



CE POLL CENSORED BY HONG KONG UNIVERSITY

"Academia in Hong Kong is growing more similar to that of Macau," commented New Macau activist Scott Chiang

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CHINA DOESN'T WANT 'TRADE WAR'

Li Keqiang said his gov't hopes for positive relations with the US and has no plans to devalue its currency to boost exports

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

WORLD BRIEFS



SYRIA Suicide bombers hit the main judicial building and a restaurant in Damascus yesterday, killing at least 30 people, according to state media, spreading fear across Syria's capital as the country's civil war enters its seventh year. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for either attack, but other, similar attacks in recent weeks were claimed by al-Qaida's affiliate in Syria.

CAMBODIA Sok An, a deputy prime minister of Cambodia who was one of Prime Minister Hun Sen's closest political and personal allies, died yesterday at a hospital in Beijing at age 66.

THAILAND's military government is seeking to collect at least 12 billion baht (USD360 million) in unpaid taxes and penalties from a prime minister toppled in a coup 11 years ago, in what his supporters consider a continuing political vendetta. Authorities have sought payment from Thaksin for years but he lives in exile in Dubai, out of the reach of Thai law.



INDONESIA's government said yesterday that a British-owned cruise ship must pay compensation for the destruction of coral reefs in a popular tourist area known for its extensive marine biodiversity.

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Displaced residents may be subsidized

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HONG KONG

Unofficial CE referendum censored by university

Daniel Beitler

STAFF at Hong Kong Polytechnic University prevented a poll from being conducted on students' preference for the next chief executive of Hong Kong, despite the fact that it has been held at the site on two previous occasions.

Students wanted to establish a polling station for a mock Chief Executive election.

According a South China Morning Post report citing Occupy Central co-founder Benny Tai, staff at the institution prevented volunteers from setting up the polling station.

"The school said that students did not have the right to use the space," he told the newspaper.

He added that he didn't understand the university's reaction given a similar poll has been held there twice before.

"We also organized the same event in 2012 and 2014 and it was peaceful and completely legal. There is no way to tell if the cancellation had any political motivations behind it or even po-



HK chief executive candidates Carrie Lam (center), John Tsang (left) and Woo Kwok-hing attend a debate on Tuesday

litical persecution [...] but the school should come forward with a proper explanation," said Tai.

"It's typical," said Scott Chiang, the president of New Macau Association (ANM), who has encountered similar prohibitions in Macau. "Academia in Hong Kong is growing more similar to that of Macau... with similar results."

"This reflects the general trend of universities [in Macau and Hong Kong] becoming less tolerant of freedom of speech. What they are doing is incredible and it makes them less credible in the 'civilized' world," he said.

Indeed, Chiang has faced similar experiences in the past.

ANM was one of three groups that organized a civil referendum on the

Macau Chief Executive in 2014. The unofficial referendum caused significant controversy, leading to the arrest of activist Jason Chao for violating personal data protection laws and prompting the MSAR government to brand the activity "illegal" and "invalid".

He was also part of a group of students that once tried to hold a Tiananmen Square vigil at the University of Macau (UM), but authorities at the institution had prevented the event from taking place.

"A group of students at the UM tried to hold a memorial of the June Fourth Incident, but we failed to get the venue [booked] because UM said that there was no space available," he said.

Hengqin looks for overseas post-doc fellows

EARLIER this week, the Administrative Committee of Hengqin New Area announced that the Hengqin district received the approval of China's post-doc administrative committee to set up a post-doctoral research office and to independently recruit post-doctoral fellows.

The approval marks the first time a post-doctoral research station in China's free trade zone has been allowed.

Deng Lianbing, a director at Hengqin's post-doctoral administrative office, said, "we will explore a work module through which we can introduce post-doctoral fellows from Macau and Hong Kong."

According to Deng, Hengqin will enhance communications between outstanding research supervisors from the two SARs and mainland post-doctoral fellows, all with the intention of creating a lasting connection between talented people living across mainland, Macau, and Hong Kong.

In addition, Deng noted

that China's top post-doctoral administration granting Hengqin such permission indicates that the country is attempting to push forward the communication of PhD human resources in the two SARs and the mainland.

In the future, Hengqin will study ways to connect the region with overseas post-doctoral fellows, Deng revealed. Looking for more overseas post-doctoral students will help Hengqin train additional high-level and new types of talented human resources.

Hengqin also outlined a regulation regarding the region's post-doctoral administration which grants a maximum of RMB5 million to a single research project to be produced in Hengqin.

Aside from this award, the region will give subsidies primarily for post-doctoral fellows to conduct research and to settle down in Hengqin.

Starting from this year, Hengqin will recruit 40 to 50 post-doctoral fellows. **JZ**

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Non-pruning of trees can be a matter of life or death. Who cares in Macau?

Dear Editor,

We have had in Macau incidents of trees and branches falling with resultant fatalities. The same in Hong Kong because, as we know, trees have to be pruned regularly and they can and do suffer from rot and diseases that make them unsafe. There were two cases not long ago, one of which involved a pregnant woman in Hong Kong. The tree fell on her, she was killed instantly but her baby was miraculously safely delivered in the eighth month of pregnancy.

Over a timespan of three, now entering four years, I have attempted to get IACM to send a cherry picker with a tree expert to the grounds of Hellene Gardens, specifically in the LOT 4 area, where there are trees which have never been pruned from the top. Yes that is right, and it spans a period of ten years, never pruned! Dangerous? Oh yes!

IACM have consistently informed they cannot assist because Hellene Gardens is a private estate and their brief is to only handle trees in non private locations - i.e. public areas. I have no means of identifying whether this is the case or not and having visited their offices on nume-

rous occasions and dispatched numerous emails, stressing the point of the danger and the fact that there are few landscape contractors in Macau, I met a dead end/a brick wall. Their answer has always been negative to the point of callousness.

Why did I go there? For the very fact that IACM have experienced tree doctor/s on their staff and they have the equipment to handle it. How was I treated? Badly. Not one member of staff at the outset of this journey, which needs to be chronicled and brought into the public domain, would agree to meet with me. Not one, over a period of more than three years. Do they know anything about civic duty towards the citizens of Macau and the fact, as was explained via emails, trees can kill and yes, there was a serious situation, otherwise why would I be there?

The bottom line: "we don't want to know and we don't handle this." Helpful? No. Any suggestions as to where one could go to remedy the situation? No. Is this the attitude of a professional government department? I repeatedly emailed and received the same answer. Never any invitation to go meet with someone within IACM who could give advice. Nothing. So

I was left with no doubt whatsoever after more than three years that IACM are not able to resolve what has now become a more than urgent requirement and their sheer lack of customer service is seriously wanting.

I then moved onto the property management company whose sole job it appears is making sure they take your money but deliver no service. This covers the same timeframe of three years. Emails requesting they activate numerous requests have met with silence and total non-action including from the manager. Eventually I was able to locate, quite by accident, one landscaping company but they have to this day, failed to communicate with them and it is now quite clear they have no intention of doing so. A professional property management company would have got onto this case as it is obvious to any reader there represents a clear and present danger to those who live nearby.

Maids with young children, residents, visitors walk daily under the trees. Babies in strollers pushed by either maids or parents. It is no longer a question of if but when someone is either killed or sustains serious injury. One tree is leaning

against a support wall leading to an underground carpark which could collapse at any given moment.

This letter is sent in the earnest hope that readers can shed some light on what can be done because after three years of trying, I have regretfully met a brick wall of non-action, ignorance and plain lack of civic duty towards residents/their families.

What will it take - a fatality? To bring home the message to both the property management company and also the administration committee of Lot 4 - neither wish to be involved. Not only does this represent dereliction of duty but it goes farther insofar as no one has any regard for anyone else's life - shame on those who are supposed to be in responsible positions and fail to act. These are not the actions of accountability or responsibility and this very fact needs to be made public before someone loses their life. A solution must be sought and quickly.

I appear to have exhausted every means possible to get some action.

Sincerely,

**A deeply concerned owner - Lot 4,
Hellene Gardens**

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Times

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Group urges gov't to clarify Coloane's future

Renato Marques

THE non-governmental organization (NGO) Green Future 綠色未來 presented a petition yesterday which urged the government to clarify and disclose more information about future urban planning of Coloane island, a member of the NGO and one of the petitioners, Joe Chan, told the Times.

Among its various points, the petition addresses the demolition of the old Lai Chi Vun shipyards. The group seeks further information pertaining to the entire area of Coloane, which they say is "the last green area of the territory."

"We want to clarify the mysterious development plan [for the area] because nobody knows exactly what is going on," Chan said. "We are not focusing only on that area [Lai Chi Vun] but in

all Coloane and its future development, because Lai Chi Vun is an important breaking point [barrier] for the urbanization of that area."

We have the legal right to know what is happening in our city.

JOE CHAN

The Green Future promoters expressed concerns that there might be interests that are driving the government's fast demolition of the old shipyards, which began last week without much progress on the production of relevant le-

gislation that clarifies what can or can not be done in the area.

"There are a lot of construction sites [around] and a lot of projects waiting for the government [to make a decision] and there is no evidence at this point that we can preserve these lands in the future," Chan said, hinting that it appeared as though someone was pushing to accelerate the urbanization of Coloane.

With the petition submitted to the government, the group says that it's trying to "persuade the government to give us more information and clarify their intentions for the future," as well as revealing "the schedule for the conclusion of the urban plan for that area."

"They are taking so long to produce a plan but they were so fast to put down the old [ship] factories," Chan said.

Regarding the organization's



expectations for the petition, Chan said: "It is not compulsory for them to reply to us but I think that a government that is responsible and wants to cooperate and cares about its people feelings should play a more active role in releasing information instead of just 'pushing you away'. We have a legal right to know what is happening in our city."

Concerns over the old shipyards have arisen after the decision

of the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau to dismantle some of the ship factories for safety reasons, leading several groups to protest the action. In some cases groups started online petitions to halt the planned demolition of around a dozen shipyards in Coloane's Lai Chi Vun district.

These groups argue that the shipyards should be preserved for their intrinsic historic and heritage value.

Kim Jong Nam's identity confirmed with child's DNA

Eileen Ng, Kuala Lumpur

MALAYSIAN police were able to confirm the identity of Kim Jong Nam, who was killed last month at Kuala Lumpur's airport, using a DNA sample from one of his children, Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said yesterday.

Zahid also said negotiations began Monday to resolve a diplomatic standoff over the death of Kim, the estranged half brother of North Korea's leader.

Malaysian authorities say Kim was killed Feb. 13 when two women smeared his face with the banned nerve agent VX in a crowded airport terminal. He was carrying a passport bearing the name Kim Chol. Police said last week they had confirmed the victim was Kim Jong Nam, but refused to say how.

North Korea — widely suspected of being behind the attack — continues to call the victim Kim Chol and has rejected the autopsy findings.

Zahid said police "confirmed that the identity of the body is Kim Jong Nam based on the sample taken from his child." He didn't



Kim Jong Nam

say when and where the DNA sample was taken.

Kim is believed to have two sons and a daughter with two women living in Beijing and Macau, but it is unclear where they currently are. A man claiming to be Kim's son appeared in a YouTube video last week saying he's safely with his mother and sister at an undisclosed location.

Malaysian officials say Kim's body has been embalmed to better preserve it and that Kim's relatives will be given two to three weeks to claim it.

Relations between Malaysia and North Korea

have deteriorated sharply since Kim's death, with each expelling the other's ambassador. Last Tuesday, North Korea blocked all Malaysians from leaving the country until a "fair settlement" of the case is reached. Malaysia then barred North Koreans from exiting its soil. The two countries have also scrapped visa-free travel for each other's citizens.

