by his crackdown are secularists.

Shortly before Trump's election, Flynn wrote an op-ed saying Turkey needed U.S. support and echoing Erdogan's warnings that a "shady" Turkish Muslim cleric living in Pennsylvania should not be protected by the United States. Erdogan accuses the cleric, Fethullah Gulen, of orchestrating the coup attempt and has requested extradition. Obama officials widely described Turkey's evidence of Gulen's wrongdoing as insufficient.

Alptekin, the businessman, told The Associated Press he met Flynn several times starting last summer. He wouldn't detail their conversations. Alptekin said he met mostly with Kelley, a former chief counsel to a congressional subcommittee, who registered with Congress as a lobbyist for Inovo BV, a company Alptekin established in the Netherlands in 2005. Alptekin also is a member of a Turkish economic relations board run by an Erdogan appointee, though he says he has no official relationship with Turkey's government.

Kelley said Flynn's consulting firm could help "do something about improving the relations between Turkey and the United States," Alptekin told the AP. He said he didn't consider any need for his firm or Kelley to register with the Justice Department as a "foreign agent in this context" because his firm was "not a government entity."

Kelley also was a registered foreign agent for the National Mobilization Force, a Turkish-backed militia fighting the Islamic State group in Syria. Documents filed with the Justice Department show Kelley was paid USD90,000 to "convey the views" of the armed group to Congress, federal officials and the media.

The Justice records do not cite any Kelley affiliation with the Flynn Group. But a December letter from Democratic senators Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., and Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., to top federal intelligence officials raised questions about whether Kelley inappropriately represented the militia on behalf of Flynn's firm, which they said raises "the potential for pressure, coercion, and exploitation by foreign agents."

Like many former military officials, Flynn boosted his profile by appearing on television news and talk shows, including several networks connected to foreign governments. They include Qatar-backed Al Jazeera and RT, the news network aligned with the Russian government. **AP**



Donald Trump (right) and Justin Trudeau shake hands during their joint news conference in the East Room of the White House

US-CANADA

Trudeau talks trade with Trump at White House

A political odd couple, President Donald Trump and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau resolutely played up their similarities at their first meeting, even as obvious differences lurked behind their public smiles.

After their White House meeting, the North American neighbors emerged to hail their

close ties, with Trump promising to "build upon our very historic friendship" and Trudeau noting the "special" bond between the countries.

But it was hard to escape their contrasting worldviews.

Speaking to reporters, Trump defended his restrictive refugee and immigration orders, saying that "we cannot let the wrong people in." Trudeau, on the other

hand, said Canada continues to "pursue our policies of openness."

Trudeau later acknowledged that there are times when the two countries differ. But he said, "The last thing Canadians expect is for me to come down and lecture another country on how they chose to govern themselves."

During their post-meeting news conference, the reporters Trump

called on did not ask about two pressing issues of the day - the future of embattled National Security Adviser Michael Flynn and North Korea's reported ballistic missile launch.

The stakes for Trudeau in his Washington visit are high: He is seeking to ensure Canada is not crippled as Trump re-negotiates the North American Free Trade Agreement. And he got much of what he was looking for. Trump praised the "outstanding" trade relationship between the United States and Canada and said he would only be "tweaking" it going forward.

"We'll be doing certain things that are going to benefit both of our countries. It's a much less severe situation than what's taking place on the southern border," said Trump, who has been strongly critical of America's trade situation with Mexico.

Trade relations with the U.S. are crucial to Canada as more than 75 percent of Canada's exports and 98 percent of its oil exports go to the U.S., while 18 percent of American exports go to Canada.

The meeting was billed as one of the most important for a Canadian leader with a U.S. president in decades because of Canada's heavy reliance on its southern neighbor.

Justin Trudeau, age 45, and Trump, age 70, have vastly different outlooks on the world.

Trudeau is a liberal who

champions free trade and has welcomed 40,000 Syrian refugees. He calls himself a feminist and women make up half his Cabinet.

Trump has few women in his Cabinet. He has taken a protectionist stance on trade and wants to crack down on the inflow of migrants and refugees. His order to temporarily halt entry into the U.S. by people from seven predominantly Muslim nations is currently tied up in court.

Trump already has been good for Canada as he has said he'll expedite approval of the Keystone XL pipeline. The pipeline from Alberta through America's mid-section would carry more than one-fifth of the oil Canada exports to the United States. Former President Barack Obama turned down the pipeline, a major blow to Canada's oil industry.

Canada has the third largest known oil reserves in the world and needs infrastructure to export its growing oil sands production. The country is America's largest supplier of foreign oil.

