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A report on inequality in Indonesia says its four richest men now have more wealth than 100 million of the country's poorest people

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

Legal Regime of Medical Malpractice
Effective from 26th February 2017

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Gov't shelves urban renovation plan

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WORLD BRIEFS



CHINA The defense ministry says it expects economic growth and a strengthened social security system to solve problems faced by former soldiers, following reports of new street protests by disgruntled veterans who say they've been denied their promised retirement benefits.
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THAILAND The Supreme Court upholds but reduces the jail sentence of a magazine editor who is currently the longest-serving prisoner convicted of lese majeste — insulting the monarchy. The court cut to seven years the 11-year sentence given in 2011 to Somyot Pruksakasemsuk (pictured), who was the editor of a magazine found to have published two articles deemed insulting to the royal family.

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Malay police not seeking help from Macau

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INSIDE

Economy shrinks by 2.1 percent in 2016

The economy of Macau shrank by 2.1 percent year-on-year in real terms last year, an apparent improvement from the 21.5 percent drop in 2015. In 2016, GDP amounted to MOP358.2 billion and per capita GDP was MOP554,619 (around USD69,372). As announced by the Statistics and Census Service, the economy contracted by 9.7 percent in the first half of the year, followed by a rebound of 5.7 percent in the second half. Regarding the fourth quarter of 2016, the gross domestic product expanded by 7 percent year-on-year in real terms. The GDP growth was higher when compared with the 4.4 percent growth in the previous quarter.

Tourist spending up last year

Total visitor spending (excluding gaming expenses) amounted to MOP14.79 billion in the fourth quarter of 2016, up by 13.3 percent year-on-year and 1 percent quarter-to-quarter. The total spending of overnight visitors (MOP12.02 billion) and same-day visitors (MOP2.77 billion) increased by 15.8 percent and 3.6 percent, respectively, year-on-year. For the whole of 2016, total visitor spending reached MOP52.66 billion, up by 3 percent from MOP51.13 billion in 2015. Total spending of overnight visitors (MOP42.10 billion) increased by 4.8 percent, while that of same-day visitors (MOP10.56 billion) dropped by 3.6 percent. Visitors spent mainly on shopping (44.3 percent), accommodation (26.9 percent) and food and beverages (20.8 percent).

2.8 million tourists in January

Tourist arrivals in January 2017 increased by 17.6 percent year-on-year to 2.8 million as the Lunar New Year, which fell in February last year, occurred partly in January this year. According to data released by the statistics bureau yesterday, visitor arrivals went up by 2.2 percent compared to December 2016. Overnight visitors increased by 18.9 percent year-on-year to 1,363,046 while same-day visitors rose by 16.4 percent to 1.5 million. The number of visitors from mainland China increased by 20.4 percent year-on-year to 1,997,355 in January, with those travelling under the Individual Visit Scheme (1,128,516) surging by 43.8 percent. Mainland visitors came mainly from Guangdong Province (991,220) and Hunan Province (70,718). Visitors from the Republic of Korea (81,448) and Hong Kong (527,218) both increased by 17.6 percent while those from Taiwan (84,263) dropped by 2 percent.

LILAU SQUARE

IC: Urban renovation plan not on the table

Daniel Beitler

THE government has abandoned an urban renovation plan for Lilau Square after the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) expressed concerns regarding the protection of cultural heritage in the area.

The plan, initially unveiled in December 2012, was intended to refresh the historic neighborhood and introduce a new dynamic to the area through a repurposing of its buildings, based on the successful transformations of historic neighborhoods in other territories.

A senior official from the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) said in 2014 that the buildings located near Lilau Square would likely have their original architecture and appearances maintained, but their purpose would now be geared toward housing the cultural industries.

However, according to information provided by the IC, the DSSOPT plan has been cancelled following concerns expressed by cultural authorities in the city.

"At that time, an urban revitalization plan was put in motion for the area surrounding Lilau Square and the Mandarin's House by the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau. The Cultural Affairs Bureau, one of the members of the [working] group, expressed its views about the protection of cultural heritage in what concerned the plan at the time," clarified an IC representative in the statement. "There is no renovation plan for the area surrounding Lilau Square at present."

The DSSOPT did not reply to an enquiry by the Times by press time.

One of the most iconic buildings in the area is Lilau mansion, located on number 37-49, which will host a number of open-house events on Sunday to help with the sale of the heritage site. Bidding will start at HKD250 million which, according to event organizers iAOHiN Gallery, will make the mansion the most expensive townhouse



Several Lilau Square buildings have been closed for decades

ever sold in Macau.

The IC is rumored to be an interested buyer, partly due to the fact that the Bureau currently owns nearly all other historic buildings in that area. However, IC representatives denied having any knowledge of an intention to bid for the premises.

"The Cultural Affairs Bureau [has] not received any information regarding the sale of No. 37

and 49 galleries located at Lilau Square [and] there is no acquisition plan yet," said a Bureau representative.

The owner of the building, local real estate developer Isabel Chiang, announced her plans to sell the two art galleries, "37" and "49," that together comprise the mansion, as they have become too expensive to maintain.

Chiang is known for her in-

volvement in the acquisition of several buildings in Macau's historical areas. She has said that she wants to see the space used for cultural events and heritage seminars in the future.

As previously reported by the Times, the property had been mortgaged twice, once in 2014 and then again the next year for a combined total of HKD90 million.

Building to host series of activities



The Lilau mansion which will host a number of open-house events on Sunday

A series of cultural activities, celebrating Lilau Square's long heritage, will be held on Sunday, including special events, a live painting demonstration, concerts, sculpture and jewelry

exhibitions and a tour of Lilau mansion. Organizers explained that the activities are being held with the additional purpose of attracting potential buyers. Among the participants in Sunday's sequence of activities there will be the president of the Association for Macanese Education, Miguel Senna Fernandes, and the architect behind Lilau Mansion's renovation project, Francisco Vizeu Pinheiro, who will both hold talks on Macau's cultural heritage.

A display of bronze sculptures by renowned French sculptor Jacques Le Nantec will also be exhibited at the mansion on Sunday. The sculptor has a studio in Rua de Lilau, close to the building. Moreover, a live painting demonstration by Tibetan artist Tashi Norbu has been organized for the day. The artist, who exhibited in Macau in April last year, will once again fly from the Netherlands, this time around to demonstrate live the painting of his work, "Fire Rooster," on a large canvas.

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Mainland rules for HKZM bridge

The Transport and Housing Bureau delivered a legal document to Hong Kong's Legislative Council (LegCo) proposing that cars drive on the right side of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge's Hong Kong section. According to an earlier report by Apple Daily, the bureau delivered the amended policy to LegCo for approval for road safety reasons. The report claimed that if drivers change lanes from right to left when they enter the Hong Kong section while driving at high speeds, it could lead to accidents.

Gongbei border recorded 137 million crossings in 2016

Gongbei Customs announced that the Gongbei border gate recorded 137 million crossings last year, according to a report by TDM. The department also supervised 138 tonnes of cargo passing through the border, with the inspected products estimated to be worth RMB400 billion. At the same checkpoints, Macau imported products worth more than RMB42.6 million under the Closer Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), representing an 11 percent increase year-on-year. Customs disclosed that the tariff concessions amounted to nearly RMB1.9 million for imports through CEPA.

Primary school student injured by classmate

On Wednesday afternoon, a fifth-grade student inflicted a three-inch-deep cut on a classmate in retaliation for the classmate's alleged damage to their workbook, according to a report by TDM. The perpetrator was taken to the police station. The Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) said that the injured student has since returned home after receiving medical care at the hospital. DSEJ has asked the school to submit reports regarding the attack and to provide help to students who witnessed the incident.

KIM JONG NAM MURDER

Police not seeking help in Macau, N. Korea denies involvement



A member of the United Malays National Organization holds a placard to protest against the killing of Kim Jong Nam outside North Korean Embassy

MALAYSIA'S national police chief Khalid Abu Bakar says help has been sought from Interpol to issue an alert for the four North Korean suspects who left Malaysia on the same day Kim Jong Nam, a half brother of North Korea's leader, was killed.

It is not known what Interpol can do, as the four are believed to be back in Pyongyang and North Korea is not a member of Interpol.

Khalid also said there were no plans to send officers to Macau to collect a DNA sample from

Kim Jong Nam's family. Kim had a home in Macau and was about to fly there when he was killed.

North Korea denied yesterday that its agents masterminded the assassination of the half brother of leader Kim Jong Un, saying a Malaysian investigation into the death of one of its nationals is full of "holes and contradictions."

The North's response came a day after Malaysian police said they were seeking two more North Koreans, including the second secretary of North Korea's em-

bassy in Kuala Lumpur, in connection with the Feb. 13 killing of Kim Jong Nam at a Malaysian airport.

Malaysia police have not directly pinpointed North Korea as being behind the death of Kim Jong Nam, but have already arrested a North Korean man working at a Malaysian company along with three other Southeast Asian people. They are searching for several more North Koreans.

The Korean Jurists Committee, a legal body affiliated with North Korea's rubber-stamp parliament, said in a statement yesterday that the Malaysian investigation lacks fairness and was influenced by the South Korean government, which blames Pyongyang for the death.

The North has not acknowledged that the dead man is Kim Jong Nam. Yesterday's statement described the man only as a North Korean citizen bearing a diplomatic passport.

It said that South Korea had "kicked up a fuss" and had plotted to have North Korea blamed for the killing.

"The biggest responsibility for his death rests with the government of Malaysia as the citizen of the DPRK died in its land," the statement said. The DPRK refers to the Democratic People's Re-

public of North Korea, the country's official name.

Malaysian police said Wednesday that the two women suspected of fatally poisoning Kim Jong Nam were trained to coat their hands with toxic chemicals and then wipe them on his face.

