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# Times

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

### WORLD BRIEFS

**CHINA** Its factory activity ticked up again last month to its highest level in five years, according to an official survey released Friday, in a fresh sign that the world's No. 2 economy is picking up steam.



**COLOMBIA** A grim search for the missing is ongoing in southern Colombia after surging rivers sent an avalanche of floodwaters, mud and debris through a city, killing at least 200 people and leaving many more injured and homeless.

**USA** The U.S. envoy to the UN says she's maintaining a hard line against Russia, even as her boss - Donald Trump - continues to dismiss reported Russian involvement in the 2016 U.S. election as fake news. "Certainly I think Russia was involved in the election. There's no question about that," Nikki Haley said.

**PAKISTAN** The custodian of a local shrine and his accomplices killed 20 devotees after intoxicating them in eastern Punjab province, police said yesterday, in what officials said was the outcome of a dispute over custodianship of the shrine.

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FINANCIAL TIMES

Toyota's hydrogen gamble

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### FASTEST GROWTH IN 8 MONTHS

# Gambling revenue rises 18pct in March

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### 10TH EDITION CLOSSES

# Organizers: MIECF is 'a major fixture for the int'l environmental industry'

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## ENVIRONMENT

## MIECF concludes with positive feedback

**T**HE three-day 2017 Macau International Environment Co-operation Forum and Exhibition (MIECF) came to a close on Saturday, marking the event's first full decade as a "Green Platform".

According to a statement by the Macau Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM), the event has "gradually become a major fixture for the international environmental industry."

In marking the 10th anniversary of MIECF, this year's event focused on "Innovative Green Development for a Sustainable Future."

The Environmental Protection Bureau of the MSAR and the Environmental Protection Department of Guangdong Province signed an agreement known as "2017-2020 Agreement on Environmental Protection Co-operation between Guangdong and Macau." The agreement aims to promote closer collaboration on environmental issues between Macau and its neighboring province.

Organizers also collaborated with the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office of the Ministry of Environmental Protection to organize a session titled "The Blueprint for Innovative Green Development."

This year's exhibition area was of similar size to last year's event, said organizers. Additionally, a new "Showcase Area for Innovative Environmental Protection Technologies" was set up inside this year's Macao Pavilion to highlight new green technologies, products and services.

The Beijing and Czech Pavilions both debuted this year, as organizers invited exhibitors from both countries to display their respective green products and services in a specialized manner. Meanwhile, the European Pavilion showcased 30 green technology companies.

Conference attendees hailed mainly from the Pan-Pearl River Delta Region and the European Union. During a session on the Pan-Pearl River Delta Region cooperation, Jiang Xiaoting, the president of Sichuan Province Environmental Science Association, shared his experiences from recent trips to Portugal and Brazil.

Separately, IPIM arranged a trip to the city of Zhongshan in Guangdong Province on April 1 (Saturday) for delegations from the EU, Portuguese-speaking countries and Macau that attended the conference.

Achim Steiner, a former executive director of the United Na-



People visit the Beijing Pavilion at MIECF

tions Environment Programme and current international vice-chair of the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development, was the keynote speaker this year. He discussed public policy and incentives regarding environmental matters, analyzed several cases and shared his views

on environmental strategies and technologies.

A total of eight sessions were held at the "Green Forum." 50 renowned experts from the environmental sector were invited, including activists, business leaders from multinational enterprises and regional policymakers. These experts came from main-

land China, the United States, Australia, Brazil, the U.K., Israel, Japan, Portugal, Thailand, Hong Kong and Macau.

They hosted in-depth discussions on various topics, including innovative green development policies, business strategies for manufacturing industries, tourism in coastal regions and cities and green buildings.

Meanwhile, China's Ministry of Science and Technology hosted the "Showcase Area for the 12th Five-Year Plan Environmental Technology Achievements" exhibition, highlighting national technological developments. IPIM said the segment covered "breakthrough technology solutions in air quality monitoring and air pollution control," among others.

A "Green Public Day" was held on the final day of the conference, opening the event to the public. Organizers hosted activities for parents and children, as well as performances, creating "a lively atmosphere at the venue."

Potted plants were distributed on-site to encourage the public to experience a green lifestyle. The organizers also opened an "Eco-Market", which sold eco-friendly products.

The 11th MIECF will be held from April 12 to 14, 2018.

## 'Babel' bookshelf to be exhibited in Milan



Rui Leão

**L**OCAL architect Rui Leão has been selected to participate in the 20th anniversary edition of the annual

Italian exhibition, SaloneSatellite. Organized by the Salone del Mobile and curated this year by Beppe Finessi, the exhibition

has been promoting new and emerging designers since its inception.

Leão's work to be exhibited, titled "Babel", is one of 500 design pieces chosen from the 20,000 or so pieces that have been exhibited over the last 20 years of the exhibition.

The first "Babel" bookshelf was designed in the year 2000 and selected for the 7th SaloneSatellite in 2004. It was showcased at The Furniture Society at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair in New York City in 2008,

and at Exponor Furniture Fair in Porto, Portugal.

"SaloneSatellite: 20 Years of New Creativity" is one of the five exhibitions to be held at the 56th edition of the Salone del Mobile, the world's largest design fair.

Attracting more than 300,000 visitors from 165 different countries and exhibiting an extensive range of pieces from furniture to lighting, the event has become a major platform and one of the most important furniture fairs in the world, making Milan the capital meeting point of design, according to organizers.

The exhibition will be held at Fabbrica del Vapore in Milan between April 4 and 9, with a total of five different exhibitions.

## Joint exhibition at Anim'Arte launches

**A**N exhibition, titled "Puzzle City x Comer - Double Solo Exhibition by Bunny Lai x Julia Lam", was inaugurated on Saturday at Anim'Arte Nam Van. Jointly organized by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) and the Macau Artist Society, the exhibition features a number of oil paintings and illustrations by two young female artists.

According to the IC, the artworks in the "Puzzle City" exhibition by Bunny Lai explores social features of the times and expresses an awareness of social changes.

"The 'Puzzle' represents the characteristics of old buildings in Macau, bringing out urban architecture

as one of the characteristics of the city," noted the statement.

Meanwhile, "Comer" is a cuisine themed exhibition by Julia Lam. This year, Lam was invited by the Yun Yi Arts and Cultural Communication Association to illustrate Cecilia Jorge's upcoming book, "Colors in the Pot". Her illustrations will be showcased at this exhibition.

"Puzzle City x Comer" is open daily from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. at the Lakeside Gallery at Anim'Arte Nam Van located at Avenida Panorâmica do Lago Nam Van. The exhibition is open to the public and the artworks are available for sale.

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# Macao Daily, Portuguese newspaper enter content-sharing agreement



Macao Daily headquarters

LOCAL Chinese-language newspaper Macao Daily News (Ou Mun Yat Po) has signed an agreement with a Portuguese economy newspaper (Jornal Económico) to share content.

According to Portuguese media outlet Meios & Publicidade, the agreement will be effective starting this month.

Macao Daily News will feature a section on Portuguese business, which will be produced by the Portuguese newspaper and translated into Chinese.

The Portuguese newspaper will also run a weekly

segment for Chinese news, using content from Macao Daily News.

The segment will be published in the original Chinese text, as well as a Portuguese translation. The Portuguese paper said in a statement last Friday that the partnership will see both publications working together to "foster cooperation as well as [strengthen] economic, cultural and political ties between the two countries, taking advantage of Macau's great potential as a meeting point between Portuguese-speaking countries and China."



The recently opened Legend Palace Hotel Casino

# Casino revenue maintains growth momentum as bettors return

MACAU'S casino revenue growth in March accelerated at the fastest pace in eight months, as both high rollers and leisure gamblers return to the world's largest gaming hub.

Gross gaming receipts rose 18.1 percent to MOP21.2 billion (USD2.65 billion), according to data released by Macau's Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau Saturday. That follows a 17.8 percent jump in February and compares with the median esti-

mate for a 15 percent increase in a Bloomberg survey of eight analysts.

The gaming recovery is gathering momentum as revenue from both high-stakes VIP and leisure gamblers bounces back in Macau, the only place in China where gambling is legal, after a two-year slump amid a crackdown on corruption. The Bloomberg Intelligence index of Macau gaming shares increased 11.1 percent in March compared with a 1.6 percent gain

in the benchmark Hang Seng Index.

There are "limited negative catalysts" in the next three to six months, Daiwa Capital Markets Hong Kong Ltd. analysts Jamie Soo and Adrian Chan said in a note on March 29. They said first-quarter earnings at Macau casino operators could throw a "positive surprise," with adjusted earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization gaining more than 20 percent from a year earlier. **Bloomberg**

Macau Daily Times contest



## BIBAP Delicious Musical

Question for readers:

Until when will BIBAP be showing at The Parisian Theatre?

Please email the answers to: [bibap@macaudailytimes.com](mailto:bibap@macaudailytimes.com) Along with your name and contact details.

### Tickets - Giveaway

Four sets of two tickets each will be awarded to the four readers who send us the correct answers the fastest. The contest will run for four days (Monday to Thursday), each day with a different question to be answered. Each ticket is valued at MOP480 for a total prize value of MOP3,840.

Tickets from MOP180 are now available through [cotaiticketing.com](http://cotaiticketing.com) or 2882 8818.

Created to celebrate the national dish of bibimbap and promote Korean food culture worldwide, BIBAP is a comedy deliciously blending martial arts, street dance and hip-hop that takes place at The Parisian Macao from April 7 to 23, 2017. Prices start from MOP/HKD180 and tickets are now available via [cotaiticketing.com](http://cotaiticketing.com) or call 2882 8818.

BIBAP is the story of a cooking competition between two master chefs, Green Chef and Red Chef, at 'BIBAP' restaurant, alongside six other hyperactive performers also dressed as chefs. Revolving around the Korean national dish of spicy rice, vegetables and beef called bibimbap, it is a nonverbal performance incorporating

music, beat box and b-boying (breakdancing), acrobatics and singing, which debuted in 2009 and has now been performed all over the world. Audiences can expect to be dragged into the fun, with the cast encouraging them to handle and even taste the food, tidy up the stage and generally get involved throughout the Macao show. Spontaneous blind dates between audience

members are also not unknown! The audience plays an even bigger role in that the performers observe crowd reaction to decide the way show will progress, so no two evenings are ever the same. Book your tickets now and join Red Chef, Green Chef, MC Chef, Rhythm Chef, Sexy Chef, Cutie Chef, Iron Chef and Rookie Chef for BIBAP – the most fun you can have in the kitchen!