In addition to private meetings, the leaders held a roundtable discussion with female executives from the U.S. and Canada and announced a task force focused on women in the workforce.

Trump's daughter Ivanka Trump was in attendance at the meeting and helped recruit participants and set the agenda, fresh evidence of her policy influence. **AP**

AD

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what's ON



BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH - KOK HENG SUN PHOTOGRAPH EXHIBITION
TIME: 10am-7pm (Open on public holidays)
UNTIL: February 20, 2107
VENUE: UNESCO Centre of Macau, Alameda d'Assumpção NAPE
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2872 7066

TROPICALIA CLUB - EXHIBITION BY ALEXANDRE MARREIROS
TIME: 2pm-7pm (Closed on Sundays)
UNTIL: February 18, 2017
VENUE: Creative Macau, G Floor, Macau Cultural Centre, Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2875 3282

LOCAL GINGER - CENOZOIC GRAFFITI ART EXHIBITION
TIME: 11am-10pm
UNTIL: February 20, 2017
VENUE: Lakeside Gallery in the Anim'Arte NAM VAN
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6866

MACAU GIANT PANDA PAVILION
TIME: 10am-1pm and 2pm-5pm daily (Except Mondays, closed on the following day instead if a public holiday falls on Monday and no admission after 4:45 pm; six viewings per day)
VENUE: Seac Pai Van Park, Coloane
ADMISSION: MOP10
ENQUIRIES: Civil and Municipal Affairs Bureau (853) 2833 7676

WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR EXHIBITION
TIME: 10am-6pm daily, (Except Thursdays, open on public holidays)
UNTIL: February 21, 2017
VENUE: Macau Science Centre, Avenida Dr. Sun Yat-Sen
ADMISSION: Exhibition Centre MOP25; Planetarium MOP60-80
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2888 0822

TAK SENG ON PAWNSHOP
TIME: 10:30am-7pm daily (Closed on the first Monday of every month)
VENUE: No. 396 Avenida Almeida Ribeiro
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 7911

Offbeat

THAILAND HANDS OUT PRENATAL VITAMINS FOR VALENTINE'S DAY



Just in time for Valentine's Day, the Thai government is handing out pills it calls "very magical vitamins" to prospective mothers to boost the country's falling birthrate.

Government employees took to the streets of Bangkok yesterday to distribute 1 million baht's worth (USD28,600) of prenatal vitamins containing folic acid and iron to women between the ages of 20 and 34.

The giveaway is part of a program called "the campaign for red-cheeked Thai women to have children for the country using very magical vitamins."

Thai couples are getting married less often and later in their lives, meaning fewer children each year.

"The Thai way of life is changing," said Dr. Wachira Pengjuntr, director of the Department of Health. "Thai women are receiving higher education and the newer generation are placing a higher value on being single."

Thailand's population grew only 0.4 percent in 2015, down from 2.7 percent in 1970.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	RTPi Live
15:20	Champions League: Benfica - Dortmund (Repeated)
17:00	Criminal Minds S.8
18:20	Precious Pearl (Repeated)
19:10	TDM Interview (Repeated)
19:40	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Non-Daily Portuguese News
21:40	Tax Havens Of The Rich And Powerful Exposed
22:10	Next in Line
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Champions League Highlights
00:40	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:15	RTPi Live

cinema



CINETEATRO

15 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

LOVE CONTRACTUALLY

ROOM 1

7:30pm

Director: Liu Guonan

Starring: Sammi Cheng, Joseph Chang

Language: Cantonese

Duration: 98min

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



1971 D-DAY DELIVERS NEW UK CURRENCY

The British Government has launched a new decimal currency across the country.

The familiar pound (£), shilling (s) and pence (d) coins are to be phased out over the next 18 months in favour of a system dividing the pound into units of ten, including half, one, two, five, ten and 50 pence denominations.

Chairman of the Decimal Currency Board (DCB) Lord Fiske told reporters: "The general picture is quite clear and the smooth and efficient changeover so many people have worked for is now in fact being achieved."

But he expected it would take several months to adapt the five million machines affected by the new coinage.

According to Chairman of the Joint Trade Committee of the London Cab Trade, John Welland, it will take 15 months to convert all the fare meters for London's 9,000 taxis.

Banks have been closed for the past two working days to prepare for the implementation of the new currency on what has become known as D Day.

Some traders - such as luxury London department store Fortnum and Mason - have been well-prepared for the switch, with dual pricing on many items.

But reporters noted some men have continued to spend their old pennies in the public lavatories in Piccadilly.

Chairman of the British Bankers' Association decimalisation committee, Bernard Sharpe, made clear old coins would not last.