Four of the seven North Korean suspects being sought by Malaysia are believed to have left the country on the day Kim was killed. Police say the other three, including a North Korean

diplomat and an employee of Air Koryo, North Korea's state airline, are believed to be in the North Korean Embassy in Kuala Lumpur.

Zahid said formal talks are ongoing at the "secretary-general level" and that Malaysia is keeping an "open heart and open mind" in the negotiations.

Asked if Malaysia will exchange the Korean suspects believed to be hiding in the embassy for the Malaysians in Pyongyang, he said "we are looking at all possibilities."

There are nine Malaysians in North Korea — three embassy staff members and their family members. About 315 North Koreans are in Malaysia.

Zahid also brushed off calls by North Korea for an international inquiry over the use of VX in Kim's death, saying the North has shown that it doesn't respect decisions made by international bodies in reference to its nuclear program.

Although Malaysia has never directly accused North Korea of being behind the attack, many speculate that it must have orchestrated it.

Experts say the VX nerve agent used to kill Kim was almost certainly produced in a sophisticated state weapons laboratory, and North Korea is widely believed to possess large quantities of chemical weapons. **AP**

EDUCATION

Many schools are adopting the latest moral and civic textbook

A total of 40 primary schools are using the latest moral and civic textbook which has been co-authored by mainland publisher People's Education Press and the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ), according to news published on the DSEJ website.

Starting from the academic year of 2016/2017, approximately 70 percent of Macau's local primary schools began using the book.

From February 23 to 25, DSEJ organized four training sessions for local teachers who teach moral and civics-related subjects.

The training sessions invited directors from different sectors of the People's Education Press to introduce local teachers to, amongst other areas, the structure of the latest textbook, its draft lines, and its focus.

According to DSEJ, the more than 200 teachers who attended the sessions welcomed the training from mainland instructors.

The textbook was published in Macau in 2008 for the first time. In 2011, deeming that the textbook no longer suited educational needs, DSEJ collected opinions and suggestions from the region's schools in order to make amendments to the book.

In 2014, a new edition of the textbook, which is currently in use, was released.

According to a report by Macau Conceleers, 63 percent, 56 percent and 51 percent of local primary, middle, and high schools respectively, are using this textbook. **JZ**



MUST discloses over 500 old map copies

The library of Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) has publicized its possession of more than 500 copies of ancient maps made between the 15th and the 20th centuries. The public can visit MUST's library to see the maps in person, or see them on the school's website. Many of the publicized maps are manuscripts with great historical value. For four years, the MUST library collected more than 2,000 ancient maps. After cataloguing the maps, the school will present rarer ancient maps for the public's perusal. The maps on display in the library are available between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., and between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. from Monday to Friday.

New director-general appointed at Customs

Ng Kuok Heng, now former assistant director-general at the Macau Customs Service, has been promoted to deputy-director-general of the department, according to a notice published in the Official Gazette. Ng started his service in the public sector in 1983 as a police officer working for the marine section, where he remained for nearly 15 years. Prior to his appointment, Ng was the head of the Inspection Department of Customs. Ng holds a bachelor degree in law.

ARTS

Hong Kong film fest marks 20th anniversary of the HKSAR

THE 41st Hong Kong International Film Festival (HKIFF) will open with the film "Love Off the Cuff" by director Pang Ho-Cheung and close with Giddens Ko's sophomore directorial work "mon mon MONSTERS." Both films will have their world premiere at the festival which runs for 15 days from April 11 to 25. The event features 230 titles from 65 countries and regions, including 69 world, international, and Asian premieres.

During a press conference this week, the Hong Kong International Film Festival Society (HKIFFS) revealed details of the program, which include a retrospective of seven feature films by director Edward Yang to mark the 10th anniversary of his death.

Several world-renowned directors will visit Hong Kong for screenings of their films. Olivier Assayas, who was awarded the Cannes Best Director, will introduce his latest awarded film "Personal Shopper" (2016) in HKIFF's Gala Premiere, together with his acclaimed biopic "Carlos" (2009).

Polish director, Agnieszka Holland, who just won the Silver Bear Alfred Bauer Prize for her film "Spoor" (2017) will lead the jury of the Firebird Young Cinema Competition.

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region,



Wilfred Wong, Chairman of HKIFFS, delivers a speech

HKIFF will present a special program, "Paradigm Shift: Post-97 Hong Kong Cinema," showcasing twenty films that are highly representative of local cinema over the past two decades. The program will kick off with the newly restored "Made in Hong Kong" (1997), which was directed by Fruit Chan. The film is an independent work that chronicles the exploits of lower-class teenagers. Thirteen other films from local veterans including "Infernal Affairs" (2002), "Shaolin Soccer" (2001) and "The Warlords" (2007) will be screened during the festival. All screenings are open to the public free of charge.

A number of internationally acclaimed films will be featured in the HKIFF. These include "The Salesman" (2016), winner of Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film; "Graduation" (2016), for which Cristian Mungiu won Cannes Best Director, and "The Woman Who Left" (2016), winner of Golden Lion for Best Film.

In celebration of Canada's 150th anni-

versary of Confederation and National Canadian Film Day, HKIFF will present the Canadian film "Window Horses" (2016), a warm and witty animated feature directed by Ann Marie Fleming, who will meet the audience at the screenings.

Japanese and South Korean films also take the spotlight at this year's festival. The Awards Gala Night will be graced by the Asian premiere of "The Tokyo Night Sky is Always the Densest Shade of Blue," directed by Ishii Yuga.

An "Audience Choice Award" is a newly added prize this year thanks to the support of premium sponsor Hearts On Fire. Audience members who vote for their favorite film will have the chance to enter into a lucky draw and win a prize worth HKD10,000.

A full list of HKIFF41 selections is available at www.hkiff.org.hk. Tickets for the public can be booked online at www.hkiff.org.hk and all URB TIX outlets from tomorrow at 10 a.m.

Berlin poster design exhibition opens

THE "Anschlag Berlin - Poster Design from Berlin" exhibition was inaugurated on Tuesday at the Tap Seac Gallery, featuring a total of 70 posters by 35 designers from several Berlin-based design studios.

The exhibition features posters relating to art exhibitions, festivals, concerts, performances and social issues.

"By sharing works that blend art and design, the Cultural Affairs Bureau [IC] hopes to provide a source of inspiration and an exchange opportunity for Macau design professionals," a statement issued by the organizer, IC, read.

Berlin, with its rich historical background and cultural uniqueness,



provides an open environment for designers, enhancing their creativity and allowing the coexistence of multiple ideas regarding design.

The posters featured in this exhibition are works inspired by the Zeitgeist Movement and contemporary Berlin, created by exceptional contemporary designers from renowned design studios including Cyan, LSD, HeSign, EPS51, Ruidi-

gkeit, Ariane Spanier, Fons Hickmann m23, Surface and others.

A seminar titled "From Berlin to Macau: Designer's stage" was held yesterday at the Tap Seac Gallery, where the curators presented the works on display and shared the creative experiences of the guests.

The exhibition is being held at Tap Seac Gallery until May 14, open daily from 10 a.m. until 9 p.m.

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HOUSING

Subsidies proposed for residents in temporary units

Julie Zhu

THE Urban Renewal Committee's plenary meeting, which was held yesterday, discussed topics relating to temporary housing, renovation of industrial buildings, and the establishment of a government-owned company.

The committee proposed to establish subsidies for residents who are being relocated from old buildings into new ones.

Currently, the region is relying on the construction of temporary buildings to house displaced residents while it modernizes, according to Paul Tse, who also explained that this is difficult for Macau to put into practice.

"A second choice can be provided to the residents," noted Tse, clarifying the conditions under which the committee deems it appropriate to grant a subsidy.

"This is on the basis of maximizing choices for residents and to give them an opportunity to decide how to solve their housing problem during urban re-



Raimundo do Rosário (center) presides over the meeting

newal," said Tse, explaining that residents can either choose to buy or rent a property. An additional option is proposed:

"To avoid double taxation, the committee additionally proposed to consider providing low-interest loans to residents who will be giving up their occupation of those properties but will maintain their right to them so that they can move back at a later time," said Paul Tse. "A low-interest loan will help their financial situation."

Earlier, the Urban Renewal Committee revealed that it is looking to establish a government-owned company, the

structure, working direction, management, and supervision board of which was discussed by the committee.

"It provides more flexibility in terms of commercial discussions," said Paul Tse, when addressing why the committee is determined to set up the company.

The committee also suggested reducing the government's property interests in relation to the redevelopment of old buildings given that the government has previously maintained full property rights. The committee's preliminary conclusion is that the government will maintain

90 percent of the property interest of buildings between 30 to 40 years, 85 percent of those that are more than 40 years, and 80 to 85 percent of those related to key interests or which have already been demolished.

With respect to the renewal of industrial buildings, the committee considered that those with fewer difficulties should be the initial focus.

The committee further suggested providing legal and safety instructions for building owners to follow.

The committee considered the renewing of industrial buildings to be a short-term goal within the city's renewal purposes.

When talking to the media, the Secretary for Land, Public Works and Transportation, Raimundo do Rosário, was questioned about the demolition of the Lai Chi Vun village. Rosário maintained his stance in relation to the recent dispute over the Lai Chi Vun village shipyards, claiming that there is nothing he can comment or add because the Chief Executive has made the matter of the region very clear.



CAEAL not to punish Coutinho over SMS

The Electoral Affairs Commission for the Legislative Assembly election (CAEAL) will not punish lawmaker Pereira Coutinho over an SMS sent on Monday (March 13), the president of the CAEAL, Tong Hio Fong said yesterday. In the message, the lawmaker and candidate in the September election reminded the recipients of the September 17 election date and urged the voters to "make sure they would be in the region to vote on that day, including their families."

Tong said that any action by the commission is only required in the event of a violation of the law. Otherwise, the cases will only be flagged for a monitoring, noting that the CAEAL will "follow up and stay alert" since "at this stage this situation is not yet a violation of the law." Nevertheless Tong criticized the use of the SMS during a period not considered a part of the official electoral campaign but noted, so far, no complaints have been made.

Property sales surged over 200 percent in February

The latest data from the Finance Services Bureau (DSF) which was released yesterday shows that the number of residential units sold during the past month surged 204 percent compared to the same month last year. In 2016, February registered a total of 268 residential sales, while this year the figure was 546. Hiking even more were the sales in the Peninsula, accountable for a total of 427 housing units (211 percent year-on-year), followed by Taipa registering 84 sales, and Coloane with 35. In addition, the average price per square meter grew approximately 20 percent from MOP73,733 to MOP88,440. Coloane was where residential units saw the prices rise 30 percent more than the previous year's average, from MOP92,914 to MOP139,374 per square meter. However, the average size of units sold has decreased by 2 square meters.



Additional Arts Festival shows

The 28th Macao Arts Festival (MAF) is organizing additional performances for the most sought-after shows, which will be on sale from today. According to the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), a number of programs were highly sought after, and therefore the organizer offers additional performances for the following shows: The soundscape theatre play "Back to the Catastrophic Typhoon of 1874"; the children's musical "Metamorphosis under Starry Night"; "Songs of Migrants" and "Miss Revolutionary Idol Berserker". Tickets for these additional performances will be available from 10 a.m. today at Macau Ticketing Network outlets. Tickets may also be purchased on the internet or by telephone.

Science Center holds 'Invention Exhibition'



THE "Invention Exhibition" co-organized by Macau Science Center (MSC) and the Macau Innovation & Invention Association, will run until June 18 at Gallery 2 of the Exhibition Center.

The exhibition consists of two parts; "Innovative Invention Thinking" and "Daily Commodity Invention."

Apart from introducing the "40 Principles from Inventors," there are a number of exhibits to allow the public to get to learn more about the innovative concepts and scientific principles behind these inventions.