Police say the substance used remains unknown, but it was potent enough to kill Kim before he could make it to a hospital.

The biggest responsibility for his death rests with the government of Malaysia as the citizen of the DPRK died in its land.

KOREAN JURISTS COMMITTEE

But the North Korean Embassy in Kuala Lumpur has already ridiculed the police account and demanded the immediate release of the two "innocent women."

An embassy statement asked how the women were able to survive if they also had the deadly toxins on their hands.

Malaysian police said the women washed their hands soon after poisoning Kim.

Khalid said the women had practiced the attack at two Kuala Lumpur malls. "We strongly believe it is a planned thing and that they have been trained," he said.

Khalid couldn't confirm whether North Korea's government was behind Kim's death but added, "What is clear is that those involved are North Koreans."

At least one of the women has said she was tricked into attacking Kim Jong Nam, believing she was taking part in a comedy prank TV show.

The case has perplexed toxicologists, who question how the two women could have walked away unscathed after handling a powerful poison.

Kim had spent most of the past 15 years living in China and Southeast Asia. He was at the airport to fly to Macau, where he had a home. He is believed to have had at least three children with two women. No family members have come forward to claim the body. AP

Kim Han Sol thrust into spotlight

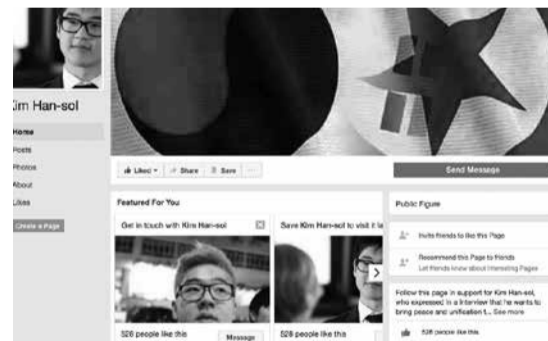
THE son of Kim Jong Nam – the North Korean leader's half-brother, who was allegedly assassinated in Kuala Lumpur International Airport earlier this month – has been thrust into the spotlight as international observers speculate whether the 21-year-old student could be a target on Pyongyang's list.

Having previously indicated his desire to return to North Korea to improve the country, Kim Han Sol could one day become a potential challenger to both his uncle, Kim Jong Un, and even the regime itself.

Perhaps equally as elusive as his father, Kim Han Sol was born in Pyongyang in 1995, before his family relocated to Macau following his father's exile. There, he lived what he described as a "low-profile life," in a rare 2013 interview granted to a Finnish television station.

The interview, where Kim referred to his uncle as a "dictator" and expressed his wish to contribute to the unification of North and South Korea, is one of the elements of a Facebook page created in support of him. The page features pictures of the South and North Korean flags assembled and an informal picture of Kim with dyed yellow hair.

Kim was reportedly refused a student visa by the Hong Kong government when trying to enter the prestigious and high-perfor-



ming Hong Kong school, Li Po Chun United World College. The reasons for denying him entry are unclear.

Kim was later accepted into Oxford University, but ultimately did not enrol due to fears for his safety.

According to South Korea's intelligence agency, Kim Han Sol's sister and mother – the second wife of Kim Jong Nam – are believed to live in Macau, while his first wife and possibly other relatives currently reside in Beijing under China's protection.

It also remains unclear whether Kim Han Sol and his immediate family are residents of Macau. A statement from the Office of the Secretary for Security declared that security services in Macau would strive to protect all residents, workers and visitors in the city. DB



**NEW FLAVOURS
AT MGM**

New MGM restaurants serve up northern and southern Chinese cuisines.

Following a USD7 million renovation, MGM has re-branded Square Eight as two new restaurant concepts serving traditional fare from China.

The restaurants are named North and South and serve authentic dishes at customer-friendly prices. Both eateries feature live cooking stations and classic décor specific to each region.

North serves 52 dishes from northern and central China, cooked by specialists from around the region. Dishes on offer include cold cuts, meat, noodles, congee and dumplings from Beijing, Shanghai, Sichuan, Xinjiang and other cities. A selection of live seafood is also available.

Highlights of North's menu include marinated baby cabbage with sesame sauce, pork and chive dumplings, braised sea cucumber, Shaanxi flat noodles and the restaurant's specialty, poached perch with garlic chili sauce.

MGM describes North's interior design as a "contemporary take on Beijing's siheyuans (courtyard houses) with windows that overlook sister restaurant South."

Aside from wall art commissioned from local artist

Victor Marreiros - which depict Northerners in different historical eras - the restaurant's centerpiece is a live noodle station where diners can watch chefs pull and cut noodles in the traditional style.

True to its name, neighboring restaurant South specializes in southern Chinese fare, namely dishes from Guangdong Province and the port city of Hong Kong.

South's menu is more extensive than its northern counterpart, with 82 dishes on offer. These include braised beef brisket, dim sum and soup, as well as barbecued meats. Among South's many signature dishes are the supreme seafood congee, marinated cuttlefish tossed in XO sauce, and cordyceps flower salad with black fungus.

The restaurant also features a roast goose station and a semi-open wok kitchen where chefs stir-fry noodles, rice and vegetables. Its layout is inspired by the southern Chinese landscape, brought to life with art by calligrapher Mok Wa-Kei.

Chef Louie Vong, Executive Chef of Chinese Culinary at MGM, said the new restaurant concepts were part of the resort's continual efforts to offer more choices for customers, while maintaining its focus on "quality, authenticity, freshness and affordability" of food.



北廚
NORTH
by Square Eight



南苑
SOUTH
by Square Eight

North and South are open for business seven days a week. North is open from 11:00 am to 1:00 am daily, while South operates 24 hours a day

Located along the Macau Peninsula waterfront, MGM is a Forbes Five-Star luxury integrated resort with a lineup of popular and award-winning restaurants.



EDUCATION

Talk on cerebral palsy to inspire people overcoming challenges

RENATO MARQUES



Joan Latta

Renato Marques

International speaker and trainer Joan Latta visited The International School of Macao (TIS) yesterday to deliver a talk on the importance of overcoming personal challenges.

United Kingdom-based Latta is well known for her talks about personal challenges, based on her own life with cerebral palsy (CP).

“It is an absolute privilege to be here and do what I’m doing. My key aim is to inspire, educate and spread the message about cerebral palsy,” Latta told the Times. She was appreciative of the opportunity to speak with young people, observing that the more educated and aware newer generations are, the more inclusive they can be.

When asked about the motto she wishes to convey to

others, Latta said, “If I can do it, so can they. No matter what obstacles you have, you can still overcome them.”

“I get a lot of positive feedback from my talks. Normally after a talk people start to follow me on [social media platforms] and keep up to date with what I’m doing,” she said. She adds that although her main talk is always the same, she does make adjustments according to the audience.

“No matter what obstacles you have, you can still overcome them.”

JOAN LATTA

She began her talk with an explanation of CP and her experience with it, which led to the development of a variety of permanent disorders that mostly affected her movement.

“In my case, at birth, I was starved of oxygen for about half an hour and the doctors said, she’ll never do anything. It took a lot of work to overcome cerebral palsy and to become who I am today,” Latta said, explaining what

her online awareness awakening and education platform, “Cerebral Palsy Alive and Kicking” is all about. She runs this company on her own.

Latta admitted that she enjoys speaking to the younger generation because “as [they] grow-up they will learn more about CP, realize that is OK to be different and will find it easy to tackle prejudice.”

Latta uses her life as an example that all can follow. Despite the daily difficulties stemming from her diagnosis, she graduated from a mainstream school and completed a degree in science.

But Latta’s success has not been restricted to proving her intellectual capabilities. She has undertaken a series of physical challenges, including running long distances of around 30km in under four hours, and participating in a hiking event in which she completed over 1,000km in 10 weeks.

Latta’s talk, organized by TIS Inclusion Academy, also marked the debut of the school’s new black box theatre.

TIS opens new space ‘where ideas can be exchanged’

The International School of Macao (TIS) recently inaugurated a new space dedicated to promoting students’ interactions with the community, as explained to the Times by Head of School Howard Stribbell.

“The Black Box Theatre is a new addition we have to our North Wing and it really gives us an opportunity to showcase students’ talents and to engage in conversation,” he said.

“Students can put together a play or some musical presentation, but we also can bring in guest speakers and engage with the students back and forth [...] we intend for it to be a unique



Howard Stribbell

space where ideas can be exchanged.”

The head of the school said the theatre would be “a very economical way of doing such things because it’s just four basic walls and some seating... but you can transform it into whatever you need it to be. It gives you a lot of flexibility.”

Fashion market developing, say student enthusiasts

Lynzy Valles

From Japanese culture and electronic music to architectural structure and the natural environment, ten graduates from the “Diploma Programme for Fashion Design and Manufacturing 2015/2016” drew inspiration from diverse sources to produce trendy garments.

The students used various techniques such as indigo dyeing, digital fabric printing and 3D printing.

Winners of the diploma programme told the Times about the difficulties of starting a career in Macau’s fashion industry due to a lack of resources.

The designers also expressed doubts over whether they would succeed in the industry, as most locals prefer purchasing clothing online and stores that sell Japanese or Korean-influenced styles.

Celestino Maria Cordova, the “First Overall Winner,” who also won the Academic Award, noted that shoppers tend to purchase items online out of convenience.

He also said China’s online retailers sell clothing replicas and pieces at relatively lower prices, which he told the Times was “dragging the whole industry down.”

“Consumers can buy clothes that are more fashionable and cheaper. [...] They

don’t want to get to know what designers are offering them,” Cordova lamented.

Cordova also suggested that designs are becoming indistinguishable because retailers only want styles that have been proven to be popular with the masses.

On the other hand, Cordova is looking to establish his own brand in the near future, which he hopes will give fashion enthusiasts in the region more options.