"There is no case whatever for the retention of the sixpence in a decimal currency system, except for sentimentality for the 'dear old tanner'," he said.

A few market-stall holders were concerned by the size of the new halfpenny, but Lord Fiske explained: "It is not unduly small by world standards.

"It has an important role to play particularly in price-shading of low-priced goods."

Work on the new system began in earnest in March 1966 when the Treasury made the practical and legislative preparations for setting up a Whitehall department a year later.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

A survey carried out by the British Market Research Bureau on D-Day showed 12% of the 1,040 questioned thought money had been unfairly converted, but the majority were satisfied with pricing.

Secret British Government documents published on the 30th anniversary of decimalisation revealed the concerns the Decimal Currency Board had about the changeover.

They included rejection by public transport workers and problems if the Queen died unexpectedly before the new coins were fully circulated.

The 20 pence piece was introduced in 1982.

The half penny was withdrawn from circulation in 1984.

A smaller, lighter 10 pence piece was circulated from 1993 and similar changes were made to the 50 pence in 1998.

In June 1998 the £2 coin came into general circulation.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 You're more observant than usual, especially when you stand to benefit from your discoveries...

Taurus April 20-May 20 The chickens are coming home to roost, so get out there and make sure that chicken coop is ready for guests...

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Sometimes things really are just as good as they look! Today you are surprised to find that the substance of an attractive person matches up to his or her image...

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 The more you strive to be number one, the less fun you seem to be having. Is this really how you want to be spending your time?

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 You begin to understand a vast, underlying pattern later in the day. It's even easier to excel when you understand why it's happening...

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Are you the hunter or the hunted today? Sometimes your position changes depending upon what you are looking for...

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Get ready to be a part of the action today. You enter a period of leadership where all eyes will be on you. You depend on others for affirmation even as they look to you for guidance...

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 If the task proves to be too much for one person to handle alone, find allies to help you enact your changes. Be careful not to stay with the process you set in motion...

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Spend some time in a natural environment today. Take a long walk in the park or visit a nature conservatory. Even sitting in your own backyard is better than staring at the television or computer screen...

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Old challenges turn into new obstacles today. Business issues rise to the surface as you are faced with a seemingly insurmountable hurdle. Be prepared for any contingency when asking for assistance...

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Sometimes there's nothing you can do about a situation. Get over what you can't change, or your fixation about it will eat you alive. While it isn't like you to give up, you also know when you can't win...

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 Don't forget that every action has an equal and opposite reaction. Yielding to temptation today might lead to a consequence that could have been easily avoided. Be especially conscious about what you eat and drink...

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 Sudoku grid for 'Easy' level with some numbers pre-filled.

Easy+

9x9 Sudoku grid for 'Easy+' level with some numbers pre-filled.

Medium

9x9 Sudoku grid for 'Medium' level with some numbers pre-filled.

Hard

9x9 Sudoku grid for 'Hard' level with some numbers pre-filled.

WEATHER

Table with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION

CHINA

Table listing weather conditions for various Chinese cities like Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, etc.