The exhibition center will also feature the "Macau Exhibits Area" showcasing the international award winning inventions and works of science made by Macau resident students and individuals.

This area allows visitors to learn more about the current status of Macanese innovation, according to a statement issued by MSC.

Other related activities include a "Quest for Invention Exploration," where visitors are encouraged to collect stamps hidden in the exhibition to receive a small gift.

Workshop "Small Invention, Big Discovery" will encourage visitors to experience the process of new invention through observing the products and tools we use in our daily lives.

Further, the exhibition also features a drama presentation, "Report Captain! This is How Inventions are Made!" which will hopefully lead visitors to experience the challenges they may face in the invention process.

EDUCATION

Direct admission to overseas graduate schools facilitated

THE University of Macau (UM) has launched two new programs, titled "3+2" and "4+X", which will allow participating students to be directly admitted to some of the world's top graduate schools upon completing their undergraduate studies at UM.

Participants in the "3+2" program will receive a bachelor's degree from UM and a master's degree from a top overseas university upon completing the program, according to a UM press release.

The "4+X" program reserves places at top overseas universities for qualified students. UM recently signed agreements for a program with the University of Toronto (UT) and another with Temple University (TU).

According to the agreement with UT, UM students who fulfil the academic criteria will be directly admitted to UT's Faculty of Medicine upon completing four years of undergraduate studies at UM.

The agreement with TU allows qualified students to receive a bachelor's degree from UM and a master's degree from TU upon completing three years of studies at UM and two at TU. The UM is in talks with other world-renowned universities for similar arrangements, including Peking University, Tsinghua University, Fudan University, the University of Lisbon, and George Washington University.

UM said it expects to conclude the negotiations soon.

Ho hopes HK localists will not influence Macau

The president of the Legislative Assembly (AL), Ho Iat Seng, said that the latest work report of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) highlights the topic of Hong Kong Independence as something Macau should be aware of, according to a report by TDM. Ho expressed the hope that Macau will not be influenced by this ideological trend. The AL president noted that Hong Kong Independence would lead nowhere, and voiced the belief that Macau's CPPCC members will be working towards a city that "loves the country and loves Macau." Ho declared that Macau's next members of the National People's Congress will be required to declare their allegiance to the country and to the SAR's basic law.

CC 'pays attention' to online shopping

The theme of this year's "World Consumers' Rights Day," which was marked yesterday, was "Building a Digital World Consumers Can Trust". The Macau Consumer Council (CC), which has been a member since 1997, issued a statement claiming it "pays attention to issues such as online shopping and relevant consumer rights." According to the Council, "consumer education work has been carried out in recent years to teach consumers the right concept, information, and methods of online shopping."

Chef Alfonso says 'growing organic products was a necessity'

Lynzy Valles

PROMINENT chef of the two-star Michelin-rated restaurant Don Alfonso 1890 at the Grand Lisboa is visiting the region, boasting the restaurant's acquisition of fresh and organic produce.

The passionate chef, Alfonso Iaccarino, heads Macau's sister restaurant Don Alfonso 1890 in Southern Italy, which offers traditional food of the Sorrento and Amalfi coast.

Originally opened by the Alfonso family in 1973 in Sant'Agata, in the south of Italy, Don Alfonso 1890 currently exists in countries as far-ranging as New Zealand and Morocco.

The chef and his wife, Livia, have also been running a boutique hotel in the hill town of Sant'Agata due due Golfi since 1982.

On Tuesday, the chef presented his two cookbooks: the Alfonso Iaccarino, winner of the 2001 Gourmand World Cookbook award, and Don Alfonso 1890.

The two cookbooks showcase



the restaurants' respected recipes and famous dishes, such as linguine con vongole veraci & zucchini, gnocchetti con cozze & broccoli, and a casserole of scoglio.

Iaccarina said that his books sought to share his humble beginnings with his guests and readers, whilst also promoting traditional Mediterranean cuisines.

When questioned how he maintained the traditional cuisine of Southern Italy despite the significant development of traditional dishes, the chef spoke of his respect for the region's culture.

Meanwhile, recalling his first

time in Macau, Chef Iaccarino noted that he and his wife visited the underdeveloped region some 30 years ago.

"That time Macau was very small; and the old Macau was very nice. We had a very wonderful impression. Macau has a little bit of European style and that was interesting," he recalled to the Times.

"I never thought that one day I'd be coming back here as a professional. [...] Now you see it as a big community and there's a big development [especially] in the last four to five years; it's terrific," said the chef.

The chef acknowledged Macau's diverse gastronomy – particularly traditional Chinese cuisine.

He also stressed that much of the produce used in his restaurants is grown on a seven-hectare family-owned farm, which he started approximately 30 years ago. Produce such as tomatoes, coffee beans, lemon, cheese and extra-virgin olive oil are shipped to the restaurants from the farmhouse named "Le Peracciole,"

in Termini.

"Growing organic products was a necessity," he said, noting that some companies advertise their cuisine on television without considering the health of the guests.

"So I must make a farm where I can grow everything organic so I can sell to my guests."

When asked whether he had made compromises on the favored dishes in various restaurants which cater to the palates of different nationalities, the chef said, "The style and the philosophy must never change because this is something that we value."

Chef Iaccarino also shared his secret to being a successful chef.

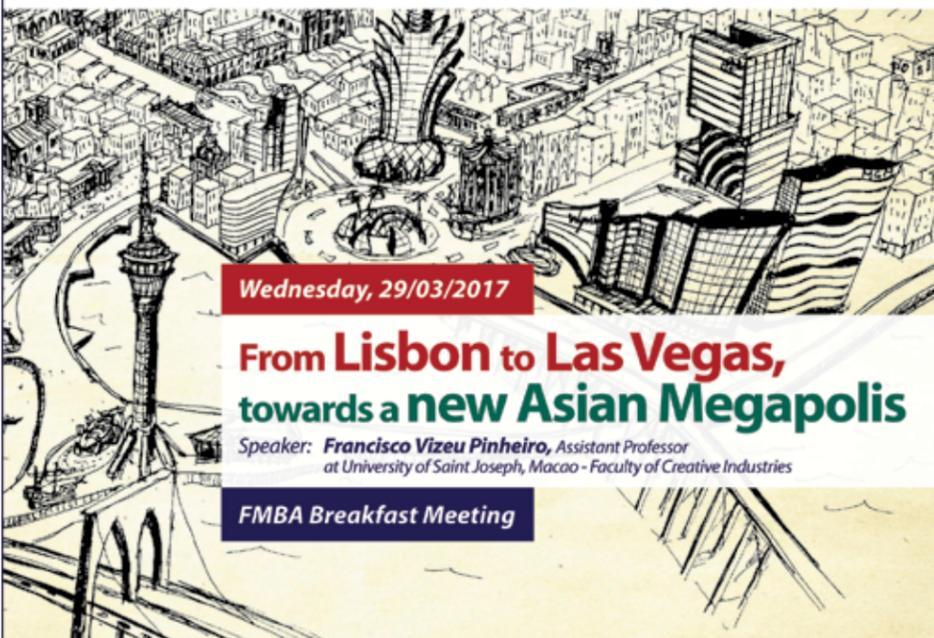
"You must always love everything that you do and never be satisfied with the things you did yesterday to make it better today. Also, be kind, be happy and give emotions to the people," he said.

The chef revealed that there will be an upcoming Don Alfonso 1890 in Rome this autumn. He hinted that the hotel in which it will open is owned by a royal family.

AD



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in town with key speakers sharing their views on current business affairs. Our monthly events take place every last Wednesday of the month at Sofitel Macau at Ponte 16. **Open to all!**



Wednesday, 29/03/2017

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Speaker: **Francisco Vizeu Pinheiro**, Assistant Professor at University of Saint Joseph, Macao - Faculty of Creative Industries

FMBA Breakfast Meeting

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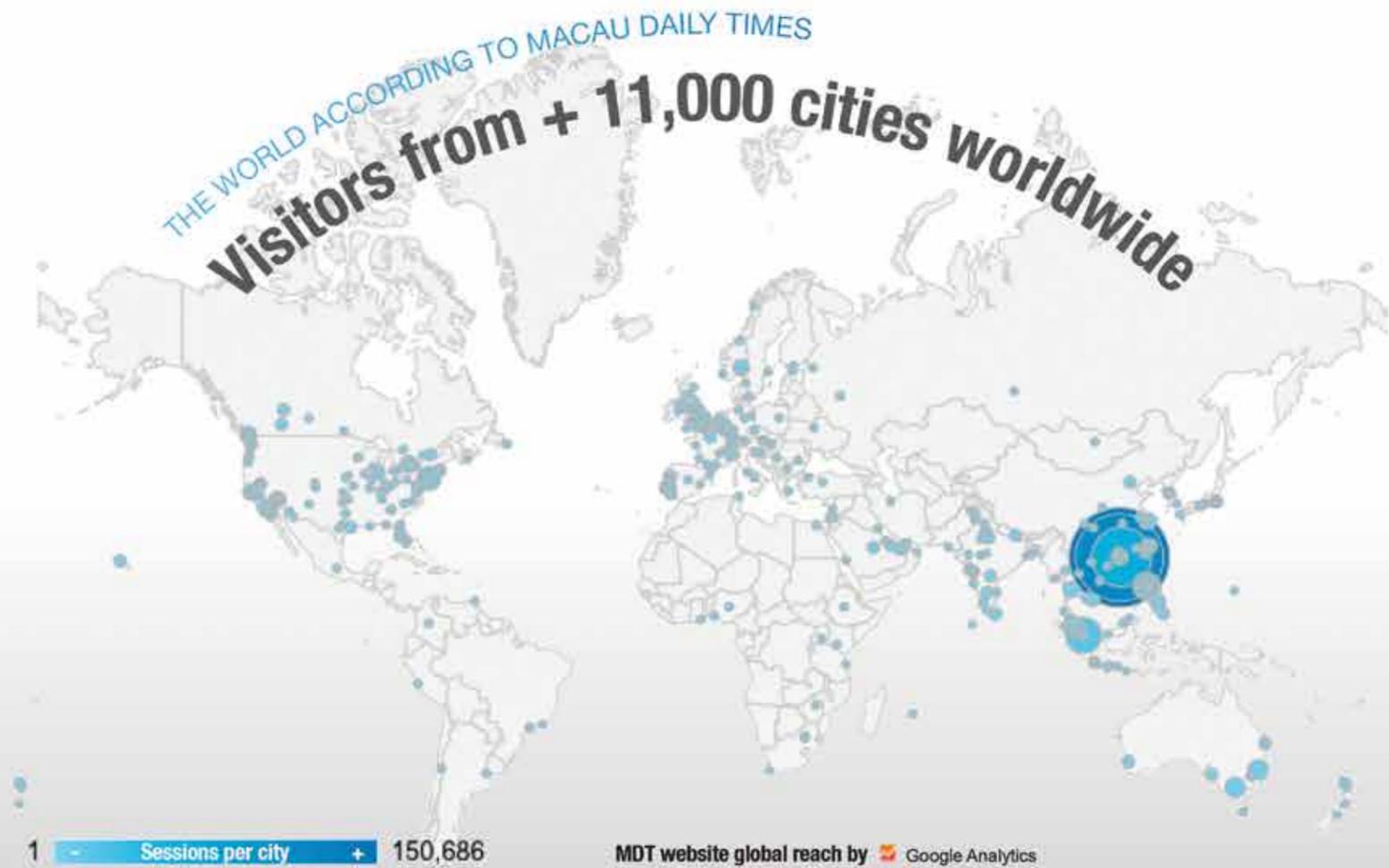
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“ THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’ ”

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The Tiguan 2 is a great all-grown-up SUV with distinctive styling which redefines its class and confidently points the way to the future. The new generation Tiguan is the first sport utility vehicle to be based on the modular transverse matrix (MQB), and it sets new standards in design, comfort and functionality. In doing so it of course remains capable of off-road, with a rugged all-wheel drive system that includes premium class technology for use on and off the highway. The Tiguan 2 is, then, both more SUV and more than an SUV.