Meanwhile, Yuna Leong and Mickey Che – respectively the second and third “Overall Winners”, respectively – said it would take some time for them to settle in the fashion industry.

Leong, who also won “Best

Color Coordination”, expressed her belief that Macau’s fashion industry has been continually developing despite its small size.

She told the Times she has no plans to establish her own brand, but intends to stay in the fashion industry even though “there are still many things to consider such as capital and rent.”

Commenting on the region’s fashion industry, Che, who also won the “Grand Trendy Award”, remarked, “It’s quite optimistic compared to the past because more people now have their own style.”

Victoria Kuan, senior manager of the Creative Fashion and Image Depart-



Celestino Maria Cordova (left) and Yuna Leong

ment at Macau Productivity and Technology Transfer Center (CPTTM), noted that the course offered a strong marketing and branding module.

Kuan believes that the government has significantly assisted aspiring fashion designers by launching pro-

jects and subsidies to help promote their works.

Thirteen pieces by the graduates will be displayed at the Macao Fashion Gallery until March 26. The exhibition is titled “Transformation – Works Exhibition of Diploma Course in Fashion Design and Manufacturing.”

Power consumption hits record high

POWER consumption in Macau hit a new record high in 2016, increasing by 5.8 percent to 5,255 GWh. Bernie Leong, Chairman of Companhia de Electricidade de Macau (CEM) Executive Committee, attributed the increase to the opening of new integrated resorts in Macau, during the power company's media spring lunch yesterday at Wynn Palace.

According to data released by CEM, the cost of local power generation was lower than that of imported electricity from the mainland, leading to an increase in local power generation by 4.3 percent in 2016.

However, local power generation only accounts for 15 percent of total power consumption of Macau. Power imported from mainland China in 2016 increased by 6 percent, amounting to 82 percent of total power consumption.

Reviewing the utility company works during 2016, Leong said that in order to improve the power supply in old districts, six new transfor-



Bernie Leong

mer substations were built: three at Rua de Cinco de Outubro, one at Rua da Praia do Manduco, and two at Taipa's Rua do Cunha. CEM set up more electric vehicle charging stations in 2016. According to the company, a total of 71 such stations are now available in 18 public car parks in Macau.

Assuming that more power is needed in Macau, Leong said that a third interconnection with China Southern Power Grid will be built, increasing total capacity by 33 percent. He also said that they expect

to demolish the Macau power plant within 18 months.

CEM expects to demolish the Macau power plant within 18 months.

CEM has been in talks with the MSAR government to build a new power plant in Coloane. **PB**

'Sands Lifestyle' loyalty program launched

Lynzy Valles

SANDS China, in collaboration with ICBC and MasterCard, launched a new credit card loyalty program this week, "Sands Lifestyle," presented as the first scheme of its kind in Greater China.

The newly launched credit card enables cardholders to earn points while shopping in and across the region, and to redeem their points within Sands China's integrated resorts.

Cardholders can earn up to five times more when shopping at Sands Resorts Macao.

Considering the benefits that come with combining a rewards program with the functionality of a payment card, "Sands Lifestyle," the three companies stated that the program appeals to both families and non-gaming visitors.

Initially the program will only be available for cardholders living in Macau and Hong Kong.

"We finally now really have a platform for customers from Macau and Hong Kong to come here and earn points while they're spending [...] we're really sort of monetizing and creating value and loyalty around all these great benefits," said Dave Horton, global chief marketing officer of Las Vegas Sands and Sands China.

"In the 10 years [since] we've opened, you couldn't really earn certain points for [hotel bookings, shopping and dining] and so this has been a key initiative of ours and finding the right partners about the right scale and working with ICBC and MasterCard," he explained.

Meanwhile, the program also marks the launch of MasterCard's Pay with Rewards in Asia Pacific, providing cardholders with the choice to spend their points at the moment of purchase, instead of using cash or credit.

The gaming operator also introduced the ICBC credit card kiosk, the machine for



"Sands Lifestyle's" real time card issuance for Macau cardholders.

The kiosk will enable instant enrolment and physical card issuance. Once registered, cardholders can apply for or receive a credit limit increase to enable them to spend, earn and redeem rewards.

Horton confirmed that the program offers benefits including hotel stays, dining, shopping, events and entertainment.

Discounts on accommodation packages, ferry tickets and holiday packages with Cotai Travel are also included.

The program will have three levels of co-branded credit cards, namely Sands Lifestyle Classic Card, Sands Lifestyle Platinum Card and Sands Lifestyle World Card.

Special introductory offers during the first three months will also be available to cardholders, such as acquiring round-trip Cotai Class tickets on Cotai Water Jet when MOP5,000 or more is spent.

Ling Hai, co-president of Asia Pacific MasterCard said, "It is an honor for MasterCard to celebrate yet another milestone in China with our partners to help cardholders benefit from payment solutions that are faster, safer, more secure, more convenient and more rewarding."

Furthermore, president of ICBC Card Center, Wang Du Fu, noted that the launch of the new program is influential in expanding its advantages in the leisure and tourism industry. He added that their collaboration with the gaming operator is an achievement that will result in a win-win business relationship.

10th MIECF edition focused on 'green innovation'

THE 2017 Macau International Environmental Co-operation Forum and Exhibition (MIECF) will take place from March 30 to April 1. This year's theme is "Innovative Green Development for a Sustainable Future."

To commemorate the event's 10-year milestone, the three-day event will include activities such as a "Green Showcase," a "Green Forum," "Green Matching" and a "Green Public Day."

According to a statement issued by the organizers, the theme for the 10th edition of the fair was chosen in response to a global environmental campaign that aims to make green innovation



the main driving force of social development. It also complements the key development guidelines of mainland China's 13th Five-Year Plan.

The event will further deliver on the region's role as a platform for co-operation and exchange between the Pan-Pearl River Delta Region and international markets.

The "Green Forum" will

focus on a range of innovations and trends related to topics including coastal development, green buildings, industrial development and climate change.

This year's "Green Showcase" will help promote the latest green building materials and other innovative eco-friendly products and solutions.

Together with the "Online Business Matching Service Platform," the 2017 MIECF will promote regional environmental business exchanges and collaboration.

The "Green Public Day" will not only open MIECF's doors to the community, but also host a series of parent-child activities, the statement

added.

These will help the public learn more about the growing international trend for awareness of environmental protection issues, thus encouraging the public to take the initiative in putting eco-friendly concepts into everyday practice.

Last year's event attracted more than 215 organizations, with the theme revolving around waste management.

MIECF has hosted a total of 60 forums for sectorial professionals have been held over the past nine years. More than 240 co-operation agreements have been signed, of which more than 90 percent have been implemented.

Pop Up Canada event held for second year

POP Up Canada, a two-day promotional event organized by the Consulate General of Canada in Hong Kong and Macau, was held on Wednesday and yesterday in the territory for the second consecutive year this week. The event seeks to promote investment, visitation and education opportunities between Canada and Macau.

"Macau is a promising market for Canadian products and services and cultural and academic exchanges," said Secretary for Administration and Justice Sonia Chan speaking at the event, according to a press release from the organizers. "The rising imports from Canada to Macau reflect the existence of a bounty of business opportunities in this region."

This year, Canada will celebrate 150 years since the pas-

sage of the British North American Act, which established the country as a self-governing entity.

Chan also commended the Canadian people for their contributions to science, which include the discovery of insulin to treat diabetes in 1922, and the discovery of stem cells in 1963. She said Canada "ranks among the highest in international measurements of government," including government transparency, civil liberties, economic freedom and quality of education.

The MSAR shares a history of educational exchange with Canada, and is home to a sizeable Canadian population. The International School of Macau employs several teachers from Canada, while the first chief executive of Macau, Edmund Ho, studied there.

REAL ESTATE MATTERS

Common misconceptions about renting a property in Macau - Part 5

Juliet Risdon is a Director of JML Property and a property investor.

Having been established in 1994, JML Property offers investment property & homes. It specializes in managing properties for owners and investors, and providing attractive and comfortable homes for tenants.

www.JMLProperty.com info@JMLProperty.com



JULIET RISDON

When you consider the rental process usually involves at least two different languages (sometimes three), it's not surprising that misunderstandings are commonplace. This list of common misconceptions may look innocent enough, but the difference in expectation is usually the source of major rental conflicts, and one that could be easily avoided with a little more clarity up front. Carrying on from last week, we continue with some of the most common misconceptions...

I can use the security deposit to pay the last two months rent. No. Deposits may not be used to cover rents.

A deposit is for the fixtures, fittings and furnishings of the property. Macau Law is very specific about this.

The moment that a rent is unpaid for 30 days, the landlord is entitled to the amount of rent owed plus an additional penalty equal to 100 percent of the rent.

In other words, if you don't pay rent for the last two months, you will owe four months rent. If this goes into the courts and remains unpaid, a person returning to Macau risks being detained at immigration.

The owner is responsible for looking after my rental apartment? The tenant is responsible for the safekeeping and care of the contents of the apartment, and returning the apartment in the same condition that it was handed over with an

allowance for reasonable wear and tear. The owner is responsible for the infrastructure of the apartment such as the shell of the apartment itself, the plumbing system, the provision of power etc. In other words, providing reasonable and safe conditions for habitation.

I will rent an apartment for three months only. Yes, it is possible, but unlikely.

There is usually great difficulty attached to renting an apartment for less than six months. Most owners consider it too much trouble, and many agents refuse to handle such short leases.

However, it is possible to rent for shorter periods using a Corporate Rental program.

Under the program, the rental agreement is signed under the company name, and the agreement provides the tenant with more flexibility than a traditional long-term lease.

The owner has lots of money. They are being greedy asking for a higher rent. You will already be aware that property prices are high in Macau, and in most cases owners have had find large chunks of cash to purchase properties.