AD

## KIM JONG NAM MURDER

# Malaysia interviewed, cleared 3 North Koreans before they left

**M**ALAYSIA'S police chief said Friday that three North Koreans who had been hiding out in their country's embassy for weeks were allowed to fly home after investigators cleared them of wrongdoing in the death of Kim Jong Nam.

Malaysia and North Korea struck a deal last week to end a diplomatic standoff over the Feb. 13 murder of Kim Jong Nam, the estranged half brother of North Korean ruler Kim Jong Un.

Although details of what led to the agreement were not released, it gave North Korea custody of the body and allowed Malaysia to question the three men who were hiding in the embassy.

Earlier this month, national police chief Khalid Abu Bakar had hinted that the men had valuable intelligence, saying he would wait to question them, "even if it takes five years."

But on Friday, in the wake of the larger political deal with North Korea, Khalid said authorities recorded statements from the men and released them. "We have ob-



Malaysians who were stranded in Pyongyang walk with Malaysia's Foreign minister Anifah Aman (center right) after arriving at Kuala Lumpur International airport

tained whatever we wanted from them," Khalid told reporters. "We have allowed them to go."

It was an abrupt turnaround in a bizarre case that is part diplomatic drama, part murder mystery. Investigators say Kim Jong Nam, who was in his 40s, was poisoned at the Kuala Lumpur airport by two young women wielding VX nerve agent, a banned chemical weapon.

Although Malaysia never directly accused North Korea of carrying out the attack, speculation is rampant that it orchestrated a hit on a long-exiled member of its ruling elite.

Malaysian investigators had said they wanted to question seven North Koreans in the case: four men who left the country the day of the attack, and the three

who were holed up inside the North Korean Embassy in Kuala Lumpur.

The three men who were hiding in the embassy — including an embassy official and a North Korean airline worker — flew Thursday to Beijing, where they were seen at the airport Friday, presumably on their way home.

## Legally speaking, Kim Jong Un is the next of kin.

KHALID ABU BAKAR  
NATIONAL POLICE CHIEF

"[The] investigation into the murder is still ongoing," Khalid said Friday. "We are still hoping the North Korea authorities will hand over to us the four North Korean suspects we have named earlier on."

That is highly unlikely. North Ko-

rea has denied having anything to do with the killing and has slammed Malaysia's investigation as flawed and politically motivated.

North Korea has not even publicly acknowledged that the victim was, in fact, Kim Jong Nam. Instead, it refers to him as Kim Chol, the name on the passport he was carrying at the time of his death.

"I'm sure they know very well" who the man really is, Khalid said Friday. He said that on the day the victim died, the North Korean Embassy identified him as Kim Jong Nam before insisting he was Kim Chol the next day.


Khalid added that Malaysia released Kim Jong Nam's body after receiving a request from his next of kin. Without specifying exactly who sent the letter, Khalid said, "Legally speaking, Kim Jong Un is the next of kin."

Kim Jong Nam had three children with two women in Macau and mainland China.

Thursday's political deal also secured the release of ordinary citizens who had been caught up in the diplomatic fight. North Korea was so enraged by Malaysia's investigation that it announced earlier this month that Malaysians could not leave North Korea. Malaysia responded in kind, with an exit ban of its own targeting North Koreans.

Those bans have now been lifted, and the nine Malaysians held in North Korea returned home on Friday. **AP**

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Matthew Campbell, Greg Farrell

GAMING

# FBI makes arrest in connection with Saipan casino construction

**T**HE Federal Bureau of Investigation arrested one person in connection with the death of a construction worker at Imperial Pacific International Holdings Ltd.'s casino on the remote U.S. island of Saipan, according to an agency spokeswoman.

"The FBI conducted a search and made an arrest in response to the recent death of an individual working at the construction site of the Imperial Pacific Resort," Michele Ernst, a spokeswoman in the FBI's Honolulu field office, said in an email Friday. "The investigation is related to allegations of a federal violation of the workplace visa system, including reports the company was systematically harboring individuals who are out of status and in violation of federal statutes."

The bureau's statement comes after a legislator and local residents said FBI agents and local law enforcement on Thursday visited an office used by Imperial Pacific, staying for several hours and blocking access to the building.

"Having made all reasonable inquiries, the board of directors of the Company hereby clarifies and declares that the investigation into the relevant construction accident of Saipan external construction team conducted

by U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, is not related to the Group and its employees," Hong Kong-listed Imperial Pacific said in an exchange statement yesterday.

## Imperial Pacific posted per-table revenues that are far in excess of those at the largest resorts in Macau

Local media reported on March 23 that a 43-year-old Chinese national had fallen to his death from a scaffold on the nearby site of the company's planned casino resort, which will replace a temporary facility currently in use.



Cranes and equipment stand on the construction site of an integrated resort owned by Imperial Pacific in Saipan, September 2016

The FBI "routinely partners with federal agencies when there are reports of widespread and systematic human trafficking within the labor sector," Ernst said.

Imperial Pacific has been sued multiple times since it opened the gaming facility in late 2015 on Saipan, including a lawsuit in December by a former executive accusing it of violating money-laundering rules. In mid-Mar-

ch, a district court judge for the territory scheduled a settlement conference for the case, Marianas Variety reported.

Chaired by Mark Brown, a former executive in President Donald Trump's Atlantic City casino business, Imperial Pacific has assembled a group of high-powered former U.S. political figures as directors or advisers.

It has attracted attention in the

gaming industry for posting per-table revenues in Saipan that are far in excess of those at the largest resorts in Macau, Asia's gambling capital. The company has said those volumes are accounted for partly by Chinese high-rollers who make the five-hour trip to the island to bet millions of dollars at a time, and that it complies with all relevant anti-money-laundering and financial reporting rules.

**Bloomberg**

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### For Rent



#### House, Hac Sa Beach, Coloane

(Ref: 17010632)  
6,000sq. ft. HKD60,000  
Houses are rare in Macau but here is an opportunity to rent one. The owner recently upgraded the property by opening up the kitchen and installing new cabinets, oven, hob and extractor fan. The kitchen is now part of the dining/entrance area which is now much brighter and spacious. Off the kitchen is a good size maids quarters private bedroom and separate shower room plus a walk in storage area where the large fridge/freezer has been positioned.



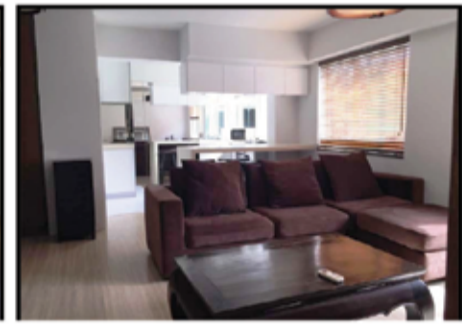
#### Jardim Lameiras Taipa

(Ref: 17030643)  
720sq. ft. HKD 13,800  
Modern two bedroom apartment recently decorated throughout. Two double size bedrooms with built-in mirrored wardrobes providing great storage. Two shower rooms, one en suite. Lovely bright living area with small dining table for two. Galley style kitchen is well laid out with further storage in the hallway. Great location behind CuppaCoffee by the Taipa Square roundabout, a stone's throw from Cotai with shops, cafes, banks close by as well as a bus stop below.



#### Poplar Court, Ocean Gardens, Taipa

(Ref: 17020640)  
1,693sq. ft. HKD 14,800  
Super three bedroom two shower room apartment in the well known complex of Ocean Gardens. Most unusual in Macau all three bedrooms are carpeted, making the property most luxurious. Lovely views from the back of the apartment over the Taipa mountain, while at the front the view is Macau's Friendship bridge. Good size oblong living room, with a dedicated dining



#### Houston Court-Coloane Village

(Ref: 15110549)  
740sq. ft. HKD 11,800  
Situated in the heart of the village. The apartment has a modern open plan kitchen, dining & living area, good size master bedroom with built-in storage, separate walk in shower room, second bedroom has built-in cabinets could be a large office or small double bedroom. Simply furnished the apartment was renovated in October which included: painting throughout / service of air conditioners / new lights installed / new kitchen cabinets / modernised shower room.



#### One Grantai Tower 3 N unit

(Ref: 17020637)  
2,167sq. ft. HKD 18,000  
Luxury unfurnished apartment with 3 bedrooms + maids room. Large open planned living/dining area with balcony showing beautiful green view. Fully fitted large kitchen. 2 bathrooms with 2 being en suite. Master bedroom has a balcony and a large en suite with walking shower and bath. Great location with easy reach of all Macau's major transport links, schools, hospital and the Coati Strip. Car Park available @ 2500 per month.



#### Camellia Court, Hellene Gardens, Coloane

(Ref: 17020639)  
1,663sq. ft. HKD 13,800  
Lovely three bedroom apartment with green mountain views. All bedrooms are doubles, one with en suite shower room. Good layout with spacious living/dining area and small balcony. Modern kitchen with plenty of storage and large enough for second dining table. Simply furnished throughout with one car park included in the asking price.



#### Kingsville, Taipa (1 Unit)

(Ref: 17010631)  
1,200sq. ft. HKD 16,800  
Popular building in Central Taipa this apartment is fantastic with great views across Taipa village, West facing. The apartment has two double bedrooms, one bedroom with en suite the second double bedroom shares a separate shower room with the third single bedroom. Lovely spacious living dining room with good size balcony. Recently redecorated; painted throughout, caulking of bathrooms, new mattress and bed frame in master bedroom, large two metre sliding door wardrobe, polished floors, air conditioners serviced



#### Edf. Nam Long - J Unit

(Ref: 17010634)  
750sq. ft. HKD 12,800  
Unique fully furnished 2 bedroom apartment located in Old Taipa Village.  
Fully renovated modern fit out to a high standard with traditional balcony. Modern bathroom and shower. Fully fitted open style kitchen with oven. Separate utility room with washer / dryer. Walking distance to Cotai Strip. Viewing is highly recommended to appreciate such a rare and unique apartment.

### For Sale



#### Roof Top Apartment, Macau

(Ref: 15055441)  
799sq. ft. HKD4.6342M  
Rate: HKD5,800sq ft  
Loft style apartment with concrete floor which includes a good size double bedroom, great size separate bathroom, open plan fitted kitchen, lovely bright & spacious dining area with floor to ceiling windows and cosy living area with small picture window of the view. The wooden staircase leads to the second floor open area which could be great to use as a second bedroom, or office, yoga studio or entertainment area. The roof top terrace is wonderful; a great place to entertain friends and family with its open view across the roof tops of the Chief Executives office and beautifully manicured gardens towards Taipa. This property is unique with a view that unlike most in Macau will not change for many years to come.