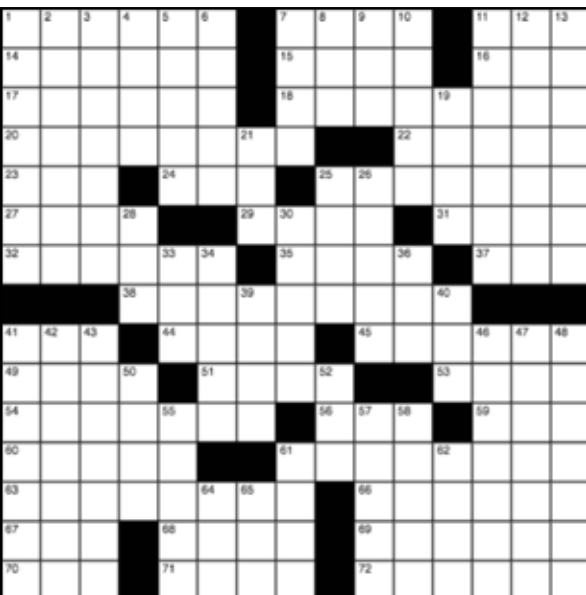
WORLD

Table listing weather conditions for world cities like Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, London, New York.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Clown; 7- "Alice" diner; 11- Short haircut; 14- Obscure; 15- Send forth; 16- "Wheel of Fortune" buy; 17- Head cases?; 18- Treacle; 20- Leaping marsupial; 22- Spoil; 23- Besides; 24- 1860s insignia; 25- Third son of David; 27- Shool; 29- Political satirist Mort; 31- Pro (proportionally); 32- Wood spirit; 35- Vietnam neighbor; 37- Cartoon Chihuahua; 38- High speed motorboat; 41- Turkish general; 44- Air-filled rubber hoop, become fatigued; 45- Of occult character; 49- Floating vegetable matter; 51- Clotted blood; 53- Thrust; 54- Social outcasts; 56- Airline to Oslo; 59- Heston's org.; 60- my case; 61- Native of Moorea; 63- South American herder; 66- Be right with ya; 67- pig's eye; 68- Couturier Cassini; 69- Recoll; 70- Nada; 71- Slammin' Sammy; 72- Beset;

DOWN: 1- Male donkey; 2- Fallibility; 3- Public disgrace; 4- Strong taste; 5- Early computer; 6- Brings up; 7- Office note; 8- Funnyman Phillips; 9- Like Abner; 10- Data; 11- Situated at the bottom; 12- Monotonous; 13- Wedding VIP; 19- German river; 21- Western Hemisphere org.; 25- Captain of the Pequod; 26- Plant flower; 28- Boob tubes; 30- Birch family member; 33- Fitting; 34- Sound of a horse; 36- Express; 39- Archer of myth; 40- Recipe abbr.; 41- Pain and fever tablet; 42- Monetary unit of Paraguay; 43- Situated near the kidneys; 46- Republic in N Africa; 47- Sharon, e.g.; 48- Space surrounding an altar; 50- It may be compact; 52- Conductor - Pekka Salonen; 55- Dumas dueler; 57- Now, in Nogales; 58- Trig functions; 61- Garment of ancient Rome; 62- Mrs. Dick Tracy; 64- "Hold On Tight" group; 65- Hi-;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222
Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993
Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333
Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944
S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
IACM 28 387 333
Tourism 28 333 000
Airport 59 888 88



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Real estate listings for Nova Taipa Tower 29, Taipa Warehouse, Nova City Penthouse, Nam Long (J Unit) Old Taipa, Jou Fai Kuok, St Pauls Ruin's, Hellene Gardens, Manhattan - B unit, House, Hac Sa Beach.



Jim Vertuno, Austin

A federal judge on Monday refused to block the government's USD100 million lawsuit against Lance Armstrong, putting the former cyclist on course for trial in a 2010 case stemming from his performance-enhancing drug use.

The lawsuit was filed by Armstrong's former U.S. Postal Service teammate Floyd Landis. The federal government joined in 2013 after Armstrong publicly admitted he cheated to win the Tour de France seven times from 1999-2005. Armstrong was stripped of those titles and banned from competition.

Armstrong has also taken huge hits financially, losing all his major sponsors and being forced to pay more than \$10 million in damages and settlements in a series of lawsuits. The Landis lawsuit would be the biggest by far, and the ruling from U.S. District Judge Christopher Cooper in Washington was a major setback for Armstrong with a trial most likely in the fall.

Landis, himself a former doping cheat who was stripped of his 2006 Tour de France title, sued Armstrong under the federal False Claims Act, alleging Armstrong and his team committed fraud against the government when they cheated while riding under the Postal Service banner. According to court records, the contract paid the team, which was operated by Tailwind Sports Corp., about \$32 million from 2000 to 2004. Armstrong got nearly \$13.5 million.

Lance Armstrong loses bid to halt USD100 million lawsuit

AP PHOTO



Lance Armstrong

The law allows Landis and the government to sue to get that money back and for "treble" damages, or triple the amount, and Armstrong could be forced to pay all of it. Landis stands to receive up to 25 percent of any damages awarded.

Armstrong claims he and the team don't owe the Postal Service anything because the agency made far more off the sponsorship than it paid. Armstrong's lawyers have introduced internal studies for the agency that calculated benefits in media

exposure topping \$100 million.

The government has countered that the negative fallout from the doping scandal tainted the agency because of its association with Armstrong.

Cooper's ruling said Armstrong makes a "persuasive case," but that any decision on damages should be left to a jury.

"Giving Armstrong 'credit' for the benefits he delivered while using [performance-enhancing drugs] could be viewed as an unjust reward for having successfully concealed his doping for so

long," Cooper wrote. "[But] disregarding any benefits USPS received from the sponsorship could bestow the government with an undeserved windfall. The same could be said of Landis, whose role in this entire affair some would view as less than pure."

Landis attorney Paul D. Scott said he was delighted to see the case move toward trial.

"The finish line for Mr. Armstrong [...] is fast approaching," Scott said.