Even with interest rates at a current low, the vast majority of owners do not receive enough rent to cover loan payments, and must therefore subsidize the mortgage every month. Many such owners are individuals,

but they may have borrowed money from family members and put themselves in long-term debt in order to 'get a foot on the property ladder'. Whilst it may be difficult to feel sorry for landlords, it is wise to recognize the need for both parties in the relationship. Without an owner who is willing to risk investing money in a property in which they don't live, of course there would also be no tenant.

24. I'm only here for a short time, so I won't buy anywhere.

As long as you think long-term, it's still a good time to buy in Macau. You may plan to be here for a short time, but plans change, and even if they don't and you end up leaving, your property investment can continue with you as an overseas owner.

As more new casinos and resorts take shape on Cotai, the demand for housing will increase as the population grows.

Property of a 'livable' quality is in short supply, and basic economics tell us that prices will continue to rise.

However, rising prices cannot continue indefinitely, and we are currently experiencing a slowdown of course. But we have to live somewhere, and it makes good financial sense to own the property we live in.

Apart from anything else, we are at least in control of our living arrangements, and not looking for a new place to live every two years.

Continued next week...

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GAMING

Packer accelerates Crown makeover as CEO leaves, IPO scrapped

Brett Foley, Angus Whitley

BILLIONAIRE James Packer accelerated his restructuring of Crown Resorts Ltd., replacing the chief executive officer and scrapping a hotels listing as the casino operator seeks to recover from a gambling crackdown in China.

John Alexander, who's worked for the Packer family for almost two decades and was named Crown chairman last month, will also take over the CEO role from Rowen Craigie next week, the company said yesterday. The concentration of power reflects Crown's tighter focus on its Australian operations, after a group of employees were detained on the Chinese mainland in October for alleged gambling-related crimes.

Crown shares soared in Sydney as it announced a special dividend and pushed on with a AUD500 million (USD384 million) stock buyback. That overrode investor concern about a slump in high-roller gambling stemming from Crown's crisis in



James Packer

China, said William O'Loughlin, an investment analyst at Rivkin Securities Pty in Sydney.

"If they're willing to pay that, then they're happy with their cash position," O'Loughlin said. "That buys a little bit of confidence. The decline in VIP revenue was probably well anticipated by the market."

Packer, whose investment company owns 48 percent of Crown, returned to the board last month and has made resolving the situation in China his top priority. The company has already scrapped

a spinoff of overseas assets and sold more than half its stake in Macau casino operator Melco Crown Entertainment Ltd. as it now focuses on its hotels and casinos in Australia.

Crown scrapped a proposed initial public offering of a trust holding the company's Australian hotels partly because it raised capital instead from the sale of Melco Crown shares.

The stock jumped 8.2 percent to AUD12.32 at 2:46 p.m. in Sydney as Crown announced a special dividend of 83 Australian cents a share. The stock climbed to the highest level since the China detentions, which raised concern of a renewed clampdown on overseas casino operators that woo Chinese citizens offshore to gamble.

Crown joined Australian rival Star Entertainment Group Ltd. in freezing its Chinese business until it grasps the scope of the Chinese clampdown. There's been no clarity on the employees being held and Crown has stopped marketing in the country, Alexander said.

John Alexander, who's was named Crown chairman last month, will also take over the CEO role from Rowen Craigie next week

"Frankly we look at that as a pause rather than a retreat," he told reporters in Melbourne. "We are waiting for clarity on China and the details behind that, but no intention to retreat from where we stand in the market."

Alexander said there were now 14 Crown employees being held in China after one was released. Crown, which initially said 18 had been detained, didn't explain the discrepancy.

Amid the crackdown, Crown

is pushing ahead with a AUD2 billion luxury hotel and casino on Sydney's waterfront - a six-star resort that's due to be completed in 2021 and will focus on high-roller gamblers. Crown is confident the project will be profitable, partly because it would be attractive to local gamers, too, Alexander said.

Mainland China represents less than half of Crown's VIP customer base, Alexander said. The other half is sprinkled between Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Hong Kong and other parts of North Asia, he said.

Earnings at Crown before significant items fell 9.1 percent to AUD191.3 million in the six months ended Dec. 31 as revenue at Crown's Australian resorts declined. Turnover from the VIP program dropped 45 percent to AUD 19.6 billion.

Star, which runs Sydney's only licensed casino, last week said total bets from Star's international VIP clients slumped 27 percent in November and December in the wake of the Crown detentions.

Bloomberg

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Chinese Basketball Association elects Yao Ming as president

YAO Ming has moved into management in a bid to hasten China's basketball development.

The Chinese Basketball Association voted unanimously to appoint former Houston Rockets star as its president yesterday, in a step toward reform for an organization which has in past been led by government bureaucrats.

The CBA's social media account quoted the Hall of Famer as saying he hoped to make improvements to the domestic league's draft system and push more Chinese players into the international arena.

In comments after the vote, Yao said he would introduce scientific training methods to Chinese clubs, improve the tactical education of players and forge exchanges with leagues in the United States, Europe and elsewhere.

"Our next move will be to borrow from international advanced experience, to thoroughly study China's actual conditions and carve ourselves a path of



innovation," Yao said. Reforms would cover all aspects of the game in China, from the national team to youth programs, he said.

Yao, 36, was one of the first Chinese athletes to become an international household name when the Houston Rockets drafted him with the first pick in 2002. The 2.29-meter (7-foot-6) center played for eight seasons in the NBA before retiring in 2011, citing chronic injuries.

A two-time Olympian, the

Shanghai-born Yao was elected to the Hall of Fame in 2016. In 2009, he purchased the Shanghai Sharks, his former CBA team.

Over the past decade NBA stars such as Stephon Marbury, Tracy McGrady, J.R. Smith and Gilbert Arenas have spent one or more seasons playing in the CBA as the league grew in prominence. But Chinese sports fans say the league could be made stronger still and their country's basketball talent pipeline remains underwhelming despite the sport's grassroots popularity.

Yang Ming, a Chinese sports commentator, praised the appointment of Yao over a government official, saying that Yao had broad experience as a player in the NBA and a CBA club owner.

"For many years we haven't seen any admirable or acceptable reform measures introduced by the CBA," Yang said. "Yao Ming is not only a brilliant player, but intelligent with his independent ideas." **AP**



After protest, defense ministry says will address army veterans' issues

Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

CHINA'S defense ministry said yesterday it expects economic growth and a strengthened social security system to solve problems faced by former soldiers, following reports of new street protests by disgruntled veterans who say they've been denied their promised retirement benefits.

The remarks came after cellphone video circulated online showing a large group of veterans in military fatigues walking through central Beijing on Wednesday and gathering outside the offices of the ruling Communist Party's corruption watchdog body.

Ministry spokesman Col. Ren Guoqiang said the government and the party are concerned about veterans' issues, but didn't say whether anyone had met with the protesters or whether any new policies were planned to assist them.

"The difficulties that veterans currently encounter will be gradually overcome," Ren said at a monthly news briefing.

It wasn't clear what the veterans' demands were, although many have long complained about pensions, access to health care and assistance in finding new jobs. Banners identified at least some in the group Wednesday as unemployed veterans from the eas-

tern port city of Yancheng. Reports of additional protests in Beijing yesterday could not immediately be confirmed.

Such protests have broken out around the country for decades, amplifying concerns over labor unrest and threatening to undermine rank-and-file support for Communist Party leader Xi Jinping's campaign to modernize the military by attracting better qualified and more highly motivated soldiers.

The government censors information about the protests and veterans are highly reluctant to discuss their plight with foreign media for fear of being accused of disloyalty.

Despite operating the world's largest standing army, with 2.3 million personnel, China doesn't have a central government body such as the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to handle welfare for former soldiers. Instead, cash-strapped local government offices are responsible for their welfare, and the type of benefits offered vary widely across the country.

Ren said Xi's plan to reduce the size of the armed forces by 300,000 by the end of the year was proceeding as planned. The downsizing is expected to shift the emphasis away from ground forces and toward the navy, air force and rocket force. **AP**

BAO BAO

US-born panda lands in Chengdu after leaving DC zoo

AN American-born panda started settling into her new home yesterday in southwest China where she will eventually join a breeding program.

Bao Bao was born at the National Zoo in Washington to panda parents on loan from China. Under an agreement between China and the U.S., such panda cubs must be returned to China before they are 4 years old, the earliest age at which they might begin breeding.

The 3-year-old landed in the city of Chengdu in Sichuan province on Wednesday after a 16-hour flight in a Boeing 777 emblazoned with a picture of a giant bamboo-eating panda. She was accompanied by a veterinarian panda keeper Marty Dearie from the National Zoo, which had put on six days of commemorations to mark her departure.

Transported to the nearby Dujiangyan panda breeding base, Bao Bao emerged from her crate looking somewhat timid and curious, but soon settled in with a snack of fresh bamboo, according to a news release from the China Conservation and Research Center for Giant Pandas.

Bao Bao, whose name means "precious" or "treasure," will first go through a month-long quarantine at the Dujiangyan



A staff member of Sichuan Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau checks the condition of giant panda Bao Bao upon her arrival in Chengdu

base, the research center said. Keepers will monitor her diet, activities and health during that time, including checking her blood and feces, it said.

"Once Bao Bao the panda completes this month of quarantine, she'll go on display to the public and I welcome everyone to come see her then," research center expert Li Desheng was quoted as saying in the news release.

A 100-square meter enclosure has been prepared for her at the base, including both indoor and outdoor play areas, equipped with rubber balls and a tires swing for entertainment and fresh bamboo and apples for eating.

Keepers will work on helping Bao Bao adapt to local bamboo and Chinese steamed bread made from corn, soybeans, rice and eggs, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

She is the 11th panda to be born overseas and returned to China, and since she does not understand commands in Chinese, she'll be looked after for a time by an English-speaking keeper, Xinhua said.