Volkswagen

PS : 1) The pictures are for reference only.

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Jasper Cheung, chief executive officer of Amazon Japan

Amazon Japan portal adopts UnionPay to attract Chinese shoppers

Reed Stevenson, Grace Huang

AMAZON.COM Inc.'s website in Japan will start accepting UnionPay cards, as the web retailer steps up efforts to sell more merchandise to Chinese shoppers across Asia. China UnionPay Co., with more than 6 billion cards in circulation, is now a key rival to Visa Inc., Mastercard Inc. and other issuers and has become an important way for retailers around the globe to attract Chinese tourists and consumers. UnionPay can now be used across Amazon Japan's website starting yesterday, the Seattle-based company said.

Amazon, which debuted in Japan in 2000, rolled out a Simplified Chinese-language version of its website last year to cater to booming demand by shoppers seeking everything from Japanese books and music to cosmetics and baby products. The number of online customers from the mainland rose fivefold since early 2016, according to Jasper Cheung, president of Amazon Japan. Amazon's revenue

in the country rose 31 percent to USD10.8 billion in 2016.

"We continue to drive more selection available for export, and we've increased it by 50 percent," Cheung said. "The biggest-selling categories have been books, health and beauty, baby products and kitchen appliances."

Amazon Japan is catering to an emerging class of consumers who are willing to shop online within Asia, and offers reduced shipping rates to homes and businesses in mainland China, Macau, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea. E-commerce demand from China to Japan alone is projected to almost triple to 2.34 trillion yen (USD22.5 billion) in 2019, according to Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.

Chinese tourists, now a constant presence in Tokyo's stores, often stock up on authentic Made-in-Japan products during their visits to the archipelago. The number of Chinese tourists in Japan rose 28 percent last year to 6.4 million visitors. **Bloomberg**

Audi raided by German prosecutors in diesel scandal fallout

Christoph Rauwald

VOLKSWAGEN AG's Audi brand was raided by German prosecutors as investigations into the manipulation of diesel engines continue to weigh on the automaker more than a year after revelations of emissions cheating.

More than 100 police took part in searches yesterday at the company's main sites in Ingolstadt and Neckarsulm as well as seven other locations across Germany. The probe is focused on potential consumer fraud related to Audi's role in developing tainted 3-liter diesel engines in the U.S., with officials seeking information on individuals involved, the Munich prosecutors office said in a statement. The company said it was cooperating fully with authorities.

The raids, which started at 7 a.m. local time, came the same day that Audi was holding its annual press conference and mark a fresh blow to Volkswagen's efforts to overcome the cheating crisis that erupted in September 2015. Rather than grappling with renewed allegations, Audi had planned to shift attention to its recovery strategy after its role in manipulating about 80,000 diesel cars led to a 1.63 billion-euro (USD1.73 billion)



charge last year from a settlement with U.S. authorities.

"I myself have greatest interest in the clarification of the matter," Audi chief Rupert Stadler said yesterday at the brand's headquarters in Bavarian town of Ingolstadt, declining to comment on the reason and timing of the raids. "The diesel crisis has been the worst disruption in our history," said the executive, who has weathered pressure even after the brand initially denied cheating before backing down.

Volkswagen yesterday had sought to draw a line under the crisis, with CEO Matthias Mueller saying the company is "back on track" and in a position to push ahead with tackling an "epochal shift" in the auto industry. Still, he acknowledged that legal disputes will continue to preoccupy the company for many years.

Audi, Volkswagen's

biggest profit maker, is critical for Volkswagen, as the auto giant seeks to absorb 22.6 billion euros in scandal damages. That burden comes on top of more than 10 billion euros in investment needed to shift strategy toward self-driving, electric vehicles. For its part, Audi set up a new subsidiary, dubbed Autonomous Intelligent Driving GmbH, to develop robot cars and plans three battery-powered cars by 2020.

The prosecutors' probe adds to Audi's woes as it has been losing ground to Daimler AG's Mercedes-Benz, which overtook BMW as the world's bestselling premium-car maker last year. Audi's global sales declined 1.1 percent in February to 125,100 cars as a dispute with dealers in its largest market China escalated. Audi's deliveries in China fell 5.8 percent to 32,155 cars last month. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

MGM COTAI TO PRESENT ART COLLECTION



MGM Cotai announced the establishment of a major permanent art collection for Macau.

Commissioned by MGM, the collection will be hosted at MGM Cotai and will be unveiled at the resort's opening this year.

Connecting East and West and blending tradition with innovation, the art collection will feature over 300 works that will integrate with MGM Cotai's public spaces. The works include antique carpets dating from the Qing Dynasty, modern and contemporary Asian paintings, and sculptures by renowned artists.

Contributing artists include Hsiao Chin, Liu Dan, Liu Kuosung, and Macau's own Ung Si Meng and Xue Song.

The collection is part of MGM's continuous efforts to bring world cultures together through art and coalesce that into diversified entertainment offerings available to people in the city from all walks of life.

From paintings to installations, wall-art to ancient carpets, visitors will travel through time as they walk through the property and explore the stories behind each artwork, according to a statement by MGM.

"It is a privilege to showcase outstanding works by celebrated Asian artists, including some extraordinary pieces that we have commissioned for our forthcoming permanent art collection at MGM Cotai,

some of which are by local Macanese artists," said Pansy Ho, co-chairperson and executive director of MGM China Holdings Limited.

"We recognize the rich history of Macau, and we are very proud to build on our own legacy in artistry and entertainment, while linking both industries to the affluent heritage of China and Asia," she added.

Grant Bowie CEO and executive director of MGM China Holdings Limited, said, "Following the introduction of the MGM Art Space at MGM Macau, we are proud to present this museum-quality MGM Cotai Art Collection to be unveiled when MGM Cotai opens this year."

Junheng Li

ANALYSIS

Beijing schools markets on tiered leadership structure

INVESTORS trying to make sense of China's National People's Congress last week and its relation to the more important 19th Party Congress to be held later this year should familiarize themselves with an old saying: "The mountains are high and the emperor is far away."

Orders from Beijing are often ignored in the cities and provinces. Instead, important decisions such as whether and how to restructure the debt of insolvent local governments and state-owned enterprises are made locally. Officials on the ground decide whether to actually shut down excess capacity in state-owned enterprises and whether to risk an increase in unemployment because some enterprise or industry (think coal mining, steel, solar panels) has become non-viable, a drain on the public finances and/or an environmental danger.

It's for those reasons that China's leadership was largely unable to meet the goals of 18th Party Congress of 2012, which sought to move the nation away from an unsustainable economic development model driven by explosive growth in corporate and local government debt, exports, capital expenditures and the production of often environmentally damaging physical goods to a "greener" one driven by lower leverage and domestic demand for services. The problem was that the plan gave little regard to the disastrous "grow at any cost" mindset of local and provincial authorities.

Many markets benefited. In 2016, China imported 33 percent of the world's total dry bulk commodities, followed by

a Japan at a distant second at 8 percent and India at 6 percent. Home values skyrocketed, fueled by the central bank's looser monetary policies.

Power may be more centralized under General Secretary Xi Jinping than it has been since Deng Xiaoping - or even Mao Zedong. Xi is the chair of an unprecedented number of committees that span every important aspect of political, military, economic, social and cultural decision making. Indeed, Xi has been granted the designation of "Core Leader" of the Party, an honorific only ever bestowed before on Mao, Deng and Jiang Zemin. Yet, current developments suggest that even though power is centralized, it is not sufficiently held enough for Xi to truly focus on the economy.

Global investors are intrigued by the opportunities held by the sheer size of China's markets. But rather than dealing with economic issues, Xi's domestic focus is still carrying out the anti-corruption campaign that was launched following the conclusion of the 18th Party Congress. No local government or a SOE leader is willing to pursue economic reform or much of anything else for which there isn't ample officially sanctioned precedent.

AP PHOTO



Internationally Xi has also focused on regional political and geopolitical issues. His pro-globalization speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos earlier this year wasn't about economics but about regional and geopolitics. The economy was, at best, fourth in the list of priorities.

The 19th Party Congress may, at last, enable Xi to consolidate power to the point that he can give the economy the attention it has been denied but badly needs, and bolstering the confidence of international investors.

Of the seven members of the Standing Committee of the

Central Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China - the supreme decision making body in China - as many as five could be replaced "peacefully" at the 19th Party Congress because they have reached the informal age of retirement of 68. Xi is 64 and PRC Premier Li Keqiang is 61. Only one of the five, Wang Qishan, who oversaw most of the corruption purge, is a clear ally of Xi. That means by the end of 2017, Xi could at last achieve the kind of control that would permit him to focus on the economy.

There is another dimension to Xi's political control and te-

nure. No General Secretary of the Communist Party since Mao has served more than two terms of five years each. Xi's first term started on Nov. 12, 2012. According to established norms, Xi would have to retire in 2022, both because he will have served two terms as General Secretary and because he will be 70 years old. If he currently has any designs on staying in office for longer than that, he could try to persuade the Party to let Wang Qishan stay on as a member of the PSC beyond the age of 68.

This will definitely be an NPC worth watching. **AP**

Name-and-shame show puts household brands in hot seat

HOUSEHOLD brands in China are bracing for the government's version of public-service journalism - the annual program on state-run TV that uses hidden cameras to highlight what the network calls companies' unfair practices against consumers.

China Central Television's yesterday's night broadcast for World Consumer Rights Day has targeted some of the world's biggest companies in the past, including Apple Inc., McDonald's Corp. and Volkswagen AG. The name-and-shame show not only attracts eyeballs, it also gets results - Apple's Tim Cook apologized in 2013 and McDonald's retrained some workers in 2012.

Breakneck economic growth and rising incomes

transformed China into an essential market with 1.4 billion people, and the government's push for a consumption-driven economy fueled an influx of foreign companies in the fast-food, retailing and automotive industries.

"China's goal of a consumption-led economy needs to be backed by greater confidence among Chinese consumers in buying locally," said Catherine Lim, a Bloomberg Intelligence analyst in Singapore. "This includes assurance about the authenticity and quality of their purchases as well as ensuring customers' satisfaction in the shopping experience."

This year, Korean companies such as Samsung Electronics Co. and Hyundai Motor Co. also have

reason to worry that it's their turn to be featured in the "3.15 Gala" program. China retaliated against Korean businesses after the government in Seoul allowed the deployment of a U.S. missile-defense system that China said threatens regional security.

"Korea is on the political hot seat right now," said Shaun Rein, managing director of Shanghai-based China Market Research Group. "I think they would target Korean brands especially."

Chinese authorities, citing alleged safety violations, suspended operations of 55 stores owned by Lotte Group, the conglomerate that provided land for the system, and shut Lotte Shanghai Foods, a joint venture with Hershey Co. The government also



curbed Chinese tourist travel to South Korea.

South Korean cosmetics brands could be a major target given their popularity in China. Amorepacific

Corp. is among the top five sellers in the nation, according to Euromonitor International's latest data.

Ensuring consumers are adequately informed about

the authenticity of online purchases likely would be one focus of this year's broadcast, said Bloomberg Intelligence's Lim.

That would dovetail with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang's call for vigorous investigations of counterfeit products and improving product quality to meet the higher standards demanded by Chinese consumers.