Armstrong attorney Elliot Peters said the court's decision laid

out Armstrong's case, even as it let the lawsuit proceed.

"There is no actual evidence of any quantifiable financial harm," to the Postal Service, Peters said. "So the government may now proceed to a trial that, as a practical matter, it cannot win."

Armstrong had been one of the most popular sports figures on the planet before his cheating confession. His personal story of recovering from testicular cancer that had spread to his brain, while forcefully denying persistent rumors of doping, had built his Lance Armstrong Foundation cancer charity into a \$500 million global brand and turned him into a celebrity.

The foundation, which removed him from its board and renamed itself Livestrong, has struggled in the aftermath as donations and revenue plummeted.

Armstrong's team was already under the Postal Service sponsorship when he won his first Tour de France in 1999. The media frenzy that followed pushed the agency to sign the team for another five years.

Armstrong's cheating was finally uncovered in 2012 when the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency, armed with sworn testimony from Landis and other former teammates, moved to strip Armstrong of his titles. **AP**

FOOTBALL

United and Spurs resume Europa League with renewed interest



Manchester United's Paul Pogba

Justin Palmer, London

THE Europa League is often viewed as an unwanted distraction by English Premier League managers as they chase a more prestigious Champions League place.

But while finishing in the top four still remains the priority, the incentive of a ticket into the Champions League for the Europa League winner, introduced in 2015, has changed per-

ceptions.

Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho and Tottenham boss Mauricio Pochettino can agree on that.

Their clubs head the betting to lift the Europa League trophy after it resumes on Thursday.

United host France's Saint-Etienne, and Spurs travel to face Belgium's Gent in last 32 first-leg matches.

Mourinho said in November that giving the

winner of the Europa League a Champions League place gave the competition a "different meaning," and he was unlikely to field a weakened side despite United's hectic fixture schedule.

As well as chasing a top four spot in the Premier League - United is in sixth place - it has reached the fifth round of the FA Cup, and plays in the League Cup final against Southampton on Feb. 26.

The prospect of United's Paul Pogba, the world's most expensive player, coming up against his older brother Florentin, a defender for Saint-Etienne, has given the game an extra edge.

"It's something for the

whole family to enjoy because I don't know if it will happen again," Florentin told UEFA.com.

"My parents will have mixed feelings because whatever happens there will be one winner and one loser. However, there are two winners because this game will be an unforgettable occasion."

Spurs enter the Europa League after being eliminated from the Champions League in the group stage, and Pochettino, like Mourinho, has more of a positive view of the competition now.

"We need to think of it as a good opportunity to win a trophy," he said.

Selected other last 32 matches:

Villarreal vs Roma

Spain's Villarreal, which reached the semifinals last season before losing to Liverpool, would have hoped for an easier draw than Roma.

Luciano Spalletti's Roma, second in Serie A, has won eight of their last nine matches in all competitions. They possess one of Europe's leading marksmen in Edin Dzeko, who netted his 25th goal of the season last weekend. Dzeko, however, will not take a penalty should Roma be awarded one having missed his last two spot-kicks.

Borussia vs Fiorentina

Germany's Borussia had the misfortune to be paired with Barcelona and Manchester City, as well as Celtic in its Champions League group, but still picked up five points from six games.

Borussia has never lost a home game against Italian opponents, and has a new coach in the

dugout since the group stage finished; Dieter Hecking replaced Andre Schubert.

Celta vs Shakhtar

Shakhtar (2009) is one of seven former UEFA Cup and Europa League winners in the round of 32, along with Tottenham (1972, 1984), Borussia Moenchengladbach (1975, 1979), Anderlecht (1983), Ajax (1992), Schalke (1997) and Zenit St Petersburg (2008).

Shakhtar is the only side to win all six of its group stage fixtures and averaged 3.5 goals per game

Anderlecht vs Zenit

Zenit's new signing, Branislav Ivanovic, was a Europa League winner with Chelsea in 2013. The Serbian defender scored the winning goal in stoppage time to defeat Benfica in the final. In midfielder Giuliano, Zenit has the joint leading scorer in the competition with six. Athletic Bilbao's Aritz Aduriz also has six. **AP**

Alexis Tribouard

HE'S the guy Mexicans love to hate: An American pro wrestler has become a sensation in Mexico City by adopting the ring persona of a flamboyant Donald Trump supporter.

Sam Polinsky, aka Sam Adonis, revels in being a target for "luche libre" fans who use him as a stand-in for the new U.S. president, whose pledges to step up deportations, build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border and lure jobs back to the U.S. have earned the anger of Mexicans like no president before.