China's unofficial national mascot, giant pandas live mainly in the mountains of Sichuan, with some also found in neighboring Gansu and Shaanxi provinces.

They have long considered one of the world's most endangered animals, although last year a leading international group lowered its classification to "vulnerable."

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature cited conservation efforts that helped the wild panda population jump to 1,864 in 2014 from 1,596 in 2004. However, the Chinese government rejected the group's decision, saying the panda's status was no less serious because its natural habitats have been splintered by human and natural causes.

More than 200 giant pandas also live in captivity. **AP**

AP PHOTO



North Korean state media say China dancing to US tune

Eric Talmadge, Tokyo

NORTH Korea's state-run news agency issued a tough critique of China yesterday, suggesting Beijing's criticism of the North's recent missile test and suspension of imports of North Korean coal are tantamount to the actions of an enemy state "dancing to the tune of the U.S."

The article took a tone normally reserved for North Korea's overt enemies — Washington, Tokyo and Seoul.

Without directly using China's name, but referring to it as "a neighboring country, which often claims itself to be a 'friendly neighbor,'" the Korean Central News Agency report accused Beijing of essentially abandoning North Korea in favor of the United States by cutting off imports of coal in compliance with United Nations sanctions.

"This country, styling itself a big power, is dancing to the tune of the U.S. while defending its mean behavior with such excuses that it [the suspension of coal imports] was meant not to have a negative impact on the living of the people in the DPRK but to check its nuclear program," it said. DPRK is short for North Korea's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

It added that China has "unhesitatingly taken

inhumane steps" to comply with U.N. sanctions.

The article, uncharacteristically for the news agency, carried a byline, Jong Phil.

China on Sunday began a suspension of all coal imports from North Korea for the rest of the year as it increases pressure on it in line with U.N. Security Council sanctions imposed in November in response to the North's fifth nuclear test two months earlier.

China had already banned coal imports from North Korea in April last year, but those restrictions allowed some imports for civilian use. China is North Korea's largest source of trade and aid and the suspension will deprive the North of an important source of foreign currency.

North Korean coal exports to China totaled USD1.2 billion last year, according to Chinese customs statistics. U.S. officials say that represents about one third of North Korea's total export income.

Beijing has come under pressure from U.S. President Donald Trump to lean harder on North Korea, but says its influence is limited.

It has, however, also grown increasingly frustrated with North Korea's defiance of U.N. demands it end missile tests and development of nuclear weapons. **AP**

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INDONESIA

Four richest men wealthier than poorest 100 million

A report on inequality in Indonesia says its four richest men now have more wealth than 100 million of the country's poorest people.

The report released yesterday by Oxfam said Indonesia, with a population of more than 250 million, has the sixth-worst inequality in the world. Within Asia, only Thailand is more unequal.

It blames "market fundamentalism" that has allowed the richest to capture most of the benefits of nearly two decades of strong economic growth, concentration of land ownership and pervasive gender inequality.

The investment returns on the wealth of just one of the four richest, which according to the Forbes rich list include cigarette tycoons Budi Hartono, Michael



A young girl takes a break on a table at a slum near the main business district in Jakarta

Hartono and Susilo Wonowidjojo, would eliminate extreme poverty in a year.

The report said extreme poverty of less than USD1.90 a day in income has declined sharply since 2000 but 93 million Indonesians still live on less

than \$3.10, which is defined by the World Bank as the moderate poverty line.

Oxfam said social instability could increase if the government doesn't tackle the gap between rich and poor.

President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo has said that re-

ducing inequality is a top priority for his government. A 2015 World Bank survey showed high levels of public concern about the wealth gap.

The report said Indonesia's tax collection is the second-lowest in Southeast Asia and the tax system is "failing to play its necessary role in redistributing wealth."

To increase the tax take, so low spending on public services such as education and health can be increased, Indonesia needs a higher tax rate on the top incomes, higher inheritance tax and a new wealth tax, it said.

Tackling tax evasion is also crucial, Oxfam said, citing International Monetary Fund data that shows \$101 billion flowed from Indonesia into tax havens in 2015. AP

Cambodian court jails activist over melee at premier's house

A Cambodian court has sentenced a prominent land rights activist to 2 1/2 years in prison on charges of committing violence at a protest she helped lead outside of Prime Minister Hun Sen's residence three years ago.

Judge Long Kes Pirum of Phnom Penh Municipal Court found Tep Vanny guilty yesterday of aggravated intentional violence in the March 2013 incident in which several government security personnel were hurt.

Tep Vanny is known for demonstrating against evictions from the capital's Boeng Kak lake shore community, where the government granted a land concession to a Cambodian tycoon and a Chinese company to develop a luxury residential and commercial community.

The protest at Hun Sen's residence in Phnom Penh was one in a series demanding compensation for the Boeng Kak evictions. AP

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Rod McGuirk, Canberra

AUSTRALIA

Highest-paid public servant quits USD4.3 million job

AUSTRALIA'S highest-paid public servant announced his resignation yesterday, two weeks after a revelation that he made 5.6 million Australian (USD4.3 million) last year sparked a public furor and created a political headache for the government.

Australia Post managing director Ahmed Fahour said he was quitting the national mail service on the same day the government-owned corporation posted a profit of AUD131 million for the six months through December. The figure was a big jump from the AUD16 million profit the corporation made in the same half a year earlier.

The Lebanese-born former banker, 50, said he was leaving because Australia Post had transformed from a traditional mail service to a parcel and e-commerce business during his seven years at the helm.

His resignation was not caused by the widespread public outrage at his high salary, he said.

"Clearly, this has been a very difficult and emotional decision for me and my family. But I've come to the conclusion that the timing is right. As the half-year results show, the transformation has worked,"



Australia's Post chief Ahmed Fahour

Fahour said.

Fahour said he would leave Australia Post in July following the announcement of his successor.

The government later announced that an independent tribunal that decides the salaries of lawmakers, judges and go-

vernment department bosses will be given power to rule on how much Fahour's replacement is worth.

While the Australia Post board of directors will continue to decide the managing director's salary package, it will now have to persuade the

Remuneration Tribunal that the pay is consistent with what other senior public servants are paid.

Earlier this month, a Senate committee revealed Fahour's pay despite objections from Australia Post that making it public could damage the corporation's brand.

His AUD4.4 million salary plus an AUD1.2 million bonus in the last fiscal year was more than 10 times the prime minister's salary of AUD507,000.

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

Fahour said that Australia Post should not be compared to the loss-making U.S. Postal Service.

"They are a letters company and, by the way, they lose \$20 billion a year and have done so now for a number of years," Fahour said.

"That's not the right compa-

risson. We need to be compared to other parcels logistics companies, e-commerce companies - and those companies are global," he said.

When Fahour's pay was made public, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, a former merchant banker with a personal fortune estimated at exceeding AUD200 million, said he told Australia Post Chairman John Stanhope that the salary was too high.

"As someone who spent most of his life in the business world before I came into politics, I think that is a very big salary for that job," Turnbull told reporters.

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

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ISLAMIC STATE

US-backed Iraqi forces enter Mosul airport, military base

Qassim Abdul-Zahra & Sinan Salaheddin, Baghdad

BACKED by the U.S.-led international coalition, Iraqi forces fought their way yesterday into a sprawling military base outside of Mosul and onto the grounds of the city's airport, taking control of the runway amid fierce exchanges of fire with Islamic State militants.

The two-pronged advance is part of a major assault that started earlier this week to drive the Islamic State group from the western half of Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city.

The Iraqi federal police units, backed by regular army forces, entered the airport yesterday morning, according to two police officials who said heavy clashes were underway hours later with IS militants hunkered down inside several airport buildings.

The officials said troops from the U.S.-led coalition were with the advancing forces, though they didn't specify the nationalities of the foreign forces. They spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to reporters.

Private broadcaster Lebanon-based Al-Mayadeen aired live footage from the Mosul airport perimeter, showing a military helicopter buzzing overhead



Two policemen sit atop of their armoured vehicle as Iraqi Federal police deploy after regaining control of the town of Abu Saif, west of Mosul

and firing at IS positions as gunfire rattled.

By early afternoon, federal police commander, Maj. Gen. Raid Shakir Jawdat told the Iraqi state TV that his troops have control of "more than half" of the airport complex.

Separately, Iraqi special forces entered the Ghazlani military base next to the airport on the southern edge of the city, the spokesman of the Joint Military Operation Command, Brig. Gen. Yahya Rasool, told the AP.

Rasool said heavy clashes were underway inside the base. He did not provide more details.

On Sunday, after weeks of preparations, Iraqi forces officially launched the operation to take Mosul's western half, with the Iraqi regular army and federal police forces taking part in the initial push. Since then, the military says they have retaken some 120 square kilometers south of the city.

Yesterday marked the first time the Iraqi special forces, which

played a key role in securing the eastern half of the city, joined the fight for western Mosul.

"The counterterrorism forces will be an additional force, which will expedite the liberation of Mosul's western side," Rasool said.

Also yesterday, another counterterrorism unit captured a key village southwest of Mosul from where Islamic State group's snipers and shelling had been slowing the government offensive, Rasool added. IS had used

Tell al-Rayan to position snipers and fire off rockets and mortar rounds to derail the advance of the Iraqi troops, he said.

In January, Iraqi authorities declared the eastern half of Mosul "fully liberated" from IS. The battle for western Mosul, the extremist group's last major urban bastion in Iraq, is expected to be most daunting yet.

However, the streets are older and narrower in the western section of the city, stretching west from the Tigris River that divides Mosul into the eastern and western half. The dense urban environment will likely force Iraqi soldiers to leave the relative safety of their armored vehicles. The presence of up to 750,000 civilians will also pose a challenge.