Previous shows targeted homegrown powers Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. and China Mobile Ltd. Alibaba has struggled to keep counterfeit products off its websites, and the U.S. government labeled the company's Taobao e-commerce platform a "notorious market" for fake goods last year. The China Consumers Association said its theme for 2017 is trust in e-commerce. **Bloomberg**

Premier: China doesn't want 'trade war' with Washington

Gillian Wong, Beijing

CHINA'S No. 2 leader said yesterday his government hopes for positive relations with Washington and has no desire for a trade war nor plans to devalue its currency to boost exports.

Speaking at an annual news conference, Premier Li Keqiang emphasized the shared interests of the world's two biggest economies. He said they should "uphold strategic interests."

U.S. President Donald Trump promised to raise import taxes on Chinese goods to counter what he says are unfair practices by Beijing. That has prompted warnings China might retaliate, disrupting one of the world's biggest trading relationships.

"We don't wish to see a trade war breaking out between the two countries. That wouldn't make our trade fairer," said Li. He noted American companies also would be hurt.

Officials of the two countries are discussing a face-to-face meeting between Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping, the premier said at the event held after the close of the national legislature's annual meeting.

"China hopes that, no matter



what bumps this relationship may run into, it will continue to forge in the right direction," said Li.

The premier affirmed Beijing's commitment to free trade, on which Chinese leaders have emerged as global advocates in response to Trump's calls for import controls, despite complaints China is the most-closed major economy.

"China will continue to open to the outside world," the premier said. "We welcome other partners to share with us in the development opportunities of

China."

The premier said China will help promote Asian regional trade but wants to work with its neighbors, possibly an attempt to ease concern about Beijing's increasing economic dominance.

"We have an open mind and we are ready to work together with others," Li said. "China has no intention to overreach itself."

Turning to another politically sensitive issue, Li said Beijing has no plans to devalue its yuan to boost exports and will keep its exchange rate stable.

Trump has promised to declare Beijing improperly manipulates its exchange rate, a step that opens the way to possible trade sanctions.

"China has no intention to devalue its currency to boost exports," said Li. He said the exchange rate "will remain generally stable."

Economists say that while Beijing suppressed the yuan's value in the previous decade, more recently market pressures are pushing the currency down relative to the dollar and its exchange rate would fall without

central bank intervention.

The People's Bank of China has been spending tens of billions of dollars a month to keep the yuan in line with the dollar after expectations it would decline led investors to move money out of the country.

The bank's foreign currency reserves have declined by almost USD1 trillion from a peak of \$3.99 trillion in June 2014.

■ Premier Li said Beijing has no plans to devalue its yuan to boost exports and will keep its exchange rate stable

The yuan could face further downward pressure if the U.S. Federal Reserve goes ahead with a widely anticipated interest rate hike. That would increase the return on U.S. bonds and other financial assets, drawing more money out of China.

The premier said Beijing will push ahead with market-oriented reforms of its mechanism for setting the yuan's exchange rate. The band within which the yuan is allowed to fluctuate each day has been gradually widened but Beijing regularly intervenes to guide the currency's movement. **AP**

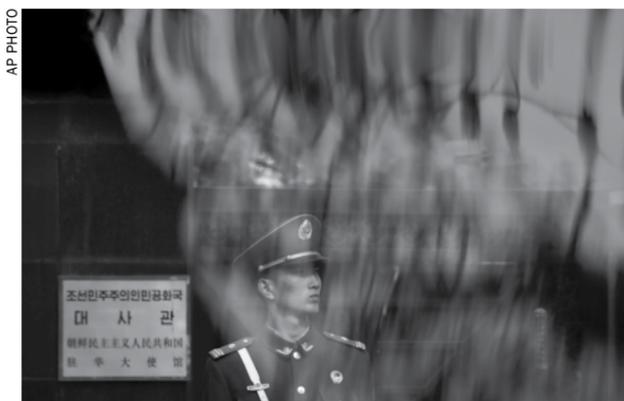
CHINESE Premier Li Keqiang called yesterday for new talks to reduce tensions on the Korean Peninsula, ahead of a visit to the region this week by U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson that is expected to focus heavily on efforts to end North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile programs.

Li said China was a strong supporter of U.N. resolutions aimed at nudging the North toward ending its programs, and had "fully complied" with economic sanctions on Pyongyang.

He acknowledged the rising tensions on the Korean Peninsula and northeast Asia in general, saying any conflict would be disastrous for all sides.

"So what we hope is that all the parties concerned will work together to deescalate the situation, get issues back on the track of dialogue and work together to find proper solutions," Li said at his annual news conference

Li calls for return to talks on Korean nukes



The North Korean embassy in Beijing

held on the final day of the annual legislative session.

China is Pyongyang's most important diplomatically and economic partner, and has been under growing pressure from the U.S. to use its influence to rein in actions by the North seen as provocative.

China has long urged a resumption of six-nation denuclearization talks on hold since North Korea

withdrew from them in 2009, and says its leverage over Pyongyang is limited. Despite that, China last month suspended imports of North Korean coal for the rest of the year, depriving Kim Jong Un's regime of a crucial source of foreign currency.

Tillerson arrives in Beijing on Saturday following visits to U.S. allies Japan and South Korea.

Complicating his mission to Beijing are China's strenuous objections to the initial deployment to South Korea of a U.S. missile defense system that have strained relations between Seoul and Beijing and sparked a snowballing economic boycott against South Korea among some Chinese.

In addition to assuaging China's concerns, Tillerson will also seek to arrange a much-anticipated visit by President Xi Jinping to the United States.

Tensions have escalated over North Korean moves to accelerate its weapons development. The North conducted two nuclear tests and 24 ballistic missile tests last year, deepening concern in Washington that it could soon develop a nuclear-tipped missile capable of reaching the U.S. mainland.

Last week, North Korea launched four missiles into the ocean off Japan as the U.S. and South Korea began annual drills. The allies call the drills routine. Pyongyang regards them as an invasion rehearsal.

Hoping to kick-start discussions, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi last week suggested that North Korea might suspend its nuclear and missile activities in exchange for a

halt to the joint U.S.-South Korea drills.

The U.S. swiftly dismissed the proposal and Li did not repeat it.

However, the premier did indicate that China was growing weary of the constant tensions and threats of conflict surrounding its formerly close communist neighbor.

"It's just common sense that no one wants to see chaos on his doorstep," he said. **AP**

TILLERSON SHUNS ALL BUT CONSERVATIVE WEBSITE ON ASIA TOUR

A REPORTER from a conservative-leaning website is the only media representative accompanying Secretary of State Rex Tillerson on his trip to Asia this week. The website,

the Independent Journal Review, said that IJR reporter Erin McPike is the lone journalist traveling with Tillerson on his tour to Japan, South Korea and China.



Japan one-ups Scotch with whisky, coveted around the world

Yuri Kageyama, Yamazaki

A dim storage room surrounded by bamboo groves and pastoral hills is filled wall-to-wall with 3,000 wooden barrels. Here sleeps, for years, sometimes decades, prized Japanese whisky.

The Suntory distillery in Yamazaki, near the ancient capital of Kyoto, is where the first drop of made-in-Japan malt whisky was distilled in 1924.

These days, Japanese whisky is winning accolades from around the world, often beating the products from Scotland its makers set out to emulate.

In 2003, the Yamazaki 12 Years single malt whisky became the first Japanese whisky to win the gold medal at the International Spirits Challenge, the most authoritative liquor competition in the world. Last year, Hibiki, another Suntory label, won the World's Best Blended Whisky prize at the World Whiskies Awards, for the fourth time. A bottle of Yamazaki Sherry Cask, aged 25 years, fetches thousands of dollars each.

"They have a lot more earthiness to them. They are much more a product of their environment," Wes Barbee, a 23-year-old consultant from Houston, gushed as he joined dozens of Japanese and foreign tourists visiting the Yamazaki distillery and lining up for a taste.

"American and Canadian whisky has nothing on this. It's mass production. This is very intimate. The flavors are carefully chosen," he said.

Japan Inc. abounds with stories of manufacturers like auto-maker Toyota Motor Corp. and

musical instrument manufacturer Yamaha Corp. that at first imitated Western pioneers in their industries but ended up matching if not outdoing them.

Suntory founder Shinjiro Torii was determined to introduce Scotch to Japan. Overcoming early failures, he eventually adapted his methods to distill a whisky palatable to Japanese.

Experts believe that aside from Japan's clean and tasty ground water, its four distinct seasons help to deepen whisky flavors during years of aging.

American and Canadian whisky has nothing on this. It's mass production. This is very intimate.

WES BARBEE
CONSULTANT, HOUSTON

Scotland's many distilleries make blending whisky flavors easy. Suntory had to develop its own array of flavors using various temperatures and combinations of yeasts for fermentation, as well as more complex methods of distilling whisky.

After fermentation, the beige liquid gets heated and distilled in "pot stills," huge metallic containers of varying shapes that can quicken or delay the distilling process, yielding nuances of fla-

vors.

The result is a colorless liquid that smells almost like antiseptic that is stored in barrels, or casks, in a cavernous warehouse designed for aging whiskies. No nails are used in the casks, whose strips of old wood are bound by tightened metal rings. Aging gives whisky its color and personality — what whisky lovers say distinguishes it from wine or beer.

The casks, used over and over again, include old wine and bourbon barrels. Some are from Europe and the U.S. and others are made of Japanese oak. Suntory's three distilleries in Japan house a million casks.

It's a mystery exactly how whisky ages, says Shinji Fukuyo, Suntory's chief blender.

Flavors of each cask are mixed — just right, like a "jigsaw puzzle," he says — to create, and re-create, various kinds of whisky and develop new ones.

A serious-looking, slight man with graying hair, Fukuyo says he avoids garlic or greasy fish, especially for breakfast, to keep his taste buds pure for his job.

"What's important for whisky is that its deliciousness must deepen with aging, sitting in the casks for a long time," said Fukuyo, 55, demonstrating how he examines the whisky in a glass, swirling the crystalline amber spirit against the light.

He gently rolls a sip on his tongue, then spits it out: Fukuyo does 100 such tastings a day, sometimes more than 200. He switches positions of the glasses on the table to remember what he just tasted. There is no time for note-taking.

"It's a clean and beautiful taste.

It's hard to explain in words," he said of Japanese whisky.

Japanese whisky aged in a white oak cask has a hint of citrus or green-apple. One aged in a sherry cask is fragrant, rich and sweet, evocative of dried fruit. Whisky aged in Japanese oak and smoky whisky have pungent, herbal flavors.

The growing popularity of Japan's cuisine has helped win a following for its whisky, which was designed to be consumed with food, experts say.

Nikka Whisky, a unit of Asahi Breweries, froze its overseas expansion in 2014, finding it impossible to keep up with demand, says Emiko Kaji, who manages Nikka's international business.

Nikka Whisky From the Bar-

rel, packaged in a sleek bottle, is doing especially well in Europe, she says.

Sukhinder Singh, owner of London-based retailer The Whisky Exchange, says he has had to ration his supplies of Japanese whisky to hotels and restaurants. He never seems to have enough.

At first, Japanese victories in blindfold whisky contests baffled connoisseurs. By now the Japanese blends have won over even the skeptics, he said.

When whisky expert Jim Murray voted the Yamazaki Sherry Cask the Best Whisky in the World for his 2015 Whisky Bible, its price shot up overnight. Prices of other Japanese whiskies have also been rising.

"Everyone went: We want to buy Japanese," Singh said in a phone interview. "The problem we have at the moment is not selling it. It's getting it.

"We can sell every bottle we can get," he said.

Zoetrope, a tiny bar in a dingy Tokyo backstreet building, is famed among lovers of Japanese whisky.

"Japanese whisky has an unpredictability that makes it fun, and the highly skillful Japanese blenders have created a subtle taste with an impeccable balance," said Atsushi Horigami, Zoetrope's owner and bartender, standing before counters and shelves crammed with colorful bottles.