Office: (853) 2835 2699



#### Cattleya Court, Ocean Gardens, Taipa

(Ref: 16095497)  
1,503sq. ft. HKD 11.2M  
Rate: HKD7,451sq ft  
Very nice 3 bedroom + Maids room apartment in the Ocean Gardens complex, Taipa. This building continues to be one of the premier buildings in Taipa, and is much sought after by both locals and ex-pats. The apartment offers easy access to shops, taxis and the Cotai strip in a popular complex where property is in high demand. The building has a supermarket as well as multiple shops, and a well presented modern lobby area. The current tenants are leaving the apartment during the month of October, and viewings are available from November onward. An accompanying Car Park is also for sale, and may be purchased together with the property.

Email: Info@JMLProperty.com



#### Kam Lai Kuok

(Ref: 17035512)  
1,380sq. ft. HKD 10.980M  
Rate: HKD 7,956sq ft  
Central Macau, wonderful three bedroom apartment with two bathrooms and modern great size kitchen. Spacious balcony although as been built in could easily be opened up again very easily.

The living room is approximately 500 sq ft including the allocated dining area. The apartment comes with a parking space in the same building which is included in the asking price.

Located a stone's throw from the Hotel Lisboa, The Military Club and the CBD it's a fabulous location central to everything. Currently tenanted, viewings to be scheduled.



#### Wan Yu Villa, D Unit, Macau

(Ref: 17035513)  
1,800sq. ft. HKD 11.5M  
Rate: HKD 6,388sq ft  
Beautifully furnished, bright and spacious 3 bedroom furnished apartment. Large open plan living/dining room with a long balcony off the living area. 3 double bedrooms, master bedroom has an en-suite bathroom.

Reverse cycle air con in both the living room and master bedroom. Western style kitchen with oven. Great location with supermarkets, restaurants, bars and ferry terminal within walking distance.

#### Contact Property Consultants Today.

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Chui Si On (center) poses for a picture with members of the newly founded group

## FM backs group to promote 'young patriotic talent'

Renato Marques

**T**HE Macao Foundation (FM) launched yesterday a new group in Macau which, according to FM president Wu Zhiliang, aims to promote the exchange and sharing of knowledge among "young patriotic talent" in Macau.

The group, named "Gathering of Thousand Talents", held its inauguration ceremony yesterday at the Macau Forum, attended by Chief Executive (CE) Chui Sai On.

The platform's launch is in line with a triennial plan that the CE proposed in his 2016 Policy Address. That plan was inaugurated last year with

about 1,000 participating youngsters from 12 of Macau's secondary schools and 10 local associations for exchange programs in mainland China.

The "Gathering of Thousand Talents" is a way to gather and nurture the youth – expected to number 3,000 eventually – who join the first edition of the program, which will run from 2016 to 2018.

"The 'Gathering of Thousand Talents' is not a traditional association but a network of communication and an exchange platform to strengthen the relations between the youngsters [participating in the program]," said Wu during

the inauguration speech.

"It is also not a common social platform, but a platform that aims to train patriotic talent."

Liu Jin, director of the Ministry of Education Office for Hong Kong, Macau and

Taiwan Affairs, said the Central Government was "very pleased with the great successes achieved during the first year of operation of the program."

The program, Liu said, will allow "one thousand Macau youngsters to see with their own eyes and feel with their own hearts the splendor, and the robust and accelerated growth, of the motherland."

According to Liu, the program and the association supporting it will "train increasingly highly qualified staff that love the motherland and Macau, with skills to perform in high-ranking positions and to [play] a relevant role in the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and reach the fulfillment of the Chinese dream."

Wu said students who participate in the "Gathering of Thousand Talents" platform will automatically be granted membership in the triennial program.

### 'YOUNGSTERS' PASSION FOR LEARNING IS WHAT CREATES KNOWLEDGE'

After the inauguration of the "Gathering of Thousand Talents", Chief Executive Chui Sai On spent some time responding to questions from participating students. "The government provides opportunities. It is the youngsters' passion

for learning that creates knowledge," Chui said. The CE added that he intends to encourage the youth to seek new opportunities to aid in the economic diversification of Macau, to which the government is highly committed.

## MUST to open medical faculty

The Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) hopes to open a Faculty of Medicine soon. Manson Fok, dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at MUST, told TDM that the medical school's curriculum is now in the advanced stages of development, as is the recruitment of professors. Yesterday, on the last day of the Sino-Luso International Medical Forum, MUST signed a cooperation agreement with the University of Lisbon's Faculty of Medicine.

## Imports up 9 percent in Feb

Total merchandise imports in February 2017 rose by 9.1 percent year-on-year to MOP5.18 billion, according to information released by the Statistics and Census Service, of which imports of watches and gold jewelry soared by 50.5 percent and 20.6 percent respectively. Meanwhile, total merchandise exports for the month amounted to MOP904 million, up by 27.2 percent year-on-year. The value of domestic exports (MOP122 million) increased by almost 30 percent, while that of re-exports (MOP783 million) grew by 26.8 percent. For the first two months of 2016, the merchandise trade deficit widened to MOP9.81 billion. Analyzed by place of origin, imports from mainland China (MOP3.95 billion) decreased by 7.9 percent in the first two months of 2017, whereas imports from the European Union (MOP3.07 billion) increased by 10 percent. Imports from Portuguese-speaking countries (MOP103 million) expanded by 12.9 percent during the first two months of this year.

## Festival showcases Asian puppets

Lynzy Valles

**S**EVENTY puppets belonging to local collector Elisa Vilaça are now on display at the third Puppet Festival, along with several puppet shows being held over the weekend at Casa Garden.

A total of six puppet shows have been held since Friday, targeting children who are above six months of age.

Vilaça shared with the Times that the Asian puppet collection on display features different puppet controls such as strings and rods, as well as puppets used for shadow-play.

The organizer, Casa de Portugal, has also invited professional puppeteers from the Hong Kong Puppet and Shadow Art Center.

Vilaça, who owns 900 puppets of different kinds, said that the reason for inviting the professionals is to nurture a common interest in the local community.

Asian art puppetry is

interwoven with philosophical and religious currents which influence the art of creating puppets.

Vilaça noted that Asian puppets retain their traditional artistic concepts, unlike in Europe where the concept of puppetry has changed since the 16th century.

Although the Asian puppets have their own unique design, Asian and European puppets share a few common factors.

These include being dressed in a traditional ceremonial style related to their origins, and connecting with "supernatural forces in a quest for another reality, marked by the relationship with the divine."

**I want to use puppets in education, because with one puppet, I can speak about geography, language, arts.**

ELISA VILAÇA

"[This exhibition] shows the difference between the different countries and different kinds of manipulations. Some of [the puppets'] faces were made from wood and clay. They are all very different," Vilaça remarked.

Vilaça, who is also an educator, has been using puppets to teach kindergarten students, a form of education which she said is not widely used in Macau.

"As a teacher, I want to use puppets in education, because with one puppet, I can speak about geography, language, arts."

Vilaça expressed her hopes that the event would boost local and



Elisa Vilaça

regional awareness of puppetry, and that it be increasingly used in education to spark creativity amongst students.

Vilaça also said she believed in the possibility of a center dedicated to teaching puppet-making.

"I think that in future, it's possible have a small school to teach puppet-making and after that, why not create a group [that hosts puppet shows]? I think it's possible, but a lot of hard work and belief is necessary."

Vilaça said there are only two professional groups in Macau that

host puppetry shows.

Yesterday, she held a puppetry show titled "In Chants", which featured different types of puppets and a set of live musical compositions. In the interactive play, six mimed mini-stories were presented to a group of children. The stories, Vilaça said, were designed to provide the children with a new sensory experience.

Vilaça revealed that Casa de Portugal is now trying to find a place in the region for a small puppet museum.

The puppet exhibition will be held until April 15.

## UM inaugurates Currency Museum

The University of Macau (UM) has inaugurated its Currency Museum at the Faculty of Business Administration. The museum houses a collection of rare coins and banknotes, including specimens from the early Republic of China and from dynastic China. Moreover, the museum also recounts the history of currencies found in countries other than China, specifically Eurasian countries. There is also information about the development of currencies and the banking sector in the greater China region at the museum. The museum will open to the public from April 9. It is open between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. Mondays to Fridays.

# AirAsia plans Vietnam venture on Southeast Asia travel boom

Anurag Kotoky, John Boudreau

**A**IRASIA Bhd., the low-cost carrier headed by Malaysian tycoon Tony Fernandes, plans to start a Vietnamese carrier in a local partnership, as cheap fares and rising incomes fuel a travel surge in the Southeast Asian nation.

The region's largest budget airline will partner Gumin Co., Hai Au Aviation Joint Stock Co. and businessman Tran Trong Kien for the venture, which is expected to start flying early next year, AirAsia said in a statement to the stock exchange. Gumin will own about 70 percent of the new venture, with AirAsia holding the rest.

Vietnam is the latest country to lure Fernandes, who is seeking to build a pan-Asian budget airline, as the 28 percent growth in passenger traffic was triple the pace in other Southeast Asian nations. The fifth-biggest market in the region has seen domestic traffic double since 2013, and the middle-class will comprise close to a quarter of its population by 2010, AirAsia said.

Shares of AirAsia climbed 1.3 percent to 3.14 ringgit in Kuala Lumpur on Friday. They have gained 37 percent this year.

AirAsia has over the years established affiliates in Indonesia, Thailand, India and Japan, and is betting on a low-cost, long-haul model for international travel through its AirAsia X unit. It has ordered hundreds of planes worth billions of dollars from Airbus SE to meet its growth ambitions, and is in the process of selling a plane-leasing unit to raise more cash.

VietJet Aviation Joint Stock Co., known for marketing stunts like bikini-clad flight attendants, listed its shares on an exchange last month, and has gained 52 percent since. Vietnam will continue to see a double-digit gain in passenger numbers in the next decade, after annual growth of 17 percent in the past decade, according to ACB Securities in December.

"AirAsia is very late to the party in Vietnam and as a result faces huge challenges,"



," said Brendan Sobie, Singapore-based chief analyst at CAPA Centre for Aviation. "The market is now well served by two low-cost carriers, VietJet and Jetstar Pacific. The rate of growth will likely slow in the coming years as the market is now more mature."

AirAsia's Vietnam venture will need investments of 1 trillion Vietnamese Dong (USD44 million), and AirAsia will contribute 30 percent of that after raising internal funding, according to the filing.