Mosul fell to IS in the summer of 2014, along with large swaths of northern and western Iraq. But the Sunni militant group has since consistently lost territory as the U.S.-led coalition proved to be critical for Iraqi government efforts to claw back territory lost to the extremists.

Also part of the Mosul battle but on its fringes, are government-sanctioned paramilitary forces, made up mainly of Shiite militiamen.

The militias this week launched their own new push to capture IS-held villages west of Mosul. The efforts by the militias, an umbrella group known as the Popular Mobilization Forces, are likely coordinated with government efforts.

The capture of Mosul International Airport and the adjacent Ghazlani base would be a major boost for the Iraqi forces in the fight for western Mosul. The Shiite militias already hold a small airport outside Tal Afar, a city located west of Mosul toward the Syrian border. **AP**

CLAIMS of hacking by the Russian state may be feeding international tensions, but they've given Californian musician David Brown a great ice-breaker when selling his line of Russian-made microphones.

"We give free hacking lessons with these microphones," he tells potential buyers in Los Angeles. "Watch what you say because they never turn off."

Brown, who's often toured Russia with his band Brazzaville, teamed up with fan Pavel Bazdyrev in 2013 to start making top-end musical equipment in Bazdyrev's home city of Tula, which is dominated by the Russian defense industry.

Though the business climate is difficult, the costs are low and they were able to buy second-hand machinery from Kalashnikov plants. The

RUSSIA

American musician makes mics using Kalashnikov machinery



Californian musician David Brown inspects a microphone at a factory in Tula

result is a range of studio microphones that have found their way into Colddisplay and Radiohead's recording sessions, and are beating more established rivals on price.

It's a rare tale in Russia,

which has struggled for decades to diversify its economy beyond oil and gas, something former U.S. President Barack Obama recently drew on.

"Their economy doesn't produce anything that

anybody wants to buy except oil, gas and arms," he said in December. "They don't innovate."

As the country recovers from a brutal recession triggered by its dependence on the oil industry, President Vladimir Putin has often talked about making life easier for small businesses and other sectors. But reforms are often piecemeal or contradictory.

The experiences of Brown and Bazdyrev sum up many of the pros and cons of operating a small manufacturer in Russia.

The company, called

Soyuz Microphones, takes advantage of lower labor costs to undercut foreign competitors — Soyuz's top-of-the-range microphone costs USD3,500 against \$8,000 for rival models. It made its first mic prototypes in 2014 and sold 160 of the retro-looking items last year, enough to turn a profit.

"We're located in a regional Russian city where the salaries are much lower than they are in Moscow let alone in the West. Producing a mic in that way in America or in Europe would be prohibitive cost-wise," says Brown, who

visits Russia regularly to check on progress, while Bazdyrev handles day-to-day matters.

It's a good deal for the 12 employees, too, such as lathe operator Roman Ilyukhin, who says his wage of 60,000 rubles (\$1,000) is almost double what he used to earn elsewhere in the city.

The factory occupies two floors in a rundown building, its renovated rooms with pink wallpaper in stark contrast to the grey Soviet-era apartment blocks just outside.

The name Soyuz — meaning "union" — refers to the "union of East and West" in the company but is also full of historical significance in what was once the Sovetsky Soyuz, the Soviet Union. Soyuz capsules have since the 1960s been the workhorse of international space flight. **AP**

TV canal macau



FRIDAY

13:00	TDM News (Repeat)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	RTPi Live
16:50	Criminal Minds S.8
17:30	Castle S6 (Repeated)
18:10	Labirint (Repeated)
19:00	TDM Talk Show (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:15	Miscellaneous
22:10	Labirint
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Europa League Highlights
23:50	The Fifth Estate
01:55	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
02:45	RTPi Live

SATURDAY

10:35	Comedy
11:05	Blaze Riders
11:30	Documentary Serie
12:30	Miscellaneous
13:00	TDM News (Repeat)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	Soap Opera
18:35	Documentary Series
19:05	Miscellaneous
19:40	Miscellaneous
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Miscellaneous
21:10	Drama
22:00	Revenge S.4
22:45	Miscellaneous
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:10	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:45	RTPi Live

SUNDAY

10:05	Young Adult
11:00	Sunday Mass (Live)
12:00	Miscellaneous
12:30	Miscellaneous
13:00	TDM News (Repeat)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	Zig Zag
16:40	Documentary Serie
17:15	Miscellaneous
18:30	Documentary Serie
19:00	Miscellaneous
19:30	Miscellaneous (Repeated)
19:40	Comedy
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Non-Daily Portuguese News
22:00	Inside Europe's Terror Attacks
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Non-Daily Portuguese News (Repeated)
23:50	Documentary Series
00:20	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeat)
00:55	RTPi Live

Offbeat

ALTAR IN MEXICO TOWN HIDES
ILLEGAL FUEL TAP

Altars to the Virgin of Guadalupe are ubiquitous at businesses across Mexico. Now federal police say one has even been used in a gasoline smuggling racket in the central state of Puebla.

Police said this week that a trail of fuel leaking into the street in the town of San Martin Texmelucan led them into a lot where they found an altar to Mexico's patron saint with an unusual red hose protruding from it.

As they approached, a man carrying a gun got out of a vehicle and tried to flee. Police say they eventually caught him, and five other people accused of filling up from the Virgin's tap.

Thieves drill into thousands of pipelines across Mexico each year to steal fuel, creating heavy losses for the state-owned oil company Pemex.

cinema



CINETEATRO

23 FEB - 1 MAR

THE SPACE BETWEEN US

ROOM 1

2:30, 4:45, 9:30pm

Director: Peter Chelsom

Starring: Gary Oldman, Asa Butterfield, Brit Robertson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 98min

LA LA LAND

ROOM 1

7:15pm

Director: Damien Chazelle

Starring: Ryan Gosling, Emma Stone

Language: English

Duration: 128min



MANCHESTER BY THE SEA

ROOM 2

2:15, 4:45, 9:30pm

Director: Kenneth Lonergan

Starring: Casey Affleck, Michelle Williams, Kyle Chandler

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 137min



JOHN WICK: CHAPTER TWO

ROOM 2

9:15pm

Director: Chad Stahelski

Starring: Keanu Reeves, Ian McShane, Ruby Rose

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 137min

A CURE FOR WELLNESS

ROOM 3

2:30, 9:15pm

Director: Gore Verbinski

Starring: Dane DeHaan, Jason Isaacs, Mia Goth

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 146min

KANCOLLE THE MOVIE

ROOM 3

5:15pm

Director: Keizô Kusakawa

Language: Japanese (Chinese)

Duration: 91min

RESIDENT EVIL: FINAL CHAPTER

ROOM 3

7:45pm

Director: Paul W. S. Anderson

Starring: Milla Jovovich, Ali Larter, Shawn Roberts

Language: English

Duration: 120min

MACAU TOWER

23 FEB - 1 MAR



THE SPACE BETWEEN US

2:30, 4:45, 7:17, 9:30pm

Director: Peter Chelsom

Starring: Gary Oldman, Asa Butterfield, Brit Robertson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 98min

this day in history

1968 SOUTH VIETNAMESE
RECAPTURE HUE

The South Vietnamese are celebrating the recapture of the country's third city, Hue, after a battle lasting three weeks.

Their allies, American Marines, finally reached the walls of the old imperial citadel two days ago wiping out pockets of resistance from the North Vietnamese on the way.

But the final assault on the old palace began this morning with the marines firing cannons at the east wall of the palace compound.

The capture of Hue at the end of January by the North Vietnamese Communist forces was part of the so-called Tet offensive - the most powerful and continuous assault in the war so far.

The Americans reportedly calculated that the operation to recapture Hue would be a "24-hour job", but it quickly turned into a prolonged battle, with exchanges of mortar and artillery fire.

It took 10 days to advance the last 1,000 yards inside the walled city.

American Skyhawk helicopters have dropped bombs and napalm on the citadel. Yesterday because of bad weather, the helicopters missed their target and hit a rocket dump, sending up enormous blue and green flames.

US Government aircraft with loudspeakers have been circling overhead sounding surrender warnings.

When the South Vietnamese troops finally broke through into the citadel, all guns blazing and whooping and yelling with delight, they suddenly realised there was no resistance.

They found only about 20 civilians left alive and two South Vietnamese soldiers, who had defied detection by the North Vietnamese throughout the siege.

Both sides have suffered heavy losses. The US Marines, 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, joined the fighting only 11 days ago but have reported 45 dead and 250 wounded.

In total more than 100 American Marines have been killed and more than 700 wounded. Some 440 South Vietnamese soldiers have been killed and 1,900 injured.

The communist forces paid heavily too. The South Vietnamese claim to have killed nearly 3,000 in the battle for Hue, while the Americans say they have killed 1,500.

Hundreds of enemy weapons have also been captured.

A British photographer, Don McCullin, told the Times newspaper: "The devastation I saw was incredible. I had never seen a city smashed to pieces like this - with naval gunfire and planes crashing down to rout out a few snipers."

"They told me it was once a beautiful city. Well, now it is an ugly city because the streets are littered with bodies that have been run over by tanks."

Elsewhere in the country, intelligence reports say up to 15,000 communist troops are still threatening the capital, Saigon.

Courtesy of BBC

IN CONTEXT

When the South Vietnamese finally hoisted their flag once more over Hue, it became clear the opposition had fled rather than stand and fight. Although much of the city was destroyed, the palace compound, a walled square 700 yards along each side, was only slightly damaged. The throne room built in 1810 for Emperor Gia Long was undamaged except for two holes in the roof and three unexploded artillery shells lying on the floor.

The Tet offensive began at the end of January and was so-called after the Tet holiday which celebrated the lunar new year. The ferocity of the assault took the South Vietnamese and their allies by surprise.

Although technically the North Vietnamese and Vietcong guerrillas were defeated by the Americans, the impact of the Tet Offensive dealt a hard blow to US morale.