Thousands of miles away at Festa, a bar in San Francisco, banker Crystal Roseberry was trying Suntory's Yamazaki 12, at USD40 a drink, for the first time.

"Soft, silky, not jarring, elegant, friendly. And it still has a structure of a good whisky, which I think is very important," she said in an interview over an online call. "This whisky is intriguing."

Bar owner Masae Matsumoto was glad to have stocked up on Yamazaki.

"It's gotten impossible to get over the last six months," she said. "Japanese whisky tastes so good." AP



Suntory's chief blender demonstrates how he examines the whisky at the Suntory distillery in Yamazaki near Kyoto, with bottles of Hibiki (left) and Yamazaki 12 years single malt whisky are displayed on the counter

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Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte shakes hands of children after casting his vote for the Dutch general election



Geert Wilders casts his vote for the Dutch general election

THE NETHERLANDS

Dutch voting in election seen as barometer of populism

Mike Corder & Raf Casert,
The Hague

PRIME Minister Mark Rutte and anti-Islam lawmaker Geert Wilders cast yesterday's Dutch parliamentary elections as a litmus test for populism in Europe, only months ahead of crucial votes in France and Germany.

As the nation went to the voting stations on a bright spring morning, two-term premier Rutte's right-wing VVD party was leading in the latest polls, with the anti-Islam Party for Freedom of firebrand lawmaker Geert Wilders a close second.

Coming after last's year British vote to leave the European Union and the election of U.S. President Donald Trump — two stunning successes for po-

pulists — Rutte now hopes to slow the momentum of what he called the “wrong sort of populism.”

“This is a chance for a big democracy like the Netherlands to make a point to stop this toppling over of the domino stones of the wrong sort of populism,” Rutte said after his vote.

Despite positive poll results in recent days Rutte was wary of the results. “There is still a risk that we wake up Thursday morning and seeing that Geert Wilders is leading the biggest party,” he said.

Wilders sought to dampen expectations for himself — but insisted that whatever the result of the election, the kind of populist politics he and others in Europe represent will be here

to stay.

“The genie will not go back into the bottle. People feel misrepresented,” he said, predicting this would show in elections later this year in France and Germany too.

“Despite what the elite wants, politicians are getting strong who have a totally different concept of what the people want them to do,” he said.

Rutte has framed the election as a choice between continuity and chaos, portraying himself as a safe custodian of the nation's economic recovery, while casting Wilders as a far-right radical who would not be prepared to take tough decisions.

The chance of Wilders becoming leader in this country where the proportional representation voting system all but

guarantees coalition governments is small — all mainstream parties, including Rutte's VVD, have ruled out working with Wilders.

Wilders' one-page election manifesto includes pledges to close borders to immigrants from Muslim nations, shuttering mosques and banning the Quran, as well as taking the Netherlands out of the European Union.

The final days of campaigning were overshadowed by a diplomatic crisis between the Dutch and Turkish governments over the refusal of the Netherlands to let two Turkish government ministers address rallies about a constitutional reform referendum next month that could give President Recep Tayyip Erdogan more powers. It showed

Rutte as refusing to bow to pressure from outside, a stance which has widespread backing in the nation.

“It is my task to keep the nation safe and stable and deal with these kinds of people,” said Rutte.

The 12.9 million Dutch voters can cast their ballots until 9 p.m. (8am, today). They have plenty to choose from; there are 28 parties fielding candidates in the splintered political landscape.

The election in the Netherlands comes ahead of polls in France and Germany later this year, when right-wing nationalists will also be key players.

Voting in Amsterdam, Sam Godfried said he tried to turn the tide away from the far right. “The thing is, I think the whole world around us is getting more extreme and it is just getting more polarized,” he said. He did not say who he voted for.

During a final televised debate yesterday among leaders from the parties vying for seats and control of the government, Wilders piled on the anti-Islam invective while Rutte played up his leadership experience.

Rutte has driven through unpopular austerity measures over the last four years, but the Dutch economic recovery has gathered pace and unemployment has fallen fast. So the prime minister is urging voters to stick with him.

Wilders, meanwhile, is tapping into discontent among voters who say they are not benefiting from economic recovery.

With such a knife-edge vote expected, only one thing appeared certain: Talks to form the next ruling coalition will take a while.

“The longest coalition formation was seven months,” said Amsterdam Free University political analyst Andre Krouwel. “It wouldn't surprise me if this results leads to a very complicated and long formation process.” AP

Hackers hijack Twitter accounts over Turkish diplomatic feud

TWITTER says it has revoked access to block “a third-party app” apparently used to hack a number of accounts to broadcast pro-Turkish messages.

It's not clear how many accounts were taken over yesterday [Macau time] but the targets appear to have been entirely random.

Twitter Counter, an Amsterdam-based third party Twitter analytics

company, told The Associated Press it had started an investigation into the matter.

Hackers have hijacked a slew of Twitter profiles amid the ongoing diplomatic feud between Turkey and two European nations, Germany and the Netherlands.

Media reports including from Gizmodo, Engadget and the Guardian say a slew of accounts as varied as UNICEF, Duke Uni-

versity, Amnesty International and Starbucks Argentina have had their accounts compromised by hackers who used them to broadcast pro-Turkish messages.

Neither Twitter nor Twitter Counter immediately provided a figure for the number of accounts affected. UNICEF, Duke, Amnesty, Starbucks and others did not immediately return messages seeking comment, although

they and other high-profile accounts appear to have since returned to normal.

The Twitter hijackings are the latest in a campaign of online vandalism that has followed from days of escalating tensions between Turkey and its European partners over Turkish politicians' hopes to campaign there ahead of their country's constitutional referendum next month. The



dispute has devolved into angry nationalist chest-thumping, a display mirrored online by the defacement of a large number of random Dutch websites.

On Monday alone several hundred websites were hit at a single Dutch

internet hosting provider, Versio, according to an employee who posted a message to the company's help forum.

The hackers who've claimed responsibility for the campaign have so far not returned messages from the AP. AP

Mark Stevenson, Mexico City

MEXICO

Official says 250 skulls found in clandestine graves

MORE than 250 skulls have been found over the last several months in what appears to be a drug cartel mass burial ground on the outskirts of the city of Veracruz, prosecutors said yesterday [Macau time].

Veracruz state's top prosecutor, Jorge Winckler, said the clandestine pits appeared to contain remains of cartel victims killed years ago.

The news came as no surprise to Lucia Diaz, one of the mothers of people who have disappeared whose group is known as Colectivo Solecito.

The mothers pushed authorities to investigate the fields where the skulls were found because they suspected more than a year ago that the wooded area known as Colinas de Santa Fe was a secret burial ground.

In the face of official inaction, the activists themselves went to the fields starting in August 2016, sinking rods into the ground to detect the telltale odor of decomposition, and then digging.

When they find what they believe are burial pits, they alert authorities, who carry out the final excavations.

"We dig holes, but we try not to touch the remains," Diaz said, because DNA may be the only hope of identifying the dead and

'I cannot imagine how many more people are illegally buried there,' [the prosecutor] said, noting the state has reports of about 2,400 people still missing

touching the bones might contaminate them.

Some remains had been found in the area even before the group started its work.

So far, Diaz said, searchers have found about 125 pits that contain about 253 bodies. Nobody knows when the burials



Members of the Solecito search group carry the coffin of Pedro Huesca, a police detective who disappeared in 2013 and was recently found in a mass grave

began, but Diaz said some were quite recent.

"Some of the bodies had a lot of connective tissue. You could see an ear, or recognize part of a face," she said.

Winckler, in the first official recognition, seemed to say the burials occurred before the new state administration took office in December.

"For many years, the drug cartels disappeared people and the authorities were complacent," Winckler said. In an interview with the Televisa network, in apparent

reference to the administration of fugitive former Gov. Javier Duarte and his predecessors.

Duarte resigned as governor two months before his term ended last year and disappeared. He faces charges that include money laundering and organized crime and officials have accused him thoroughly looting state coffers. Winckler said that resources needed for DNA tests in criminal investigation had vanished, leaving officials to depend on help from the federal government and groups such as

the Red Cross.

So far only two sets of remains — a police detective and his assistant — have been identified, Winckler said.

The prosecutor said excavations have covered only a third of the lot where the skulls were found, and more people may be buried there.

"I cannot imagine how many more people are illegally buried there," Winckler said, noting the state has reports of about 2,400 people who are still missing.

"Veracruz is an enormous mass grave," he said.

Diaz also said "it is impossible to say" how many people are buried, and isn't sure the burial ground wasn't used recently. "We don't know when it stopped, or if it stopped." She said searchers found eight bodies just 10 days ago.

The state had long been dominated by the ferocious Zetas cartel. But the Jalisco New Generation cartel began moving in around 2011, sparking bloody turf battles. **AP**

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what's ON



MACAU LITERARY FESTIVAL - THE SCRIPT ROAD CONCERT BY SÉRGIO GODINHO, WITH PIANIST FILIPE RAPOSO
TIME: 8:30pm
VENUE: The Venetian Theatre
ADMISSION: MOP100
ENQUIRIES: (853) 6207 2294

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

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

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

Offbeat

ALASKA RESIDENTS WARNED TO GIVE GRUMPY MOOSE THEIR SPACE

Alaska wildlife officials warned people to keep their distance from grumpy moose after two close calls this past weekend.

One of the animals walked up behind a woman tending chickens in the city of Homer on Sunday and started eating chicken food from a bucket she carried. When she turned, the startled moose kicked her.

"It pulled its nose out of the bucket, looked at her, reared back and kicked her right in the noggin," said Jason Herreman, assistant area biologist for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Another agitated moose twice charged skiers in a lift line Saturday at Alyeska Resort, a downhill ski venue in the resort town of Girdwood, said Ken Marsh, spokesman for Fish and Game. No one was hurt, but authorities advised resort officials to shoot and kill the animal Sunday to remove the threat to skiers.

"Not all moose are looking for a fight right now, but they do tend to get a little cranky this time of year," Marsh said.

In summer, moose eat lush leaves but turn to twigs and other woody material in winter, which are not as nutritious, biologists said. The animals are tired and ready for spring, Marsh said.

Most Alaska residents know better than to get near a moose in mating season or between a moose mother and a new calf, but they generally regard the animals as docile. Moose are a common sight along roads and even streets of Anchorage, the state's largest city.

At the ski resort, the moose was positioned at a blind corner. Skiers had to pass the animal to get to the lift line. As more skiers appeared, the moose became increasingly agitated and charged people twice.