## AirAsia is very late to the party in Vietnam and as a result faces huge challenges.

BRENDAN SOBIE  
ANALYST

Kien is the chief executive officer of Hanoi-based Gumin, which was founded March 29, according to Vietnam Planning and Investment Ministry's website. He is also the chairman and CEO of Thien Minh Group, or TMG, which owns Victoria Hotels & Resorts in Vietnam and Laos. Hai Au Aviation is a unit of TMG. **Bloomberg**

# San Miguel plans USD34 billion investments, eyes Saigon beer stake

Cecilia Yap, Ian Sayson

**S**AN Miguel Corp. plans to invest USD34 billion in an oil refinery, an integrated steel complex and an ocean-tide power plant as the Philippines' largest company by sales expands amid forecasts for robust economic growth in the country, according to its president.

The company, which sells nine of every 10 beers in the Philippines, is also "evaluating and may bid" for Saigon Beer Alcohol Beverage Corp., President Ramon Ang told reporters on March 31. Vietnam may provide an anchor to increase its brewery business as consumption in the country is growing at an annual rate of at least 10 percent, five times that in the Philippines, he said.

"The businesses we ventured into have matured, such that the company is in a very stable position," Ang said, citing compounded annual 20 percent growth in recurring profit and a near fourfold increase in assets since 2008 following San Miguel's diversification from food and drinks into non-allied industries such as toll roads and resources. Excluding one-off items, profit will rise at least 20 percent to about 60 billion pesos (\$1.2 billion) this year, he said.

Election-related spending, remittances from Filipinos overseas and a booming outsourcing industry have helped raise sales of hotdogs and beers, while record car sales boosted oil demand. The momentum is

expected to stay strong this year, with gross domestic product forecast to rise 6.8 percent, Fitch Ratings said on March 29, when it kept its investment-grade rating and positive outlook on the Philippines.

Profit at the company that started as a brewer more than a century ago rose 80 percent to 52.2 billion pesos last year, boosted by higher sales at its oil, beer and food units. An 11.8 billion peso one-time gain from the sale of its telecommunication assets helped offset a 9 billion peso foreign exchange loss.

"Ang is trying to ride on the wave of Philippine economic growth," said Astro del Castillo, managing director at investment advisory company First Grade Holdings Inc. "Like its previous infrastructure and industrial bets, these won't make a quick buck, so it will take time for the stock to appreciate. San Miguel is for investors with a long-term view."

San Miguel plans to build an oil refinery complex with a capacity of 250,000 barrels a day and an integrated steel plant, which will entail investments of \$15 billion each. An ocean-tide energy project with initial capacity of 1,200 megawatts and costing \$3.6 billion is also in the pipeline.

The oil refinery, which will also produce aromatics and petrochemicals, and the steel plant are under study and construction could take three-and-a-half years, while the power project may be completed in five, Ang said, declining to elaborate. San Miguel-owned Petron

Corp., the nation's largest oil refiner and retailer, said in January it's seeking partners for a refinery it will build in southern Philippines.

Saigon Beer, Vietnam's largest brewer with a 40 percent market share, has received government approval to hire consultants to advise the state-owned company's planned stake sale this year. Heineken NV, Anheuser-Busch InBev NV and Asahi Group Holdings Ltd. are among seven foreign companies that previously registered to bid for stakes.

An initial public offering of its unit SMC Global Power Holdings Corp. may push through in the third quarter, Ang said, declining further details. In January 2014, Ang said as much as \$1 billion will be raised from a maiden-share sale of up to 49 percent of the unit, which owns San Miguel's power-plant ventures.

Ang's expansion outside of food and drinks didn't immediately boost San Miguel's share performance, which has trailed the benchmark Philippine Stock Exchange Index since he was named president in 2002. While the stock has gained 13 percent this year after rallying 85 percent in 2016, boosted in part by a windfall from the sale of its telecom assets, San Miguel underperformed relative to the index in six of the 10 years since 2007, when Ang obtained shareholders approval to expand into non-allied industries. The benchmark index has gained almost 7 percent this year after losing 1.6 percent in 2016. **Bloomberg**

## corporate bits

### VENETIAN THEATRE HOSTS 'THE BOSS BABY' MOVIE PREMIERE



Sands Resorts Macao hosted a movie premiere and red carpet event for DreamWorks Animation's latest 3D animated comedy-adventure blockbuster, "The Boss Baby", at The Venetian Theatre on Saturday.

The premiere marked Hong

Kong and Macau's first screening of the movie, and was attended by celebrity guests from Hong Kong and Macau.

As part of its commitment to corporate social responsibility, Sands Resorts Macao also invited around 600 at-

tendees from 14 local community associations, parent company Sands China said in a statement.

Described by the Hollywood Reporter as "a delightful blend of clever and tender that's certain to tickle audiences of all ages and stages," "The Boss Baby" is DreamWorks Animation's latest and biggest production to date.

The premiere is the newest addition to the interactive DreamWorks Experience at Sands Resorts Macao. The DreamWorks Experience includes Asia's largest indoor frozen wonderland, Kung Fu Panda Adventure Ice World with the DreamWorks All-Stars, which is open at The Venetian Macao's Cotai Expo Hall F from March 16 to July 9, 2017.

### MGM HOLDS 'ACADEMY GRADUATION 2017'



MGM held its 'Academy Graduation 2017' to celebrate and recognize the development of its 6,000 team members who participated in various training programs last week at MGM China's grand ballroom.

More than 300 Golden Lion team members who represented the various cohorts of training programs attended the graduation that was attended by guests from government entities, acad-

emics, and the gaming operator's senior executives.

The event celebrated the graduation of MGM employees from core development programs including MGM Management Associate Program (MAP) & PRIDE Career Development programs, MGM Academy, and MGM Continuing education.

For MGM's Continuing Education, more than MOP5.1 million in scholarship and sponsorship

funds have been provided to support students and academic events since the program's opening a decade ago.

CEO and executive director of MGM China, Grant Bowie, affirmed that investing in its team members is a key component of the company's success.

Annually, MGM offers approximately 57,400 training places for its team members, averaging over 45 training hours per employee over the year.

"We have crafted an industry in Macau with high standards, high performance but a unique characteristic which caters to our consumers, to the nature of the Asian clientele," Bowie told the press on the sidelines of the event.

"Most importantly it reflects and allow us to express what it is to provide a Macau experience," he added.



# Battle with Apple takes a toll on Chinese phone giant Huawei



**H**UAWEI Technologies Co.'s earnings grew at their slowest pace in five years, as China's biggest maker of telecommunications gear sank money into research and a marketing blitz to gain ground on Apple and Samsung in smartphones.

Huawei, founded by former army engineer Ren Zhengfei three decades ago, has emerged as one of China's most recognizable consumer brands. A relatively new entrant in mobile devices, it's rapidly grabbed market share from Apple Inc. and Samsung Electronics Co. with premium phones and is now ranked third globally. But that expansion comes at a cost, as the company boosts spending to keep up.

Its main business of networking equipment is also slowing as phone carriers rein in network rollouts and prepare for the advent of faster 5G standards. And smartphone competition at home from the likes of Oppo is intensifying.

Net income inched 0.4 percent higher to 37.1 billion yuan (USD5.4 billion) in 2016, the Shenzhen, China-based company said on Friday. That was its slowest pace of growth since a profit decline in 2011. Its net margin dipped to 7.1 percent, from about 9.3 percent the previous year. Going forward, that level of profitability is "appropriate," said Eric Xu, the current rotating chief executive.

Huawei said Friday it spent 14.6 percent of its 2016 revenue on R&D and will set aside \$10 billion to \$20 billion annually for that purpose as it ramps up research into everything from artificial intelligence and wireless technology to cloud computing. But it's also begun keeping a closer eye on the bottom line. Xu pledged in December to cut extravagant marketing events and warned against "blind optimism and rhetoric." Mounting expenses would damage efficiency and profitability, he said in a memo to staff.

"We're paying more attention to efficiency and scaling back on investments that cannot bring value," Xu, who under the current rotation will cede the helm on Friday, told reporters after releasing its annual report in Shenzhen.

The company blamed a rapidly expanding consumer business for

weighing on margins. Revenue grew 32 percent to 521.6 billion yuan, said Huawei, a closely held company that discloses only basic finances. That was a tad ahead of its own expectations. But the consumer division outstripped that pace, growing revenue 44 percent to 179.8 billion yuan by shipping 139 million smartphones in 2016.

Huawei has become less dependent on its traditional networking business as the company attempts to grow sales from cloud computing and smartphones. About 56 percent of its sales came from the telecoms-carrier business last year, down from about 60 percent in 2015 and about two-thirds in 2014, according to previous reports.

It's declared its intention of becoming the world's largest smartphone player within half a decade and Huawei is said to be aiming for \$33 billion in 2017 revenue for its consumer electronics business, which include smartphones, tablets and wearables.

But that business is under assault at home. It lost its top position in China's smartphone market last year to Guangdong Oppo Electronics Co., which attacked rural areas and lower-tier cities. And Vivo ranked just behind Huawei domestically in the December quarter, according to IDC.

While Huawei has voiced ambitions to expand abroad, it remains heavily reliant on its home market. China contributed 45 percent or 236.5 billion yuan of revenue last year compared with 42 percent in 2015. A little over half of its smartphones were shipped within the domestic market in the quarter ended December, according to data from research firm IDC.

Deputy Chairman Guo Ping will now become CEO after Xu's six-month tenure ends Friday. Guo, 51, started as a project manager at Huawei nearly 30 years ago and once headed the smartphone business. Huawei employs a unique rotating-CEO mechanism after Ren excused himself from daily operations more than five years ago. Ken Hu, who used to lead information security and U.S. businesses, is the other executive in the rotation. He's expected to take up the role after Guo's term ends around September. **Bloomberg**

ADVERTORIAL



The love of art has forever been engrained in our Company DNA. You are immersed in art from the moment you step through our doors, and it is something that pervades throughout our resort portfolio, forming an impressive sensory experience with spaces that are interesting, exciting and distinct.

Through the MGM Art Program, MGM is committed to supporting the Macau community and contributing to its status as an international city where globally influential artworks are appreciated, interpreted and studied.



Museum quality art comes to MGM COTAI

On March 16, MGM 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 in 2017. Connecting East and West and blending tradition with innovation, the MGM COTAI Art Collection will feature over 300 captivating works of art, including antique carpets dating from the Qing Dynasty, modern and contemporary Asian paintings and sculptures by both renowned artists and rising talent. Contributing artists include Hsiao Chin, Liu Dan, Liu Kuosung, Macau's own Ung Si Meng, Xue Song and many more.