The crowd at the capital's Arena Mexico erupts in screams, boos, jeers and sarcastic whistling when Adonis appears wearing a Trump-esque orange tan, his blond locks streaming from a head band and waving an American flag emblazoned with a photo of Trump. "Out! Out!" the crowd screams.

The native of Pittsburgh came to Mexico last year and the Trump campaign gave him the unparalleled chance to play the ultimate ring villain.

"Right now, I would be considered by the Mexican public as the most malicious bad guy they have," Polinsky said with a smile before a match Sunday that — spoiler alert — he predictably lost.

Polinsky is happy to endure the boos in pro wrestling's high-camp show of good vs. evil — and Mexico's "luche libre" has the added long tradition of foreign villains.

"I'm very proud of the fact

In Mexico, pro wrestler enjoys drawing boos with Trump flag



Pro wrestler Sam Polinsky waves an American flag emblazoned with a photo of U.S. President Donald Trump in Mexico City

that I am able to evoke a genuine hatred, a genuine hate which is generally lost in professional wrestling due to the fact that most people realize that it is what it is — it's more along the lines of a show," Polinsky said.

There is little doubt he gets a rise out of the crowd.

Wrestling fan Gerardo Romero was among those booing Sam Adonis. "There is a lot of ill will for Trump's character, and because of that every time they hit him, we enjoy it," Romero said.

But it's all about the show, as Trump himself knew during his involvement with U.S. pro wrestling in the 1990s and

2000s.

"It's no different than Spiderman or Batman. You need a very, very bad villain in order to invoke the sympathy for the hero," Polinsky said. "As I see it, the more malicious, the more evil I can be for the Mexican public, the happier the Mexican public are when they see their Mexican heroes destroy the enemy."

Which is just what happens, of course. Wrestlers working under the names of Blue Panther, Triton and Drone took apart Sam Adonis and his trio of allies with a battering combination of flying kicks and "back breakers."

Fan Rafael Martinez, who wore

a white-and-gold mask to the match, explained the crowd's reaction. "What a lot of people think is that if they're expelling Mexicans from the United States, then why do we want them (Americans) here."

But even though Sam Adonis has had vile epithets, popcorn and beer thrown at him in the ring, it's all show in the end.

"The truth is, we Mexicans are very open to foreigners," Martinez said. "We are a warm people."

Polinsky attests to that. "I can honestly say I'm pretty surprised how the Mexican public comes to me after each event," he said.

"Those same people that can't scream enough, can't get their emotions out enough, are the first ones to come up to me and ask for a picture with their kid, or the first ones to shake my hand and say, 'Hey, great show.'"

In the end, he adds, he is helping the fans. "I can whip up a frenzy in the arena that no other wrestler can, getting people to forget about their jobs, forget about their problems at home for that 25 to 30 minutes in the ring. All that they care about is getting their frustrations out on Sam Adonis in the ring, and for that I'm proud," Polinsky said. "What they want to say to Donald Trump they can say to me and feel good about it."

As for the president, Polinsky said he doesn't agree with all of Trump's pronouncements, particularly his criticisms of Mexico, but he still admires aspects of the leader's approach.

"I embrace the fact that he is a villain," the wrestler said. "He's going to do what he has to do and what he thinks is right. If you don't agree with him, that doesn't really bother him. He's going to push forward with what he thinks is right, and the fact that he's embraced his public perception, whether it's good or bad, I have respect for that." AP

Spanish football sees major drop in doping tests

POLITICAL stalemate in Spain and failure to reach a deal with football's governing bodies have damaged efforts to maintain doping tests in the Spanish league.

Only 57 doping tests have been carried out in Spain's first division this season, according to the country's anti-doping agency, while more than 400 players have seen action in over 200 matches so far.

In 2015, Spain's anti-doping agency carried out 889 doping tests in the top two divisions of Spanish football and the Copa del Rey tournament, an average of 74 a month.

Questions from The Associated Press regarding when those 57 tests were carried out and if testing in football is still continuing were not immediately answered by the

agency.

Equally worrying for WADA, the world's anti-doping agency, those 57 tests in the first six months of the season were done while Spain remains non-compliant with WADA's stricter standards.

WADA called the lack of tests in a football league that boasts such star talents as Lionel Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo and Neymar "alarming."

"The lack of testing in a country with one of the leading football leagues worldwide for a period of almost 12 months is alarming, and will do little to instill confidence in clean sport at a time when it is needed most," WADA said in a statement.

Spain's anti-doping agency said that the Spanish government is close to ending an almost

year-long wait to bring its doping legislation up to WADA standards. The government had been unable to act following a political deadlock in parliament caused by two inconclusive elections that finally gave way to a new government in October.