"It sort of ended up resembling the running of the bulls in Pamplona," Marsh said.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	RTPi Live
17:40	Criminal Minds S.9
18:20	Soap Opera (Repeated)
19:10	Non-Daily Portuguese News (Repeated)
19:40	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:30	Castle S6
22:10	Soap Opera
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Champions League Highlights
00:40	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:15	RTPi Live

cinema



CINETEATRO

16 MAR - 21 MAR

KONG: SKULL ISLAND

ROOM 1

(2D): 2:30, 4:45, 9:30pm

(3D): 7:15pm

Director: Jordan Vogt-Roberts

Starring: Tom Hiddleston, Samuel L. Jackson, Brie Larson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 118min



SILENCE

ROOM 2

2:30, 5:30, 9:30pm

Director: Martin Scorsese

Starring: Andrew Garfield, Adam Driver, Liam Neeson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 118min

THE GIRL WITH ALL THE GIFTS

ROOM 3

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

Director: Colm McCarthy

Starring: Gemma Arterton, Glenn Close, Sennia Nanua

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 111min

LA LA LAND

ROOM 3

7:15pm

Director: Damien Chazelle

Starring: Ryan Gosling, Emma Stone

Language: English

Duration: 128min

MACAU TOWER

15 MAR - 29 MAR



BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30pm

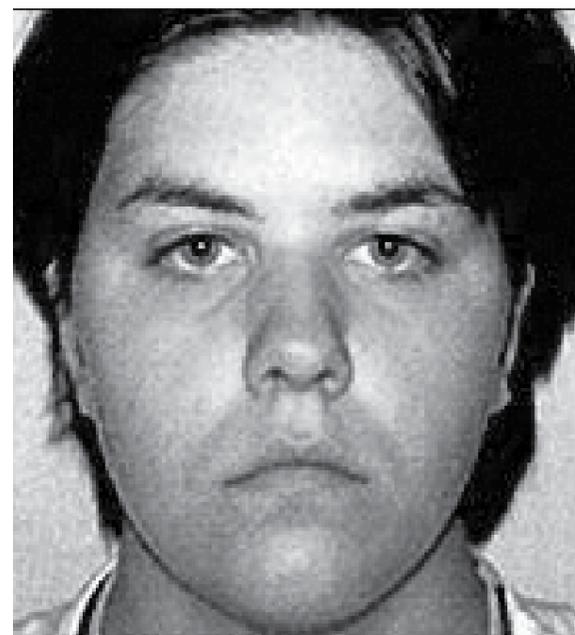
Director: Bill Condon

Starring: Emma Watson, Dan Stevens, Luke Evans

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 129min

this day in history

**2001 TEENAGE WOMAN GUILTY OF RAPE**

An 18-year-old woman has been convicted of rape after she pinned down a victim during a horrific gang sex attack.

Claire Marsh is thought to be the youngest woman in Britain to be convicted of rape after she also punched the 37-year-old victim in the face and ripped off her top as she was gang-raped on a canal towpath.

A 15-year-old boy, who is too young to be named, forced the woman to have sex, while others in the 14-strong group - including a boy aged 12 - shouted encouragement as the brutal attack unfolded shortly after midnight on 22 July last year.

Marvin Edwards, 18, Brentford, west London, also raped the woman, after she had been thrown into the Grand Union Canal in Ladbroke Grove, west London and dragged out.

Two boys aged 15 and 16 were cleared of the same charge at Blackfriars Crown Court in London.

Judge Timothy Pontius told Marsh's barrister: "She will know that, given that this was a particularly vile and horrific offence of sexual brutality, a substantial custodial sentence is inevitable."

At the start of the two-and-a-half-week trial Richard Whittam, for the prosecution, told the jury Marsh, from Margate, Kent, as female could be convicted of rape because she encouraged it.

The woman's ordeal began when she set off home by the canal after a "lovely summer's evening" with friends.

A young couple approached her to share a cannabis "spliff" but suddenly she was surrounded and robbed before being thrown into the canal.

As she got out they grabbed her and she was raped. She briefly escaped but was caught by the gang, kicked and punched repeatedly and dragged naked along a gravel path, lacerating her bare skin.

Eventually she fled naked to her home more than a mile away.

Gang members were arrested after a tip-off and DNA evidence proved Edwards' guilt.

Marsh admitted hitting the woman but denied taking part in the sex attack.

She was remanded in custody for reports and will be sentenced at a later date along with the 15-year-old, who admitted rape, and Edwards.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Claire Marsh was given a seven year custodial sentence in a young offenders' institute for her part in the vicious attack.

Her two co-accused, aged 15 and 18, were sentenced to five years.

Police said it was the gang's need to boast about the crimes which allowed officers to piece together evidence overheard by the public.

Marsh, described by officers as intelligent, is rumoured to have become involved in the gang because of a relationship with one of them and may have been trying to "show off".

Home Office figures show between 1995 and 1999, 18 women were convicted of rape or aiding and abetting it, but most of those were against children.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Why limit yourself? Today offers wonderful experiences for every one of your senses - including your sixth. Take full advantage of every opportunity and keep your eyes and ears wide open.

Taurus April 20-May 20 It may be slow going at the start of the day, but don't let yourself get discouraged too easily. The people around you have some excellent ideas to share, and will be looking to you to put the finishing touches on things.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 There's no time like the present to grab the bull by the horns. Whether you need to move things forward at work, school or in a relationship, now is the time to give it your best shot!

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 You're all about giving - or at least you should be if you want all the joy that's due to you. People will be reaching out for some advice or help that's easy to give, so give it.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Fanciful ideas and romantic wishes have been blooming inside your head. They're all so pretty, and it's a waste that no one sees them but you. The time is right to share them with a person who loves you the most.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 An exciting opportunity could be coming your way soon - but are you prepared to take it on? Clear out your busywork to make sure. Run those errands and take care of the little things you've been putting off.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 There has been a steady progression of your passions: First they started in your rational brain. Then they took up residence in your heart, growing into something that you truly believed in. But they will move into your gut.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Today will be all about feeding your brain, so explore the things you don't know much about. If a conversation drifts toward political issues or world events, keep up with it.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Everyone doesn't have to be your favorite person, but right now you should get to know a difficult personality a little bit better. Accepting the people you don't like will ultimately free you from their influence.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 A work or school drama is carrying over into your free time, and this is growing into a problem. The fact is, people are demanding too much of you right now. It's time to be clear about what you can (and cannot) do for them.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 People always rely on you to do the right thing, and that's an incredibly valuable (and flattering) position to be in. Don't dilute your point of view to appease other, more powerful people.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 The pace of the day will be fast - but you'll love every minute of it. For a while now you've been itching for the people around you to pick up the pace, and you will definitely get your wish now.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

5x5 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle with numbers 1-9.

Easy+

5x5 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle with numbers 1-9.

Medium

5x5 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle with numbers 1-9.

Hard

5x5 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle with numbers 1-9.

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Stoker; 8- Pungent sauce; 15- Monotonous; 16- Premier player; 17- Venerates; 18- Unhurried ease; 19- Dirt; 20- Get ready to drive; 22- Skid row woe; 23- ___-bitsy; 24- As ___ resort; 25- Usher's offering; 26- Never, to Nietzsche; 27- Not dead yet; 28- Slight trace; 29- Petrol; 31- Strong suits; 32- Respiratory organ; 33- Low-cal; 34- Hours of operation; 37- Treacle; 41- Poles, e.g.; 42- "Bolero" composer; 43- Capote, to friends; 44- Own; 45- Sublease; 46- Composition in verse; 47- Shoshone language member; 48- French beans?; 49- Twist into ridges; 50- Skyway; 52- Unlawful; 54- Entrails; 55- Having a tail; 56- Contrary to; 57- One bent in reverence;

DOWN: 1- Signing illegally; 2- Sluggishness; 3- Examines and corrects; 4- Foe; 5- Oliver Twist's request; 6- Got fed up?; 7- Young bird; 8- "Unto the Sons" author; 9- Aboriginal Alaskan; 10- Radar screen element; 11- Pack animal; 12- Scholar; 13- Transport cost; 14- Brother of Electra; 21- Gutter locale; 24- Skirt style; 25- Fathers; 27- Grads; 28- Sum; 30- Martini garnish; 31- ___ mignon; 33- Pining for one's amour; 34- City in S Argentina; 35- Chromium use; 36- Restaurant in Greece; 37- Boy or man; 38- Impassive; 39- Recluse; 40- Packhorse; 42- Student's second chance; 45- Tears; 46- Self-respect; 48- Mountain lake; 49- What you're reading right now; 51- China's Chou En-___; 53- PC linkup;



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Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993
Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
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SKIING

Hirscher soon off to island to unwind after rewarding year

Pat Graham, Aspen

MARCEL Hirscher's not-so-distant plans include spending two weeks on an island, where he will read books, watch movies and stare into the sea as he ponders this: Does he really want to keep ski racing?

Don't read too much into it, though. It's an annual rite for the Austrian standout who has captured six straight overall World Cup titles. After each season, he takes his time to gauge just how much he wants to return to the World Cup circuit.

Sometimes, Hirscher rediscovers his passion by May. And sometimes, it takes until October. But his appetite always returns.

"At the moment, I'm not sure if I'm doing next year's season," the 28-year-old Hirscher casually said as he hung out by an outdoor pool during a warm day on the eve of World Cup Finals where he's already



Austria's Marcel Hirscher poses with a cake made to celebrate his sixth straight overall World Cup title after winning a giant slalom Saturday

clinched the overall, slalom and giant slalom titles. "I always need a little bit of time to see how is my physical status, how is the mental thing — is the fire still burning? These are a lot of

questions. No worries, though, all the years prove it's always the same."

All the years also prove he can't be caught as he keeps setting the bar higher and higher.

This season, he became the first man to win six overall World Cup titles. On the women's side, only fellow Austrian Annemarie Moser-Proell has won six championships.

"I just feel like Marcel's really the one athlete on the men's or women's side that's always there, always, always shows up on game day and probably in training as well," said American Mikaela Shiffrin, who's closing in on her first overall title. "He doesn't win every single race, but if he's not winning, he's second. He's so consistent."

Hirscher's surrounded by a coach, ski servicemen and physiotherapists, whose sole task is keeping him running at top form.

It's an enviable position.

"Marcel has changed the sport, in the way of the team concept," said Norway's Henrik Kristoffersen, who beat Hirscher for the slalom title last season. "It's still important to have a team, but it's really important as well

to have individual differences, the way he does it. [...] Everything is as close to perfect as it can get with logistics, training, everything.

"To have the opportunities Marcel has, to put in the work he does, then maybe one day we could catch him."

Hirscher doesn't compete against racers so much as himself and the course. He could finish in second and may not be the least bit pleased with his skiing.

"I know how fast I can go and if I'm not reaching my 100 percent maximum, then I'm not happy with myself," Hirscher said. "It doesn't matter if I've won the six globes or not. I want to be as good as it is possible for myself."

Hirscher is so unflappable on the slopes that not even a falling drone can distract him. That's what happened during a race in Italy in December 2015. The drone carrying a TV camera for a broadcast crew crashed to the snow just behind Hirscher on his second run. It led the international ski federation to announce it was banning camera drones from its World Cup races.

For as dominating as he's been over the years, there is one thing missing from his portfolio — an Olympic gold medal. **AP**

AD

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Steve Douglas, Leicester

FOOTBALL

Time for Europe's elite to start taking Leicester seriously

THE obvious answer was Barcelona or Real Madrid. Bayern Munich would have been understandable, too.

But when Gianluigi Buffon was asked which team he would like to avoid in the draw for the Champions League quarterfinals, the Juventus goalkeeper went for competition's big outsider.

"Leicester," the Italy great said, "because it is a dangerous team, a team which will have enthusiasm, a team which has the weapons to cause trouble for teams who want to take the initiative."

Against Leicester, Buffon added, "there would also be everything to lose."

Indeed, the previously unheralded club from central England is making a habit of embarrassing Europe's big teams.

Last season, the cream of English soccer couldn't live with Leicester, which romped to the Premier League title by 10 points at odds of 5,000-1. This season, they've moved onto the Champions League, topping a group that contained two-time European champion FC Porto before eliminating Sevilla — a club that has won the Europa League the past three years — in the last 16.

"We are in there on merit, make no mistake," Leicester manager Craig Shakespeare said, looking ahead to tomorrow's quarterfinal draw. "We might be the surprise team."

Except no one should be surprised by Leicester anymore. This is



Leicester's Wes Morgan (second left) celebrates with team mates after he scores a goal during the Champions League round of 16 second leg against Sevilla

a team playing soccer in a simple but highly effective way and specializing in making possible the impossible.

It's time to take them seriously. Shakespeare was asked after the 2-0 win over Sevilla yesterday, which sealed a 3-2 victory on aggregate, whether playing against Europe's power clubs would actually suit his counter-attacking team. He seemed to agree.

"You have to be concerned about the opposition and know their strengths," he said. "But I think as a football club, we have to know

our strengths. And you saw that in abundance [against Sevilla], in terms of desire, and we can play a bit as well."