In the US, President Lyndon Johnson was spurred on by the anti-war movement to begin peace negotiations in Paris later in the year.

The Paris Peace Accords were finally signed in January 1973.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19
If you feel like your own personal well of creativity has run dry, it's time to go to the source to refill it.

Taurus April 20-May 20
Getting bent out of shape is only useful if you're a pretzel. A certain situation or a certain someone might be using your last nerve as a jump rope.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21
Why not take that energy you're currently spending on fussing over not very important details and use it a little more constructively?

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22
You do have pretty definite ideas about what works and what doesn't, but you're starting to realize that what works beautifully for you might not go so swimmingly for others.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Are you in the mood for love? If so, don't try to make someone guess what's on your mind - tell 'em that it's time to turn up the heat and stay in the kitchen.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22
Just before you convince yourself that the battle is lost, however, the other party agrees to a mutually satisfactory compromise.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22
Remember how you ordered that value meal of fun, laughter and romance? Well, the stars have just supersized it - and thrown in some dessert and a free drink for the heck of it.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
Is the thrill gone in a relationship that you usually cherish? That can be fixed, especially since you've caught it now.

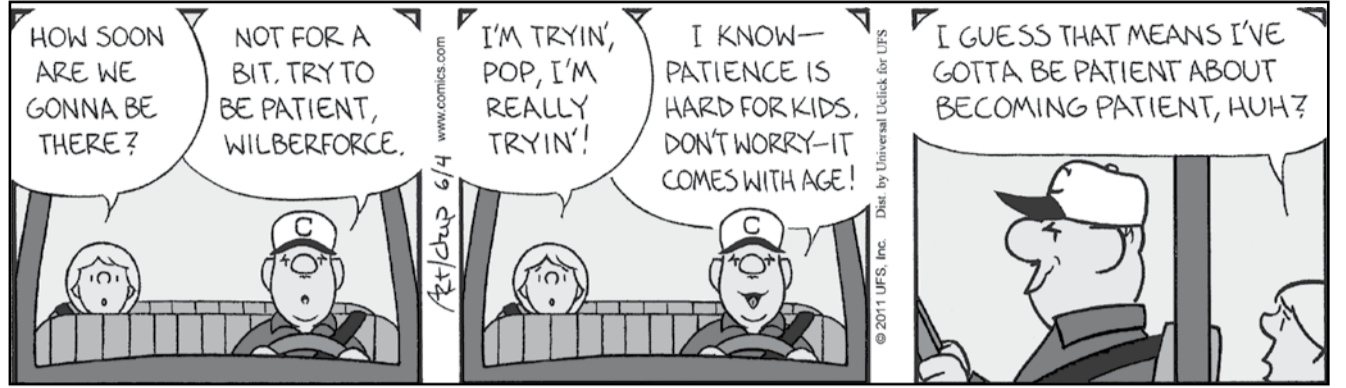
Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21
You've been given a truly wonderful window of opportunity to inspire everyone around you, so make sure you maximize it.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19
If there's one thing you hate, it's waste. Whether you implement a recycling program or take that new intern under your wing, today is all about utilizing resources that aren't being properly cared for.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Your good fortune is the best part of your life right now. Put it this way: if you bought a lottery ticket, you'd win the big jackpot - or you'd fall into the arms of someone totally devastating.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20
Learn to do some mental yoga (although doing some physically is a good idea as well) and bend around what they're saying right now no matter what.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle

Easy+

9x9 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle

Medium

9x9 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle

Hard

9x9 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle

WEATHER

CHINA

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

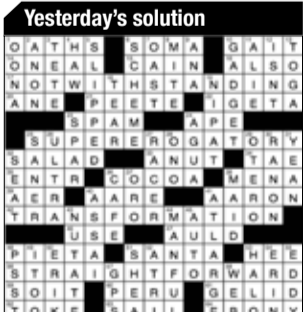
WORLD

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Drinks (as a cat); 5- Bingo call; 9- A ___ formality; 13- Quickly, briefly; 14- Philbin of TV; 16- Garden spot; 17- "Cast Away" setting; 18- Bucky Beaver's toothpaste; 19- Ground; 20- Assisted; 22- Moon of Mars; 24- Parcel; 27- Puts two and two together; 28- Claim; 29- Salad sauce; 33- Hubert's successor; 34- Golf club which can be numbered 1 to 9; 35- Shivering fit; 36- Metal, often used as a container; 37- Gather; 38- K-O connection; 39- Put a lid ___; 41- Matador's flourish medium?; 42- Mythical weeper; 44- Revitalize; 46- Maximally; 47- Would ___ to you?; 48- K through 12; 49- Cylindrical wooden container; 52- Building add-on; 53- Nicholas II was the last Russian one; 57- Slaughter in Cooperstown; 58- Green ___ is the place to be; 60- Jessica of "Dark Angel"; 61- For fear that; 62- Gullible; 63- Headed for overtime; 64- Apart; 65- Insect-repelling chemical; 66- 911 respondents;

DOWN: 1- Chou En-___; 2- Balaam's mount; 3- Good buddy; 4- Orator; 5- Structure spanning a river; 6- Conical dwelling; 7- Old oath; 8- Diarist AnaA's; 9- Singer Etheridge; 10- Mild cheese; 11- Nevada city; 12- Wraps up; 15- Makes sorrowful; 21- Othello villain; 23- Begley and Wynn; 24- Priest; 25- Skiing style; 26- Medical treatment place; 27- "___ by any other nameA"; 29- Hang with cloth; 30- Inuit dwelling; 31- Deadens; 32- "The Maids" playwright; 34- Icon; 37- Synthetic fiber; 40- Parched; 42- To the ___ degree; 43- Mimic; 45- Pub choice; 46- Good to go; 48- Parisian pupil; 49- Actor Lugosi; 50- Again; 51- Civil rights leader Parks; 52- Canal of song; 54- Meager; 55- Help in a heist; 56- X-ray units; 59- Structural engineer's software;



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
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HKD 6.99M
Storage Space & Cargo Lifts
Ref: 16095501

Nova City Penthouse Taipa
1,984 sq ft / HKD 7,832sq ft
HKD 15.54M
European Style
Ref: 16105508

Nam Long (J Unit) Old Taipa
750 sq ft / HKD 5,733sq ft
HKD 4.3M
Stylishly Furnished Throughout
Ref: 16095499

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Edf. Coloane Coloane Village
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Manhattan - B unit Taipa
3 Bedroom Apartment
Spacious and Furnished
HKD 22,000 / 1,680 sq ft
Ref: 16120630

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to regulatory approval.



SEVILLA was unable to capitalize on its dominant performance in a 2-1 Champions League win over Leicester yesterday as Jamie Vardy scored a crucial goal — his first of the year — to keep the English champions alive in the Round of 16.

Vardy capped a spirited second half for Leicester in the first leg with a 73rd-minute goal in one of the few chances created by the visitors at the Ramon Sanchez-Pizjuan Stadium in Seville.

Pablo Sarabia and Joaquin Correa scored in each half for Sevilla to leave the Spanish club a draw away from reaching the quarter-finals of the European competition for the first time in nearly 60 years.



Leicester's Jamie Vardy (left) celebrates after he scores a goal during the Champions League round of 16

FOOTBALL | CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Leicester's Vardy ends goal drought in 2-1 loss at Sevilla

■ In the other match, Juventus defeated host FC Porto 2-0 with second-half goals by substitutes Marko Pjaca and Dani Alves

"We were far superior, with some 10 clear chances, but we were not able to earn the advantage that we wanted," Sevilla coach Jorge Sampaoli said. "We deserved more."

Only a quarter-hour into the game Correa missed a penalty for the hosts, which are a three-time

defending champion in the Europa League but haven't advanced past the last 16 in the Champions League since 1958.

"We suffered," Leicester coach Claudio Ranieri said. "In the end we improved a bit and the goal leaves it open for the return match. That was crucial for us. We know they are favorites but we have played some great games at home in what has been a very strange season for us."

In yesterday's other Champions League match, Juventus defeated host FC Porto 2-0 with second-half goals by substitutes

Marko Pjaca and Dani Alves.

Sarabia opened the scoring with a firm header into the far corner after a cross by Sergio Escudero from the left side, and Correa made up for his missed penalty by adding to the lead from close range after a pass by Stevan Jovetic in the 62nd.

"They had 22 shots or something like that and we knew today was going to be tough and we'd have to ride our luck a couple of times and I was going to have to come up with some saves here and there but everyone deserves great credit for today," said Leicester goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel, who easily stopped Correa's weak penalty shot.

Struggling to stay out of the relegation zone in its Premier League title defense, Leicester scored the important away goal when Vardy got to a low left-side cross by Danny Drinkwater.

"We knew we had to be patient but we also knew we could hurt them if we got through their first press and hit them a bit quicker, and that's exactly what we did," Vardy said. "[Drinkwater] got through and put it on a plate for me and I've managed to slot it in."

Sevilla almost claimed a third goal after an 88th-minute header by Adil Rami struck the crossbar. "We had several opportunities, we had to score more goals," Jovetic said. "You have to score in every chance you get, especially in a Champions League game like this, otherwise it becomes difficult."

The result kept Sevilla unbeaten in eight games in all competitions, a run of six wins and two draws.

Sampaoli watched from the stands as part of a two-match touchline ban when he was sent off in a group-stage game against Juventus. **AP**

Italyans, but he also said the Irish "momentarily fell asleep" when losing to Scotland, leaving it too late despite a strong comeback after trailing 21-8 at halftime.

RUGBY | SIX NATIONS

France makes makes changes to face Ireland



France's rugby coach Guy Noves (right) watches his players as they practice during a training session at the National Rugby Center in Paris

FRANCE coach Guy Noves has made three changes for the Six Nations match at Ireland tomorrow [Sun, 00:30am], one he considers "crucial" in the team's development after narrow losses against rugby's leading nations.