"With this collection, we are creating something truly unique for Macau to develop the city's cultural tourism, and we have carefully considered every detail to create a cultural experience that is surprising, striking and fun for our guests and local visitors to enjoy," said Ms. Pansy Ho, Co-Chairperson and Executive Director of MGM China Holdings Limited. This collection builds on the well-established MGM Art Program delivered by MGM MACAU, which has hosted 21 world-class international and local exhibitions and welcomed more than 200,000 visitors to foster and encourage art and its appreciation since inception.

A unique art experience at Art Basel

This March, MGM proudly partnered with Art Basel Hong Kong to deliver Kingsley Ng's "Twenty-Five Minutes Older". Hong Kong artist Kingsley Ng, who is renowned for conceptual and community-engaging artwork, transformed two of the city's iconic trams to create an altered reality allowing tram passengers to experience Hong Kong in a new way – in reverse. Capturing images of passing street life, the scenes displayed inside the tram were accompanied by spoken extracts from Liu Yichang's popular stream-of-consciousness novella "Tête-bêche" during the course of the 25-minute tram journey.



MGM also organized three special tours for members of the Macau community to experience this unique exhibition, as well as the wider Art Basel experience. MGM invited members from the Cultural Industries Fund and the Committee of Cultural Industries from Macau, as well as a group of students and professors from the Visual Arts and Design bachelor's degree program of the Macao Polytechnic Institute for this unique experience. In addition, the groups had the opportunity to meet with Kingsley Ng in person and learn about the ideas and techniques that made him the accomplished artist he is today.



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# Dalai Lama recalls flight to India ahead of northeast trip

Wasbir Hussain

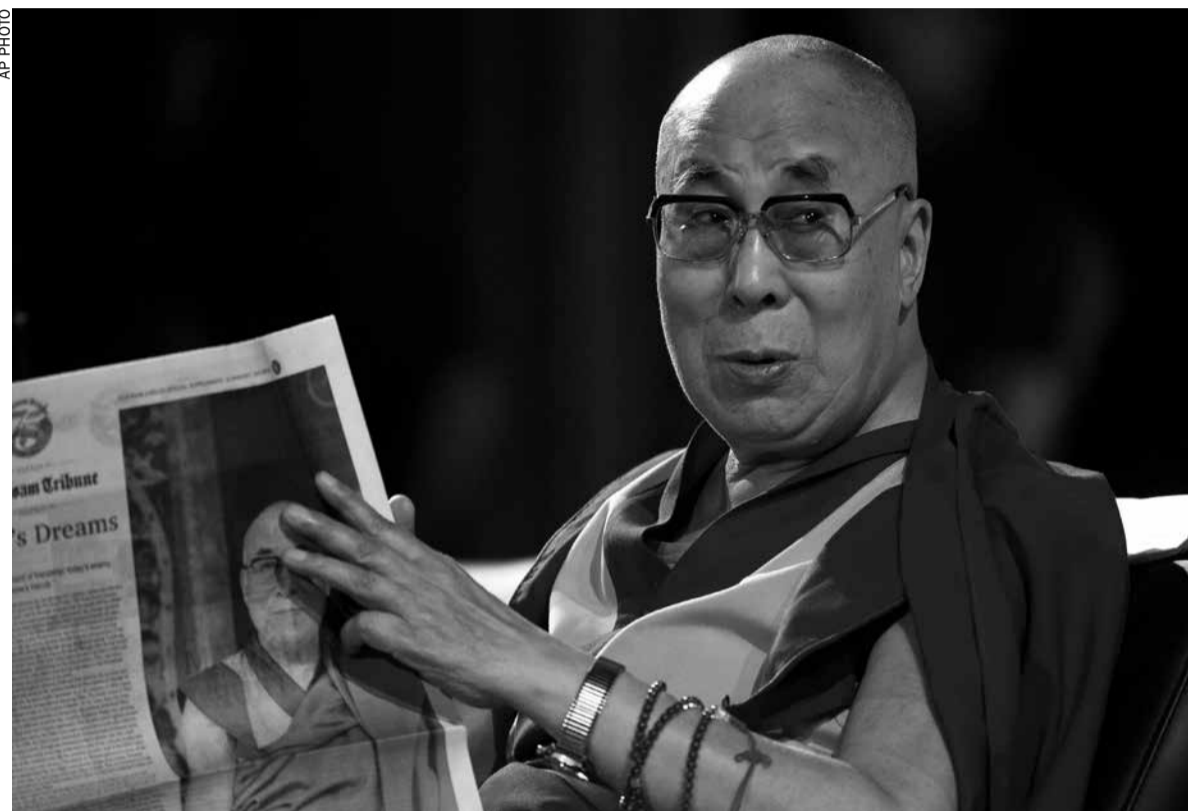
**EXILED** Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama on Saturday recalled his 1959 flight to India from Tibet ahead of a visit to northeast India's Arunachal Pradesh state despite objections by China, which considers it a disputed region.

The Dalai Lama said he had no option but to escape Tibet in view of Chinese military action. He spoke at a function organized by an Indian newspaper, The Assam Tribune, in Gauhati, the capital of Assam state. The state's governor and its top elected official were among an audience of nearly 1,500 people.

The Dalai Lama last visited Arunachal Pradesh in 2009. China protested that trip, but there was no major impact on relations with India.

He will leave for Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang district on Tuesday, at the end of his Assam state trip. He is scheduled to consecrate a temple and give teachings to his followers during his weeklong stay in the state.

"Whenever I come to the nor-



Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama attends the platinum jubilee celebrations of Assam Tribune newspaper in Gauhati

theast of India, it feels like a reunion with people here," the Dalai Lama said Saturday. "When I revisit the Tawang area, I am reminded of the freedom that I had experienced for the first

time [in 1959]. That was the beginning of a new chapter in my life."

"On March 10, 1959, there were huge demonstrations in Lhasa," the Tibetan region's

capital, he recalled. "Chinese military action also increased. I had no option but to escape. On March 17, I fled."

"I sent some of my officers to Indian authorities at the bor-

der," he said. "They readily allowed us in, received us warmly, and today I can tell you that I am the longest guest of the Indian government."

Last month, China warned of "severe damage" to relations with India and increased regional instability if the Dalai Lama proceeds with his trip to the state.

Beijing has expressed its concerns to New Delhi on numerous occasions and urged India to avoid offering a place for the Dalai Lama to carry out anti-China separatist activities, China's Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said last month.

China claims the partly ethnically Tibetan Himalayan state of Arunachal Pradesh as its own territory, and the frontier between the two Asian giants remains tense more than 50 years after they fought a brief but bloody border war high in the peaks.

China claims about 90,000 square kilometers (35,000 square miles) in Arunachal Pradesh, referred to informally by some Chinese as "Southern Tibet." India says China is occupying 38,000 square kilometers (15,000 square miles) of its territory on the Aksai Chin plateau.

More than a dozen rounds of talks have failed to make substantial progress on the dispute, although there have been relatively few confrontations in recent years. **AP**

## Professor detained in China returns to Australia

Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

**THE** lawyer for a Sydney-based professor who was prevented from leaving China said yesterday that his client has been allowed to return to Australia, apparently bringing closure to an incident that raised concerns about the safety of conducting academic research in China.

The barring of associate professor Feng Chongyi from leaving the country had prompted diplomatic appeals from Australia and an open letter to China's leaders from dozens of academics.

Feng's lawyer Chen Jinxue said Feng flew home from the southern city of Guangzhou on Saturday night after a final round of questioning by security agents from the southwestern province of Yunnan, where Feng had traveled during his most recent visit.

"By request of the state

security department, I am unable to discuss the contents of the discussions," Chen told The Associated Press by telephone. Chen said that while Feng was not able to leave China, he had never been in formal detention.

Feng told reporters in Australia yesterday that he wasn't sure why he was allowed to leave China, but suspected international pressure may have played a role. He said he was unable to discuss the details of his experience.

Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said in a statement that the government welcomed the news of Feng's return.

Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said last week that her government had been making representations on Feng's behalf despite the long-term Australian resident not having Australian citizenship.

The reasons Feng had

been barred from leaving were never clear. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang said Thursday that Chinese law enforcement authorities acted "while performing duties of safeguarding national security."

Feng had been wrapping up a three-week trip researching human rights lawyers. Since July 2015, Chinese authorities have questioned or detained hundreds of activists and independent legal professionals as part of a crackdown on civil society under President Xi Jinping. Some of the lawyers have been labeled threats to national security.

Rights groups and Western governments including the U.S. have urged China to release the activists and lawyers detained in the crackdown, while critics say the campaign is aimed at silencing opponents of the ruling party.

Chen said last week that

Feng's troubles may have been related to his research on the lawyers, and that state security officials who met with Feng at his hotel in Guangzhou asked him who he met with in China and in Australia during the course of his research.

The incident unfolded as Chinese Premier Li Keqiang finished up a five-day trip to Australia, during which the two countries sought to boost trade ties.

The open letter on Feng's case, signed by more than 80 scholars, stated that the signatories were "disturbed that a fellow researcher, who has dedicated himself to promote the understanding of and interest in China, has been prevented from returning to his home and workplace for no reason other than his conscientious work as a China Studies scholar.

"Such actions make it difficult for the rest of us to be confident in the research environment in China today, and do not contribute positively to the continued construction of open and productive higher education collaboration between China and the rest of the world." **AP**

## New economic zone to be established near Beijing

**CHINA** announced Saturday that it is going to establish a special economic area in a province neighboring Beijing as part of a plan to integrate the capital with its surrounding areas.

The government says the Xiongan New Area in Hebei province will have national significance like the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone, China's first free-market economic zone set up in 1980 as the country was beginning economic reforms, the official Xinhua News Agency reported. The creation of the new area is a "major historic and strategic choi-

ce," Xinhua said, citing a circular issued by the Communist Party's central committee and China's Cabinet.

The Xiongan New Area will eventually cover 2,000 square kilometers and be located about 100 kilometers from downtown Beijing.

Since 2014, the government has planned to jointly develop Beijing, the port city of Tianjin and Hebei province to boost regional and economic development in the northern region, and bridge the economic disparity between the capital and the industrial and rural areas surrounding it. **AP**

Sandra Tsui

# Hong Kong warns on home loan risks as prices soar

**T**HE Hong Kong Monetary Authority has warned banks in the city over the rising risks of property lending, according to the Oriental Daily, just as home prices notch up another record in the world's most expensive housing market and Citigroup Inc. sees an imminent round of new cooling measures.

The authority sent letters this week raising concern over the increasing number of highly leveraged mortgages provided by developers, which boosts risks for banks lending to these companies, according to the Daily and other media reports on Saturday, citing unidentified people. It may tighten risk management and said banks should be prudent when lending to clients who buy multiple units with a single contract, the reports said.