At times, it felt as if Sevilla had never seen Leicester play before, such was the way it was exposing itself to Leicester's high-energy, counter-attacking style. The last thing a team should do when playing Leicester is leave space behind the defense for Jamie Vardy or Riyad Mahrez to run into, or give away free kicks around the penalty area to bring big center backs Wes Morgan and Robert

Huth into goal-scoring contention.

Sevilla did just that.

Even during a Premier League season where Leicester has mostly struggled in its title defense, Manchester City and Liverpool showed arrogance in coming to the King Power Stadium and refusing to tailor their tactics to stifle Leicester. They both took the game to Leicester, left gaps in behind and were beaten 4-2 and 3-1, respectively.

Would Barcelona or Madrid or Bayern do the same? Or would they respect the English champions?

"We had a game plan [against Sevilla], we stuck to it and it came off perfectly," said Leicester midfielder and scorer Marc Albrighton, one of the players who does the simple things well — work hard, get good crosses into the box, close down opponents.

Against Sevilla, it was the classic Leicester of last season, the kind of performance that shook the Premier League.

Vardy ran tirelessly, got in opponents' faces — Samir Nasri was given a second yellow for aiming a headbutt at the striker — and was generally a nuisance. Shin-

ji Okazaki was a hard-working link between midfield and attack. Huth and Morgan defended deeply and obdurately. Mahrez showed flashes of his individual ability and set up the first goal for Morgan with a free kick.

Against Sevilla, it was the classic Leicester of last season, the kind of performance that shook the Premier League

In the final days of Claudio Ranieri's tenure, Leicester's players had lost the values that took them to the top of the English game. Those values are back under Shakespeare and it could yet lead the team to an even greater achievement than last season.

Leicester, after all, is 360 minutes away from a Champions League final. **AP**

England, Argentina in with South Korea in U20 World Cup

ENGLAND and Argentina will renew their soccer rivalry in the group stage of the Under-20 World Cup in May.

At the official draw yesterday, England and Argentina were placed in Group A along with tournament host South Korea and Guinea.

The draw took place in the city of Suwon, just south of the capital Seoul, and featured former Argentina stars Diego Maradona and Pablo Aimar, who won the trophy as players in 1979 and 1997 respectively.

"Argentina has good players but they have to improve if they want to get through," Maradona said. "But I don't see them as a favourite."

Italy and Uruguay will meet in Group D along with Japan and South Africa, while the United

States was grouped with Ecuador, Senegal and Saudi Arabia in Group F.

Portugal's expected to progress from Group C, which also contains Iran, C. Rica and Zambia

New Zealand, the 2015 tournament host, was placed in Group E with France, Honduras and Vietnam. Germany, Venezuela, Vanuatu and Mexico are in Group A.

Portugal will be expected to progress from



Argentina's former soccer player Pablo Aimar holds up the name of South Africa during the official draw for the FIFA U-20 World Cup Korea 2017 in Suwon, South Korea

Group C, which also contains Iran, Costa Rica and Zambia.

The tournament kicks off May 20 and the final is scheduled for June 11. Serbia, which claimed

its first Under-20 World Cup title with a dramatic extra-time winner against Brazil in 2015, did not qualify for the 2017 edition in South Korea. **AP**

ASIAN CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Guangzhou Evergrande denied victory by late penalty

BIG-SPENDING Chinese club Guangzhou Evergrande was held to a 1-1 draw in the Asian Champions League this week after conceding an injury-time penalty against Japanese team Kawasaki Frontale.

Yu Kobayashi scored from the spot five minutes into injury time at Tianhe Stadium after Yu Hanchao had handled in the area.

Guangzhou, the six-time defending Chinese league champions coached by Luiz Felipe Scolari, took the lead in the first half of the Group G match when Brazilian midfielder Alan Carvalho scored from the edge of the area — his third goal in as many ACL games.

"Normally we could score two or three goals

to win the match in such an occasion like tonight, but unfortunately we couldn't score even one more goal to clinch the victory," Scolari was quoted as saying by Xinhua.

Guangzhou and Suwon Bluewings each have five points in the group. The South Korean club beat Hong Kong team Eastern SC 1-0.

In a Group E match in Japan, Kashima Antlers beat Brisbane Roar 3-0, leaving the Australian club at the bottom of the standings with one point and a minus-9 goal differential. The three Australian clubs in the tournament have yet to register a win in this year's competition.

Brisbane coach John Aloisi said that despite the score, he felt the Roar played well. **AP**

opinion

Girl About Globe

Linda Kennedy



MAN TIGHTS

It's 9.30a.m. and 11 degrees at Yuen Long MTR station in Hong Kong. And there are a lot of men in tights. Super hero convention?

Upon closer inspection, these tights are footless. Eighties appreciation society?

No, Yuen Long is the man muster point for Sunday warriors. These guys are cyclists and runners.

I am there waiting for hiking friends, though tightless.

The Sunday warriors are not entirely comfortable in their man tights. There is discreet pulling at gussets under their shorts. Some frustration that protein bar crumbs stick to the tights' fabric and defy being easily brushed off. Some worry that drips from an isotonic sports drink will mark the fabric and some irony that utilitarian water is required to dab these stains-to-be.

We all go about our sporting activities for the day. Later that night, I wonder if the Sunday warriors are putting their man tights in the wash. Are they in a tangle? A man-tight-tangle?

A few days later, I ask a male friend about this new fashion for man tights. He bristles. 'They are compression tights,' he says.

Compression tights? What new 'hosiery-for-him' is this? I Sherlock it (seeing as we are using cool man expressions instead of normal words).

My investigations discover 'compression tights' have heroic sporting attributes. They are part-Olympian, part-lycra. In reviews on blogs, men write of their legs going from 'slack to firm, without any flexing' then go on to marvel at how 'sleek and aerodynamic' they look in their compression tights.

The claims of sports retailers are yet more red-blooded. 'Compression tights deliver power and stamina.' They 'focus your muscles'. I wonder if these tights are legal.

Here comes the rub, guys. Well, the other rub. In tights departments across the world, women – and inevitably the one man who is bizarrely there with his wife or girlfriend – know very well about the existence of shaper tights and slimming leggings. They promise to tame our tummies and tone our pear-shaped bottoms. Sunday warriors – say hello to what your compression tights actually are. They are a 'nom de guerre' for slimming tights targeting your man-problem areas. Sure, thigh-slayers. Conquistadors of your glutes and guts. But slimming tights nonetheless.

And be aware, blokes, these are gateway slimming garments. Spanx are knickers that hold your stomach in, and you're not that far away from a shopping trip for 'compression sports shorts', are you? Or a 'compression sports vest' which, you will deny with fury, would actually be a garment to pull in your torso, which would make it... a man corset?

Hey, I'd be happy to leave you to romp around in your compression gear, except for one thing: there is a dividend of giving clothes fancy names and claims, and the implications of aggrandizing apparel is evident on the hangers of sport stores. Exercise clothes are now enormously expensive because of the extra skills they have amassed.

A recent search for a basic hoodie led me to several audible expulsions of air – good cardio, shopping, - after seeing the price. HKD669 for a top in Adidas?

How come so expensive, I asked. 'It's attire for my pre-game zone,' I was told, being further directed to the inspirational quotes from athletes in different languages in the lining. I don't need encouragement by my armpit. Nor do I want to pay for it.

Sunday warriors, it is rare I invite men into the ladies' underwear department. But most of you are small-boned Asian guys. Just buy actual shaper tights and female Spanx – and save us all from a manflationary effect on the price of exercise gear.

THE BUZZ PHILIPPINE VP BLASTS DUTERTE'S DRUG CRACKDOWN, CITES ABUSES

The Philippine vice president has raised alarms over the president's bloody crackdown against illegal drugs, which she says can't be solved "with bullets alone," and she also asked Filipinos to "defy brazen incursions on their rights."

The comments are one of Vice President Leni Robredo's sharpest critiques so far of President Rodrigo Duterte's campaign and are likely to antagonize him because they are intended for an

international forum of human rights advocates, whom he has often lambasted.

Robredo's office issued a videotape of her comments to media yesterday. In her speech to be shown today in a U.N.-linked forum on extrajudicial killings in Vienna, Austria, she cited specific complaints of abuses, including how close relatives of drug suspects have been threatened if the real targets were not found by enforcers.

BOTTOM LINE

Trump earned USD153m and paid 36.5m in taxes in 2005

PRESIDENT Donald Trump earned USD153 million and paid \$36.5 million in income taxes in 2005, paying a roughly 25 percent effective tax rate thanks to a tax he has since sought to eliminate, according to highly sought-after newly-disclosed tax documents.

The pages from Trump's federal tax return show the then-real estate mogul also reported a business loss of \$103 million that year, although the documents don't provide detail. The forms show that Trump paid an effective tax rate of 24.5 percent, a figure well above the roughly 10 percent the average American taxpayer forks over each year, but below the 27.4 percent that taxpayers earning 1 million dollars a year average were paying at the time, according to data from the Congressional Joint Committee on Taxation.

The tax forms were obtained by journalist David Cay Johnston, who runs a website called DCReport.org, and reported on MSNBC's "The Rachel Maddow Show." Johnston, who has long reported on tax issues, said he received the documents in the mail, unsolicited.

Trump's hefty business loss appears to be a continued benefit from his use of a tax loophole in the 1990s, which



allowed him to deduct previous losses in future years. In 1995, Trump reported a loss of more than \$900 million, largely as a result of financial turmoil at his casinos.

Tax records obtained by The New York Times last year showed the losses were so large they could have allowed Trump to avoid paying taxes for up to 18 years. But Trump's 2005 filing shows that another tax prevented him from realizing the full benefit of those deductions.

The bulk of Trump's tax bill that year was due to the Alternative Minimum Tax, a tax aimed at preventing high-income earners from paying minimal taxes.

The AMT requires many

taxpayers to calculate their taxes twice – once under the rules for regular income tax and then again under AMT – and then pay the higher amount. Critics say the tax has ensnared more middle-class people than intended, raising what they owe the federal government each year.

Were it not for the AMT, Trump would have avoided all but a few million dollars of his 2005 tax bill.

Trump's campaign website called for the end of the AMT, which is expected to bring in more than \$350 billion in revenues from 2016 to 2025.

As a candidate and as president, Trump has refused to release his tax returns, breaking a decades-long tradition. AP

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

MDT Reader



Phantom's four. A highlight of Tuesday night's show at the Parisian Macao. The Three Phantoms in the pic are Kieran Brown (Scotland, center), David Shannon (Ireland, left) and Earl Carpenter (UK). Ah, yes, and Alistair Barron... out of the frame.

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	35-50 Good	
High Density Residential Area	45-65 Moderate	
Ambient	50-70 Moderate	

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS

SOUTH KOREA It was hard to imagine that ousted President Park Geun-hye could get any more unpopular in South Korea – until she moved out of the presidential palace and left her nine dogs behind. An animal rights group accused Park of animal abandonment.



PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN

The closure of the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan is more than inconvenient; it is costly. Officials on both sides of the border say in just one month, the closure has resulted in hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost trade, and tons of perishable goods have rotted in stranded trucks.

UKRAINE yesterday announced a transport blockade of rebel-held areas that is likely to cause serious economic disruption and could threaten a precarious cease-fire in the east of the country.



NETHERLANDS

As the Netherlands elects new leadership, its European neighbors are watching with unusual interest – because the struggle between nationalist, anti-immigrant politicians and pro-EU forces is playing out across the continent in several elections this year. More on p14

MEXICO More than 250 skulls have been found over the last several months in what appears to be a drug cartel mass burial ground on the outskirts of the city of Veracruz. According to officials in the country, the pits appear to contain remains of cartel victims killed years ago. More on p15