Spain's anti-doping agency said that, unlike in football, it succeeded in reaching agreements with the international governing bodies of other sports to assist in maintaining doping testing during the past year.

Its efforts, however, to strike such a bargain with both FIFA and UEFA failed.

"Both federations declined to sign the agreement," the Spanish agency said in a statement. "FIFA understood that its jurisdiction was limited to countries' national teams, while UEFA un-

derstood that its jurisdiction was limited to clubs playing in UEFA competitions" such as the Champions League and Europa League.

"Therefore, no agreement was reached in football so that one of the international federations assumed responsibility for monitoring doping in Spanish football," the agency said.

The Spanish league refused to comment on the tests when questioned by The AP. Spain's football federation also did not issue a comment, saying it was a matter for the league.

WADA criticized the lack of a deal.

"It is deeply disappointing that some international federations did not sign the agreement, as this has prevented effective anti-doping programs from being run

at the national level in Spain," it said.

The Spanish anti-doping agency said that Spain's own anti-doping laws have continued to be enforced during this time. None of the 57 tests in football came back positive.

FIFA and UEFA have also continued to test for doping in international competitions held in Spain, including the Champions League, Europa League and Spain's national team.

In 2013, Spain passed a sweeping anti-doping law to much fanfare, but it was left out-of-date when WADA's anti-doping code was revised in 2015.

WADA declared Spain "non-compliant" in March after the country failed to adapt its law because its caretaker government was unable to

pass new legislation for 10 months.

WADA also suspended the accreditation of the Madrid drug-testing lab in June, dealing another blow to the country which has long been under scrutiny following the long-running Operation Puerto doping scandal that implicated some of the world's top cyclists. Spain's other doping laboratory in Barcelona remains in operation.

Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy was finally able to cobble together support to form a minority government in October, clearing the path for new legislation.

The Spanish anti-doping agency said that new anti-doping legislation is close to being presented to parliament for its necessary approval to become law. AP

opinion

Macau Matters

Richard Whitfield



FIXING MACAU'S BROKEN TAXI SYSTEM

There is ample evidence that the government managed and regulated system of taxi services in Macau is totally broken. A cursory analysis leads me to believe that a major overhaul is needed, and this article summarizes my thinking on what should be done. Admittedly, my analysis is cursory (and I would be very happy to do a much more in-depth study if somebody is willing to pay me to do it!).

I recommend that they change the system to regulate drivers and not taxis. The current system whereby the government sells high-priced taxi licenses to investors who then hire drivers introduces a totally unnecessary middle-man who skims off much of the system's profits.

I further recommend that they replace the antiquated taxi metering and radio dispatch systems with a modern Uber-like system for calling taxis, determining distance traveled, calculating fares and accepting payments, and reviewing the performance of both drivers and customers. But this electronic taxi management system should be run as a public monopoly, rather than as a private business like Uber. This would also cut out another useless middle-man that also skims profits from the system - the taxi management companies.

I also recommend removing the system of regulated, fixed fares - with modern technology it is quite feasible for customers and drivers to negotiate a price for each ride using an auction style system which would automatically increase fares during peak periods while reducing them at off-peak times.

And finally, we need to get rid of these silly laws about not taking photos/videos/audio recordings of taxi drivers. Drivers should accept that they may be recorded as part of their licensing, because they are important for proving cases of inappropriate driver behavior. (Passengers should also accept that they may be recorded as part of the conditions of riding in a taxi - so that bad passenger behavior can also be recorded.)

In my proposed taxi services system, a small government monopoly would manage the computer systems underpinning taxi services for a small, regulated profit. This system would be mobile phone App and cloud-based and not require any specialized technology (no taxi meters, radio calls, etc). Drivers would be required to undergo extensive training and good character checks before being licensed to driver passengers and would be required to have liability insurance (like doctors). Their performance would be periodically reviewed to maintain their license, and passenger reviews would be an important part of their assessment. Drivers would be able to use any vehicle as long as it met minimum safety requirements, which would be monitored by the regular inspections.

The existing taxi radio dispatch companies would no longer be needed - and good riddance because they currently provide very poor service. It has been years since I could get an answer from the taxi phone numbers, let alone have them get a taxi to my location. The taxi license owners would also be eliminated. All they have ever done is take a substantial part of drivers' income without adding any value to the system. Finally, "bad apple" drivers would be quickly eliminated by bad passenger reviews and recordings of their bad behavior.