Hong Kong's property market is on a roll, stoking discontent among the city's residents and posing a headache for incoming Chief Executive Carrie Lam. Existing home prices have risen to a record for six consecutive weeks, according to the Centaline Property Agency, shrugging off stamp duty increases in November. Citigroup said in a note dated March 27 that it sees new tightening moves coming any



Friday from now on.

Li Ka-shing, Hong Kong's richest man and the 88-year-old head of Cheung Kong Property Holdings Ltd. and CK Hutchison Holdings Ltd., said last month the rebound could persist for as long as two years as growing demand outweighs

government curbs. "I cannot see how property prices would fall in the coming one to two years," he told an earnings press conference. "The force from buyers is very strong."

Even with the Federal Reserve raising interest rates, brokers and analysts in the

city also expect further increases in prices. But Citigroup is not so sure. Home prices increasing at 2 percent to 3 percent a month is "clearly not an acceptable rate" for the government, the bank said in its note, and maintained its underweight

rating on developers, with sell recommendations on several.

**Highly leveraged mortgages provided by developers boost risks for banks lending to these companies**

Hong Kong retained its position as the most expensive housing market among 406 major metropolitan regions in the annual Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey for the seventh year in a row. The median price of a home in Hong Kong last year was 18.1 times the median annual pretax household income, according to its website in January. **Bloomberg**

## Two activists who supported 'Occupy Central' convicted



Demonstrators hold umbrellas in the Admiralty district of HK on Oct. 28, 2014

**T**WO Chinese rights activists who were detained after they supported pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong in 2014 were convicted and sentenced Friday on charges of inciting subversion of state power, their lawyer said.

The convictions of women's rights activist Su Changlan and online commentator Chen Qitang are the latest in an ongoing crackdown on civil so-

ciety under President Xi Jinping. Su was sentenced to three years' imprisonment and Chen to four and a half years.

Their lawyer, Liu Xiaoyuan, said he believes their convictions were a direct result of photos and comments they posted in support of the Hong Kong protests. The court's verdict posted online by Liu doesn't mention Hong Kong, but makes clear they were

convicted for making comments on social media that were critical of China's political system.

The two were detained during the Hong Kong protests and a crackdown in mainland China in which rights groups say at least 100 people were detained for expressing support. Since July 2015, authorities have questioned or detained hundreds of activists and independent legal professionals.

Amnesty International called for Su's and Chen's immediate and unconditional release.

"It is reprehensible they have been convicted solely for peacefully expressing their views," Patrick Poon, China researcher for Amnesty International, said in a statement.

Calls to the court in Foshan city in Guangdong province in China's south rang unanswered. **AP**

## Visa issues keep thousands of Chinese tourists from Hawaii

**R**EJECTED visa applications are keeping thousands of Chinese tourists from visiting Hawaii.

More than 2,000 of the 6,000 Nu Skin distributors in China and Hong Kong that were planning to attend a conference in Hawaii were not able to attend because of visa troubles, The Honolulu Star-Advertiser reported. The convention of the direct marketing company that sells personal care products next month is slated to be Hawaii's largest incentive travel group from China.

Typically, 10 percent to 15 percent of visa applicants for large groups traveling to Hawaii get denied, but the Nu Skin rate was significantly higher.

Hawaii and other U.S. cities looking to increase Chinese tourism have been working with the U.S. Travel Association to advocate for visa improvements. Since

a 2011 China U.S. Tourism Leadership Summit was held in Kailua-Kona, reductions in visa processing times and the introduction of nonstop flights and longer-term visas helped spark growth.

Some travel officials say they are concerned about the Trump administration's effect on travel. Reene Ho-Phang, managing director of Hawaii Tourism China, said the executive order limiting travel from specific regions of the Middle East and Africa may not be aimed at Asia, but it still creates unease for Chinese visitors who fear travel restrictions could worsen.

"Everyone is keenly awaiting a meeting next month between China's President Xi Jinping and President Trump," Ho-Phang said.

Ho-Phang said the issues with the Nu Skin conference has alerted other would-be tourists

of the stress of getting a visa.

"We've observed that group demand has cascaded a bit. Word has spread in the industry, and it's impacting other groups. Some are postponing group bookings by a year," Ho-Phang said.

The Hawaii Tourism Authority has estimated that if all of the Nu Skin members had come to Hawaii, it would have added \$15.9 million in corporate spending into the state and generated \$1.9 million in taxes. Instead, Nu Skin sent about 2,000 incentive winners to Bali, Indonesia, reducing the group's benefit to Hawaii.

The state Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism has forecast that 2017 arrivals from China will increase 2 percent to 173,479, while spending is expected to rise slightly more than 6 percent to \$434 million-plus. **AP**



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Ashok Sharma, New Delhi

# Iconic New Delhi movie theater shuts down after 85 years

FROM Bollywood superstars to political heavyweights, the Regal theater hosted some of India's biggest names over more than eight decades.

But with nostalgic theatergoers singing their way to the exits after a final showing of a Bollywood classic, the iconic New Delhi theater has closed its doors to make way for a multiplex.

"It's the end of an era. It's very sad," said Nanak, who had worked at the theater since 1979. Nanak, whose grandfather and father were part of the Regal's management team in the 1950s and '60s, uses one name.

With its corridors studded with black-and-white images of Bollywood stars such as Nargis, Madhubala, Meena Kumari, Dev Anand and Raj Kapoor, the magic of a bygone era was visible throughout the theater.

For its final screening, the Regal showed "Sangam," or "Union of Two Hearts," on Thursday night in a tribute to producer-director Kapoor, Bollywood's biggest showman, who premiered his movies at the theater from the 1950s to the '70s.

Around 600 movie buffs cheered the 1964 Bollywood classic at the final screening. Some young movie lovers came with their parents and grandparents, and many were singing the film's



An overview of the colonial era Regal Theater in New Delhi

songs as they left the theater.

"There was nostalgia," said Sudhir Dutta, 75, recalling that he had seen "A Tale of Two Cities" in 1958 in his first visit to the Regal.

India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, and his daughter, Indira Gandhi, also used to watch movies there, said Bhoop Singh, a theater executive.

The Regal opened in 1932, built by Sobha Singh, an Indian civil contractor and real estate owner. At first, the theater hosted mainly Indian stage shows. Then

came performances by Western classical musical artists, Russian ballets and British theater groups.

Finally, movies were shown. The 1931 Bollywood film "Alam Ara," the first Indian movie with sound, was the first Hindi movie

screened at the Regal.

The theater, part of an 84-year-old shopping hub known as Connaught Place, is in one of the main commercial areas of New Delhi, built during British colonial rule.

## A decision to shut the theater was prompted by a craze for multiplexes in India

A decision to shut the theater was prompted by a craze for multiplexes in India. Also, the recent caving in of portions of the roofs of two buildings in the area raised concerns about the Regal's safety.

Building a multiplex is a better option than renovating such an old building, Bhoop Singh said, adding, "We may resume screening movies in the multiplex within two years." AP

### THAILAND

# Thaksin not interested in reconciliation process



Thaksin Shinawatra

FORMER Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, ousted by a military coup in 2006 and still the object of political passions, declared Friday he doesn't want to be included in a reconciliation process being promoted by the country's ruling junta.

Thaksin said he doesn't seek anyone's help by including him in the process, and instead wants an end to persecution of him and his family by the military and other enemies.

Thaksin expressed his thoughts in a Facebook posting, his first extensive political commentary in many months. He was forced from office over allegations

of corruption, abuse of power and disrespect for Thailand's king, and has been in exile since 2008 to avoid a prison sentence for conflict of interest.

His ouster set off a sometimes-violent struggle for power between his supporters and opponents, and Thailand's military rulers continue to use legal pressures in an effort to block him from making a political comeback.

The junta, which seized power in 2014 from an elected government that had been led by Thaksin's sister, Yingluck Shinawatra, has been promoting a reconciliation process for the declared purpose of patching

up political differences, though critics say it is part of a process to keep power in the hands of the military and the permanent bureaucracy rather than elected politicians.

Thaksin declared he also seeks peace and reconciliation.

"For the reconciliation process that is soon to happen — I ask that for every side to leave me out of the equation entirely. I do not want anyone to recommend anything that would help me," he wrote. "In turn, the people in power should not use miracles and any way possible solely to try to get rid of me with taking into consideration the rule of law."

Thaksin wrote that the government tries to blame him for every bad thing that happens in Thailand, including bombings, but that the problems inevitably are caused by the government's failures.

Thaksin's remarks came just days after Thai author-

ities initiated a legal process to collect 17.6 billion baht (USD503 million) in taxes they say he owes for his sale in 2006 of shares worth 73.3 billion baht (\$1.88 billion) in his telecommunications company to a Singapore state holding company. His lawyers say the taxes were not applicable under the law in effect at that time, and that the Revenue Department's efforts are politically motivated.

In 2010, the Supreme Court ordered \$1.4 billion of his assets seized for concealing his ownership of the family telecommunication group and tailoring government policies for his own financial gain.

Various legal attacks have also been made on his sister, and a ruling that as prime minister she had been negligent in administering a rice subsidy program led to her being issued a \$1.3 billion fine, a ruling she is challenging.

Another political ally, Yingluck's foreign minister, Surapong Tovichakchaikul, was banned from politics for five years on Thursday on the basis that he acted illegally by restoring Thaksin's Thai passport that had been invalidated after he went into exile. AP

### INDONESIA

# 81 foreign ships destroyed for illegal fishing

INDONESIAN authorities destroyed 81 foreign ships over the weekend after seizing the vessels for fishing illegally in the country's waters.

The world's largest archipelago nation has taken a tough stance against illegal fishing since President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo took office in 2014. Authorities have sunk 317 foreign vessels since then, including the most recent.

The ships were blown up at sea in 12 locations around the archipelago on Saturday. The most destroyed in one area was 26 in Natuna on the edge of South China Sea and 10 in the nearby seaport of Tarempa.

Most of the vessels were from Vietnam,

the Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand.

Indonesia was upholding its sovereignty and combating illegal fishing, said Susi Pudjiastuti, the minister of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries who witnessed the sinking of two ships in the port of Ambon in Maluku province.

"We hope Sino [the name of one of the ships] is the symbol of our victory against poaching after years of defeat, especially in eastern Indonesia," Pudjiastuti said. She expressed hope that the action would deter poachers.