France has improved under Noves and com-

peted well against New Zealand and Australia in the November test series, only to lose narrowly against England in their Six Nations opener three weeks ago.

"We competed for 70 minutes against England. This match is crucial in a way because we need big performances against the

best teams," Noves said. "Ireland, without question is among them."

Ireland ended New Zealand's 18-game winning run when it beat the All Blacks 40-29 in November.

Tomorrow, Yoann Huget will start at right wing instead of Virimi Vakatawa, who has a thigh problem, with Noa Nakaitaci switching over to the left wing to accommodate Huget.

"Yoann is coming back to form. He's full of energy and his commitment to his teammates has been exceptional," Noves said. "That's what we expect in the France team, that players put themselves at the service of the team."

The other two changes are in the forwards. South African-born Bernard

Le Roux will come in at flanker for the injured Loann Goujon, and Rabah Slimani — France's try scorer against England — will replace prop Uini Atonio, who is out of form and has been benched.

Noves said France needs a "powerful player" like Le Roux, who is also very mobile, against the strong Irish pack.

However, Noves made a surprising decision not to pick a flyhalf among his reserves, and said that scrumhalf Baptiste Serin could switch to flyhalf if he brings on another scrumhalf during the match at the Aviva Stadium in Dublin.

In the first two matches, France lost at England 19-16 and beat Scotland 22-16 at home, while Ire-

land lost at Scotland 27-22 and routed Italy 63-10 in Rome.

Noves underlined the attacking threat of an Ireland team that scored nine tries against the

BARCLAY NAMED SCOTLAND CAPTAIN TO PLAY WHALES

FORWARD JOHN Barclay will replace injured Greig Laidlaw as Scotland captain against Wales in the Six Nations tomorrow [10:25pm]. Laidlaw has been ruled out of the championship with an ankle injury. Scotland coach Vern Cotter has been forced to make three injury-enforced changes for the game at Murrayfield. Ali Price will make his first start for the national team at scrum-half, Ryan Wilson

will replace number eight Josh Strauss and winger Tim Visser will come in for Sean Maitland. In two tactical changes, prop Gordon Reid and flanker John Hardie trade places with Allan Dell and Hamish Watson. "We've now had two weeks to recover, reflect and prepare a new game plan for Wales," Cotter said. Scotland beat Ireland 27-22 in its first Six Nations game but then lost to France 22-16.

opinion

Kapok
 Eric Sautédé



SMOKING GUN

Is it me or are we being treated worse than headless chickens with tar-filled lungs? An opinion survey on to smoke or not to smoke in casinos conducted by the University of Macau and commissioned by the six casino licensees? An appended study on the law-compliant quality of the air surrounding "smoking lounges" performed by an offshoot of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University? To show what exactly? That "87% of employees working in gaming areas recognise the significant improvement of air quality in their work environment" and "60% of employees surveyed support solutions that allow smoking lounges". And this is supposed to be convincing beyond reasonable doubt and pave the way for expensive and state-of-the-art ventilation systems? This is supposed to be the result of an "independent" enquiry when it bluntly contradicts the government-sponsored survey released in January 2015 that indicated that 74% of the population was in favour of a full ban?

At the time, Secretary for Social Affairs, Alexis Tam did not mince his words: "The Macao government has made a decision and it's unanimous: [we are calling for] the implementation of a full smoking ban in casinos. The government will not be harming citizens, casino employees and tourists' health." He made it clear that he would not bow to pressure because "even with ventilation systems, this could still trigger negative health effects." One of the licensees with the oldest installations had failed repeatedly the health bureau tests regarding air-quality standards and another licensee had just been fined MOP100,000 for pushing a bit too far the cat and mouse game all of them had been playing with the new regulations.

The two studies are far more independent than the KPMG report of 2015, also commissioned by the gaming operators, that was part of a robust and systematic campaign to twist arms in favour of what had been conceived as the "only" viable solution: the smoking lounges. Even pro-business legislators of the Legislative Assembly Second Committee in charge of examining the amended law had been "shocked" to find the report of KPMG — a global accountancy firm with a longstanding relationship with the tobacco industry — on their desk before even starting their work! But soon, these legislators started to play the "delay" game that had bought them 16 months before the initial passing of the Tobacco Prevention and Control Law in 2011. Introduced in July 2015, the revised version paving the way for a full ban is still under discussion, and the initial resolve is now gone in smoke, despite the secretary and even the Chief Executive boasting to the contrary.

In 2007, a World Health Organisation report concluded that "ventilation and smoking areas, whether separately ventilated from non-smoking areas or not, do not reduce exposure to a safe level of risk and are not recommended" and in another brochure, the WHO described how "the tobacco industry and its allies [would] challenge the science on the health effects of second-hand tobacco smoke exposure and propose that designated smoking areas and ventilation are acceptable alternatives." It then stressed that the same ones would "claim that smoke-free laws are a violation of so-called 'smokers rights', or are simply not necessary, not feasible, not enforceable and will have a negative impact on business (particularly restaurants, bars and casinos). These claims are unproven and should not be factored into policy-making decisions."

It is thus rather ironic to have Mr Ambrose So, Chairman of SJM, introducing the results of these surveys on behalf of the six gaming operators, given that it was mainly his casinos that had failed the tests in 2013-2014 and that he had suggested SJM facilities should be exempted from the smoking ban altogether. And although this was not stressed in the press release he introduced, 60% of those sampled are still in favour of a total ban if it was to be implemented: facts are stubborn!

By the way, for those whose brain has been fried by cigar fumes: tobacco smoke produces 10 times more fine particulate matter than diesel exhaust! And I am not even counting the chemicals...

THE PHILIPPINE COURT ORDERS ARREST OF PRESIDENT'S LEADING CRITIC

A Philippine court issued an arrest warrant on drug charges for a senator and former top human rights official who is one of the most vocal critics of President Rodrigo Duterte and his deadly anti-drug crackdown. The Regional Trial Court in Muntinlupa city in the Manila metropolis issued the warrant for the arrest of Sen. Leila de Lima and other officials who have been charged by Department of Justice prosecutors with receiving bribes from detained drug lords.

De Lima has vehemently denied the charges, which she said were part of an attempt by Duterte to muzzle critics of his crackdown, which has left more than 7,000 drug suspects dead. She questioned why the court suddenly issued the arrest order when it was scheduled today to hear her petition to void the three non-bailable charges. It was not immediately clear when de Lima would be arrested or how her followers would react.

Professor has taken 'selfie' every day for last 30 years



This panel of black and white self-made photographs provided by Karl Baden shows Baden over the last three decades beginning Feb. 23, 1987

Philip Marcelo, Boston

LONG before they were called selfies, Karl Baden snapped a simple black and white photo of himself. Then he repeated it, every day, for the next three decades.

Baden's "Every Day" project officially turns 30 yesterday and he says he has no intention of stopping. The stark contemplation on mortality and aging has prompted some to dub the Boston College professor the unwitting "father of the selfie."

The 64-year-old Cambridge resident grumbles at comparisons to the pouty face, self-congratulatory portraits that fill Instagram and Facebook.

But he recognizes the ubiquity of the "selfie" — a word that didn't become widespread until this decade — has helped raise the profile of the project, which has been exhibited in art galleries in Boston, New York City and elsewhere over the years.

"If it wasn't for the selfie craze, I'd probably be slogging along in anonymity as usual," Baden joked this week. "Which is sort of what I had expected."

What makes the project work is that it reflects a number of universal themes, from death to man's obsession with immortalizing himself in some way, said Howard Yezerski, a Boston gallery owner

who has exhibited the project on two occasions.

"It's both personal and universal at the same time," he said. "He's recording a life, or at least one aspect of it that we can all relate to because we're all in same boat. We're all going to die."

Robert Mann, a New York City gallery owner that exhibited Baden's work on its 10th anniversary, says he's impressed with how Baden has stuck to his process. "Watching Karl age [gracefully] in front of the camera has been an honor," he said.

Baden quietly launched his project on Feb. 23, 1987, the day after Andy Warhol died and nearly two decades before Facebook emerged. He tries to remain faithful to that first image, posing with the same neutral facial expression and using the same 35mm camera, tripod, backdrop and lighting.

"I have to turn all these variables into constants so that I'm not distracting from the aging process," Baden explained.

Besides mortality, Baden says the project touches on the notions of obsession, incremental change and perfection.

"There's always something that's a little different, aside from the aging process."

Approaching 11,000 photos, the changes in Baden's appearance over time don't appear dramatic. But in 2001, Baden underwent chemotherapy to treat prostate cancer and became noticeably thinner. The cancer is now in remission. AP

Station	Air quality
Roadside	25-45 Good
High Density Residential Area	30-50 Good
Ambient	30-50 Good

WORLD BRIEFS



JAPAN Japan's Crown Prince Naruhito marks his 57th birthday with a pledge to follow in his father's footsteps as a symbol of the nation if his father's wish to abdicate is realized.



JAPAN An endorsement by the wife of prime minister Shinzo Abe of a new elementary school run by a man with ultra-nationalist views has been removed from the school's website amid an escalating controversy over the low price the school paid for government land.



AUSTRALIA-ISRAEL Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says he hopes to triple trade with Australia as the countries forge closer technology and aviation ties. Bilateral trade is currently worth about USD1 billion a year, with Israel sending less than 1 percent of its exports Down Under and Australian products accounting for just 0.3 percent of Israel's imports.



USA Conservative activist James O'Keefe has announced plans to release recordings today that he says were made secretly inside CNN. O'Keefe tells the network in an interview that the media is a "huge target" of his and he's targeting CNN because it "has a very important role as an arbiter of news." The network has drawn the ire of President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly labeled it "fake news."

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