The existing industry players - radio dispatch companies, taxi owners and "bad apple" drivers have created the taxi system mess we have now and deserve no sympathy or support. Uber has proven that a much better system is possible and that the technology already exists. What is stopping Macau from leading the world in developing and regulating a "next generation" system for providing public taxi services? The only thing that seems to be holding us back is a government with no vision that is timidly unable to stand up to a few undeserving bad actors in the existing system.

THE BUZZ DISNEY ENDS DEAL WITH YOUTUBE STAR OVER ANTI-SEMITIC STUNT

Disney's Maker Studios and Google's YouTube are distancing themselves from a top YouTube star after he made jokes construed as anti-Semitic and posted Nazi imagery in his videos.

Felix Kjellberg, known online as PewDiePie, has the most popular YouTube channel, with more than 53 million subscribers. The Swedish YouTube star rose to fame by posting videos of him playing and commenting about video games. More recently, he branched out into non-gaming videos that show him performing skits, stunts or making jokes.

Disney, whose Maker Studios runs Kjellberg's channels and network, said he crossed the line with some of his videos. One video from January shows two Indian men paid by Kjellberg to hold up a sign that says "Death to all Jews." Kjellberg said the video was meant to demonstrate how far people will go if they get paid to do something, but he didn't think they would actually do it. Other videos show Nazi imagery in a satirical way.

In blog post Kjellberg said he was making jokes, but realizes now that they were offensive.

Nevada lawmaker seeks precautionary ban on human microchips



Alison Noon, Carson City

Computer chips that store personal information and could be used to pinpoint someone's location could not be implanted in humans without consent under a bill Nevada state lawmakers weighed yesterday [Macau time].

Lawmakers on a judicial panel considered whether Nevada should join at least four other states in banning mandatory identification markers in people as a precaution to keep the emerging technology from creeping into workplaces, prisons or hospitals.

Republican Sen. Becky Harris of Las Vegas, sponsor of the legislation, said she's worried computer chips could pose serious risks to human rights and public health.

"This is a completely new issue," Harris said. "I just want a safety measure in place until we better understand the technology and the reasoning behind people's desire to require implanting chips."

ACLU of Nevada Policy Director Holly Welborn said there's no impending need to protect people against mandatory microchipping, but there's no question the technology would violate rights to personal autonomy and privacy.

"There really aren't, under any circumstance, any justifications for that type of a tracking device on a human being," Welborn said.

The chips are currently used to track goods, find lost pets and make no-swipe credit card purchases.

Sean Sullivan, Washoe County deputy public de-

fender, said the bill may also prohibit radiologists from using tattoos as permanent identifiers of where on patients to aim treatment. Others voiced concerns that it would forbid families and legal guardians of Alzheimer's patients from deciding to put computer chips in those patients, who often wander in later stages of the disease.

The Senate Committee on Judiciary did not vote on Senate Bill 109.

Radio frequency identification or RFID technology can be encapsulated in glass tubes roughly the size of two grains of rice and can be injected under skin.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the chips for use in humans in 2004. Two employees at an Ohio-based surveillance company stirred public debate in 2006 when they embedded the chips in their forearms to access protected vaults and police images.

Wisconsin, North Dakota, California and Oklahoma subsequently enacted legislation banning any required implantations, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Welborn said municipalities in Canada, Sweden and Australia have considered, but not enacted, laws mandating the chips for certain groups, such as criminals considered a potential threat to society. AP

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

WORLD BRIEFS

PAKISTAN Markets and businesses are closed across much of the country's Punjab province in mourning for 13 people killed in a suicide bombing claimed by a breakaway Taliban faction.



THAILAND-US — The highest-ranking U.S. official to visit Thailand since a 2014 coup urged the country to restore democracy while reaffirming the partnership between the two nations, saying America needs "a strong and stable ally" in Southeast Asia.

MYANMAR A court in western Myanmar sentenced to death a man arrested for his part in an attack on a border guard post that triggered a crackdown by security forces on the country's Muslim ethnic Rohingya minority.

THE PHILIPPINES' environment chief ordered 75 mining contracts canceled because the projects are located in watersheds, intensifying her crackdown against mines that she says harm the environment.



CONGO Witnesses say at least four people have been killed in a police clampdown on a separatist political and religious group in Congo's capital. A police operation against members of the Bundu Dia Mayala movement at its founder's home left at least two members dead, according to witnesses. Jean Onema Wembo, mayor of the Ngiri-Ngiri commune south of the capital, said two others were killed elsewhere in clashes between police and suspected members.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Xinhua/Huan Yuelian



A couple holding their marriage certificates pose for photos at a marriage registration center in Wuxi, east China's Jiangsu Province. Many couples registered for marriage on Valentine's Day.