Pudjiastuti declared a fishing moratorium for foreign vessels immediately after taking office. "The state's sovereignty has to be upheld." AP

# Venezuela walks back move to strip congress' power

Hannah Dreier, Fabiola Sanchez

VENEZUELA'S president and Supreme Court backed down Saturday from an unprecedented move to strip congress of its legislative powers that had sparked widespread charges that the South American country was no longer a democracy.

President Nicolas Maduro asked the Supreme Court in a late-night speech to review a ruling nullifying the branch of power that set off a storm of criticism from the opposition and foreign governments. The court on Saturday reinstated congress' authority.

It was a rare instance of the embattled socialist president backing away from a move to increase his power. Opposition leaders dismissed the reversal as too little too late. They said the clarification issued by the judges only proved yet again that Maduro controls the courts and there is no longer a real separation of powers in Venezuela.

"The dire situation we're living through in Venezuela remains the same. There is nothing to 'clarify' when it comes to respecting the Constitution," said moderate leader and former presidential candidate Henrique Capriles.

At the same time, critics celebrated the reversal as proof that cracks are beginning to show in Maduro's control of a country spiraling into chaos, with his approval ratings dipping below 20 percent amid the worsening economic and humanitarian crisis.

Opposition leaders recast a planned Saturday protest as an open



AP PHOTO  
Opposition members shout slogans against Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro during a National Assembly special session in Caracas

air meeting. Hundreds of supporters joined congress members in a wealthy Caracas neighborhood to celebrate the rare victory.

Later, soldiers fired tear gas on activists who attempted to march on government offices downtown and blocked their path with barricades and armored cars. Some of protesters jumped atop the military vehicles and made triumphant gestures.

"It's not clear exactly how wounded the government is. This is the first time since the opposition won the National Assembly in 2015 that they have managed to get the president to reverse a decision. So this is huge," said Javier Corrales, who teaches Latin American politics at Amherst College in Massachusetts.

Saturday's revision undoes most of the original court decision, but will still allow Maduro to enter into joint oil ventures without congress-

sional approval. Supreme Court president Maikel Moreno met with diplomats in the morning and warned that the court would not "remain passive" in the face of attacks on the country's right to self-rule.

Maduro issued his instructions to the court after an emergency night meeting of the National Security Council Friday night that was boycotted by congress leaders. The three-hour meeting capped an extraordinary day in which Venezuela's chief prosecutor and long-time loyalist of the socialist revolution launched by the late President Hugo Chavez broke with the administration and denounced the court ruling. Luisa Ortega said it was her "unavoidable historical duty" as the nation's top judicial authority to defy what she called a "rupture" of the constitutional order.

That statement, and the inter-

nal division that it exposed for the first time, may have been the most damaging moment of the whole episode.

"It was really perhaps the first sign of public dissent within the ranks. And it was huge that Maduro did not trash her. Maduro must have realized that Ortega was not acting alone," Corrales said.

Images posted on Communications Minister Ernesto Villegas' Twitter account showed Ortega heading to the government palace on Saturday to meet with Maduro.

## Critics celebrated the reversal as proof that cracks are beginning to show in Maduro's control of a country spiraling into chaos

Small protests popped up all around the capital beginning at dawn Friday. Troops from the National Guard fired buckshot and swung batons at students protesting in front of the Supreme Court, and several journalists had their cameras seized.

As the country's currency hemorrhaged value and some analysts

began to project the beginning of the end of 18 years of socialist rule in Venezuela, Maduro invited congress president Julio Borges to speak with him about the situation. But Borges refused, breaking a years-long streak in which the opposition ramps up pressure on the administration only to help diffuse it at the last minute by coming to the bargaining table, usually fruitlessly.

"In Venezuela the only dialogue possible is the vote," Borges said Friday night.

The Supreme Court ruled late Wednesday that until lawmakers abided by previous rulings that nullified all legislation passed by congress, the high court could assume the constitutionally assigned powers of the National Assembly, which has been controlled by the opposition since it won a landslide victory in elections in late 2015.

The ruling had brought down two days of condemnation by governments across Latin America, along with the United States and the United Nations. Colombia, Chile and Peru withdrew their ambassadors over the ruling.

The South American trade bloc Mercosur, which suspended Venezuela in December, called an emergency meeting. And the Organization of American States announced that it would hold an emergency meeting at its Washington headquarters on Monday to discuss what Secretary General Luis Almagro called a "self-inflicted coup."

Maduro was conspicuously silent during much of the two days of turmoil. Then on Saturday, dressed in black and waving copy of Venezuelan constitution, likened the international condemnation to a "political lynching."

He concluded his remarks with a call for more dialogue.

"I'm ready with whoever is willing," he said. **AP**

SERBS voted yesterday in a presidential election that was a test of their powerful leader's authoritarian rule amid growing Russian influence in the Balkan region.

Prime Minister Aleksandar Vucic, a former ultranationalist now a declared pro-European Union politician, is slated to win the presidency by a high margin against 10 opposition candidates, including a parody candidate who is mocking the country's political establishment.

Vucic's political clout could face a blow, however, if he does not sweep his opponents in the first round of voting. Vucic needs to win by more than 50 percent of the vote yesterday to avoid a runoff election on April 16 that would put him in a much trickier position

## Serbia's powerful PM favored to win presidential election

against a single opposition candidate.

Vucic's main challengers in the vote include human-rights lawyer and former Ombudsman Sasa Jankovic, former Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic and firebrand nationalist and Vucic's former mentor Vojislav Seselj, who has been tried for war crimes.

### Vucic has been pushing for deeper ties with longtime ally Russia

The opposition has accused Vucic of muzzling the media and intimidating voters ahead of the election. Vucic denies such accusations, saying only he can bring stability to a region scarred by the wars of the 1990s, which Vucic had supported at the time.

"I really hope that with these elections, Serbia will carry on toward its further stability with full support of its government," Vucic said as he cast his ballot. "I don't know if I'll win, but I truly hope that those who want to destabilize Serbia will not succeed."

Jankovic, the independent candidate, said yesterday he's happy with his campaign,

which has galvanized the pro-democratic movement in Serbia that has been upset with the country's persistent corruption and growing autocracy.

"In Serbia, a new, honest political movement has been created, and it's the reason why we should be optimistic," Jankovic said after he voted.

The prime minister since 2014, Vucic expected to use his win to appoint a figurehead successor and transform the presidency from a ceremonial office into a more muscular role — and rule unchallenged like Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has endorsed him.



AP PHOTO  
Current Serbian Prime Minister and presidential candidate Aleksandar Vucic

Contrary to his claims that he wants to lead Serbia into the EU, Vucic has been pushing for deeper ties with longtime ally Russia.

Right before the vote, Vucic even visited Putin, who reportedly promi-

sed his signature on the delivery of fighter planes, battle tanks and armored vehicles to Serbia. The move triggered fears of an arms race in the western Balkans, which Russia considers its sphere of influence. **AP**

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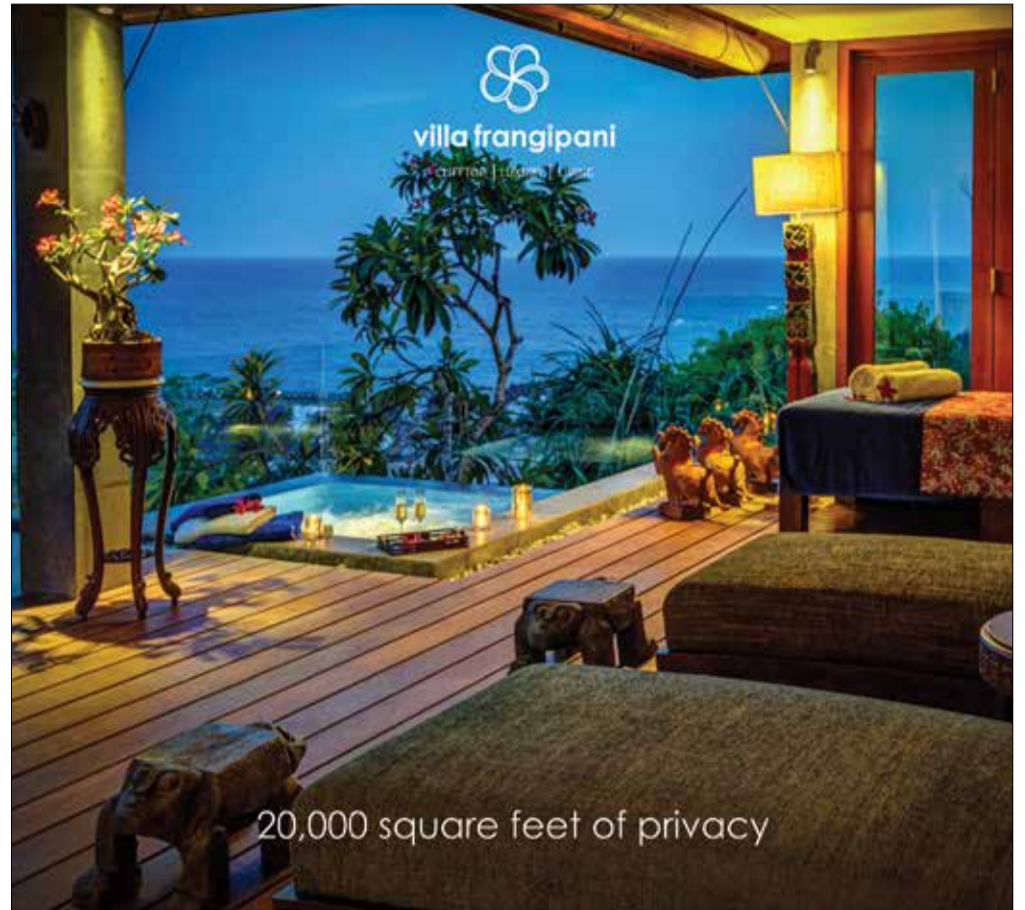


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## what's ON

SEARCH FOR: OUR SPIRITUAL HOME II  
INSTALLATION BY YEN-HUA LEE  
TIME: 12pm-7pm (Closed on Tuesdays)  
UNTIL: May 7, 2017  
VENUE: Intersection of Av. do Coronel Mesquita  
and Av. do Almirante Lacerda  
ADMISSION: Free  
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2853 0026

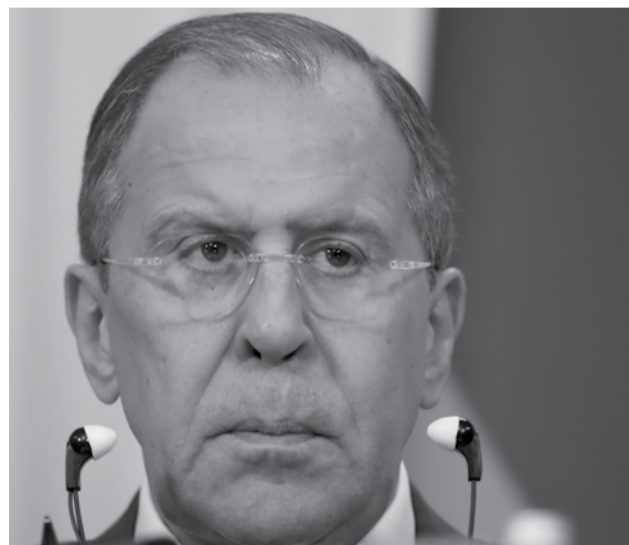
FORMER HOME OF REVOLUTIONARY LEADER YE  
TING  
TIME: 10am-6pm daily (Except Wednesdays,  
open on public holidays)  
VENUE: 76, Rua Almirante Costa Cabral  
ADMISSION: Free  
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8399 6699

MACAU GRAND PRIX MUSEUM & WINE  
MUSEUM  
TIME: 10am-8pm daily (Except Tuesdays)  
VENUE: Rua Luis Gonzaga Gomes, 431,  
basement (Tourism Activities Centre-CAT)  
ADMISSION: Free  
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8798 4108 / 2833 3000

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

THE VOICE OF DESIGN – WORKS EXHIBITION BY  
STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OF THE BACHELOR  
OF ARTS IN DESIGN OF MACAU POLYTECHNIC  
INSTITUTE  
TIME: 11am-10pm  
UNTIL: April 15, 2017  
VENUE: IFT Café, Anim'Arte NAM VAN  
ADMISSION: Free

## Offbeat

RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY POKED  
FUN AT HACKER SCANDAL

Need some election interference? The Russian Foreign Ministry is ready to help — or so it says on April Fools' Day.

On Saturday, the ministry posted on its Facebook page an audio file of the purported new automated telephone switchboard message for Russian embassies. "To arrange a call from a Russian diplomat to your political opponent, press 1," the recording begins, in Russian and English. Press 2 "to use the services of Russian hackers," and 3 "to request election interference."

A ministry duty officer, who did not give his name in line with official practice, confirmed to The Associated Press that the post was an official joke.

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday emphatically denied allegations of Russian meddling in the U.S. presidential election. **AP**

## TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	RTPi Live
15:30	Nos League: Arouca - Sporting (Repeated)
17:10	Criminal Minds S.9
17:50	Now Generation (Repeated)
18:40	Non-Daily Portuguese News (Repeated)
19:40	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Sport
22:10	Now Generation
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Champions League Magazine
00:05	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:40	RTPi Live

## cinema

## CINETEATRO

30 MAR - 4 APR

## GHOST IN THE SHELL

ROOM 1

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

Director: Rupert Sanders

Starring: Scarlett Johansson, Takeshi Kitano

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 106min

## GHOST IN THE SHELL (3D)

ROOM 1

7:30pm

Director: Rupert Sanders

Starring: Scarlett Johansson, Takeshi Kitano

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 106min

## IN THIS CORNER OF THE WORLD

ROOM 2

2:15, 7:15pm

Director: Sunao Katabuchi

Starring: Megumi Han, Yoshimasa Hosoya

Language: Japanese (Chinese)

Duration: 118min



## POWER RANGERS

ROOM 3

2:30, 4:45, 7:15, 9:30pm

Director: Dean Israelite

Starring: Brian Cranston, Elizabeth Banks, Naomi Scott

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 118min

## MACAU TOWER

30 MAR - 12 APR



## GHOST IN THE SHELL (3D)

ROOM 3

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

Director: Rupert Sanders

Starring: Scarlett Johansson, Takeshi Kitano

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 106min

## this day in history

1987 WINDSOR GEMS FETCH  
RECORD PRICE

The late Duchess of Windsor's jewelry has been sold for £31m (USD50m) - six times the expected figure during an auction in Switzerland.

About 1,000 bidders and 300 members of the media crowded into a huge tent erected by Sotheby's next to Lake Geneva for the two-day sale.

In New York another 600 people were in Sotheby's main salesroom to view slides of the jewels and to have their bids relayed to Geneva. Many items went for up to 10 times their expected price.

The highest price was nearly £2m (\$3.15m) paid for a 31-carat diamond ring by a Japanese jeweler. A plume-shaped diamond brooch designed in 1935 by the then-Prince of Wales for his future bride, was sold for more than £400,000 (\$566,000) to actress Elizabeth Taylor.

Ms Taylor, who was a close friend of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, said she had often admired the brooch when the duchess wore it and bought it for sentimental reasons.

"I loved it so much, I had to buy it. It's the first important jewel I've ever bought myself," Ms Taylor said of her purchase.

Another item, a sapphire pendant, was rumored to have been bought on behalf of fellow British actress, Joan Collins.

Sotheby's president John Marion said the prices reflected a "unique outpouring of nostalgia".

The Duke of Windsor, formerly King Edward VIII, had to abdicate to marry the twice-divorced American, Wallis Simpson.

The duke died in 1972 and the duchess in 1986. The couple had no children and in her will the duchess left the proceeds of her jewelry collection to the Pasteur Institute in Paris, known for its AIDS and cancer research.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

After the death of the duchess in 1986, Egyptian Mohammed Al Fayed bought the Windsor's former home on the Bois de Boulogne in Paris.

In 1998 he sold their furniture and other possessions through an auction at Sotheby's which raised more than £14m (\$23m).

Items in the sale included the desk at which the-then King Edward VIII signed his abdication papers.

Mr Al Fayed said the proceeds from the sale would go to charities favored by his late son Dodi and Diana, Princess of Wales, who were killed in a car crash in August 1997.



YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Do you take the same role in every situation? Are you always the leader, always the follower, or do you take turns in this role? These are the questions you should address.

Taurus April 20-May 20 Today you will be the beacon that all others follow. Your leadership potential has slowly (but surely) been maturing, and now you will be able to step confidently into the role as leader.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Compromise, not dogma, is what will feel most comfortable. Everything is a shade of grey to you now, and that's causing a small amount of confusion in your personal life.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Your fascination with the finer things in life could be holding you back right now. Are you devoting too much time and money to looking good but ignoring your poor emotional and physical being?

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Let go of your current goals and put them on the back burner for a while. Right now you should concentrate on learning more about how this person made the transition they made and why.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Recent dramatic events in a friend or family member's life might be causing you to think more about the quality of your own life. You can learn from the choices that other people have been making.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 You will be in the middle of all the action today, so be prepared to fight for every inch of the elbow room you need. Take a moment to look around at the people you are working with.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 The speeding race car that is your life is about to hit a big, blinking red light. Something unexpected is going to happen today that forces you to stop in your tracks and take a long, slow look at where you are in life.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Email is a great way to get back in touch without making too much of a commitment. Even if no one replies, you will feel good knowing you got things out into the universe.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 The activities throughout the day will create a lot of different possibilities, and it may be hard to decide which opportunity you want to explore. You have so few things limiting your options, and that is a blessing.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Your life is a marathon, not a sprint - and you have plenty of ground left to cover. So do things today that help conserve your energy, not use it all up. Physical activity is fine, but just don't go overboard or try to show off.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 Making a sacrifice is never very much fun, but today it will be easy: You will see a clear benefit to making a tiny, painless alteration to your plans. A slight change will also be called for in your romantic life.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Accumulate; 6- Hopscotch; 11- Black cuckoo; 14- Hostess Mesta; 15- Steve of country music; 16- Male child; 17- "Silas Marner" author; 18- Sand bar; 19- Actor Gulager; 20- Freshwater fish; 22- Atty.-to-be exams; 24- British rock group; 28- Man's wig; 29- Joined by treaty; 30- Headgear of a monarch; 32- River sediment; 33- Fantasy; 35- Warner \_\_\_; 39- It's a thought; 40- Takes too much; 41- Bits of thread; 42- Observed; 43- Song of joy; 45- Cuatro doubled; 46- Champagne buckets; 48- Shun; 50- Powerful cat; 53- Large ships; 54- Varnish resin; 55- \_\_\_ Selassie; 57- Unit of weight; 58- Liquid measure; 60- Evade; 65- As well; 66- Run-of-the-mill; 67- Adjust to zero; 68- Actress Alicia; 69- Words on a Wonderland cake; 70- One cubic meter;

DOWN: 1- Gibbon, e.g.; 2- Singer Torme; 3- "Exodus" role; 4- \_\_\_-pitch softball; 5- Colonize; 6- Mexican moola; 7- Pearl Harbor locale; 8- Horse's gait; 9- Hearst kidnap grp.; 10- Egg yolk; 11- Songwriters' org.; 12- Nick of "Cape Fear"; 13- Busy; 21- Comedian Foxx; 23- Sunburn protection; 24- Foundation; 25- Omit in pronunciation; 26- Tree-lined walk; 27- Metallic element; 28- Male turkey; 30- Gives up; 31- Tabula \_\_\_; 34- Stadium din; 36- Nouveau \_\_\_; 37- \_\_\_ Majesty's Secret Service; 38- Puts away; 43- For each; 44- Actress Patricia; 47- Long narrow skiff used on the Bosphorus; 49- Scoffs; 50- Volkswagen model; 51- Crazy as \_\_\_; 52- Columbus's birthplace; 53- Name; 55- \_\_\_ monde; 56- Composer Khachaturian; 59- Country bordered by Canada and Mexico; 61- Allow; 62- Manipulate; 63- \_\_\_ Rosenkavalier; 64- Somme summer;

Friday's solution crossword puzzle grid with filled-in words.

A large crossword puzzle grid with some numbers and letters pre-filled.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



FOR SALE and FOR RENT advertisement for JML Property, including website and contact information.

Real estate listings for various properties in Macau, including Roof Top Apartment, Old Taipa, Wan Yu Villa, Cattleya Court, Kok Wui, The Carat, Jardim Lameiras, and Edf. Nam Long.

JML Property logo and branding, including the text '卓雅物業' and 'Since 1994'.

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IOC President Thomas Bach (second from left) is flanked by Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti (left), LA 2024 chairman Casey Wasserman (second from right) and UCLA chancellor Gene Block (right)

# LA, Paris head to 2024 Olympics event unsure of IOC's goal

Graham Dunbar, Geneva

AS the IOC moves the goalposts in the 2024 Olympic contest, bid leaders from Los Angeles and Paris head to a campaign event in Denmark tomorrow unsure of exactly what they are shooting for.

While both cities are bidding for the 2024 Games, the 2028 hosting rights are also in play, according to IOC President Thomas Bach.

LA and Paris will send 12-member delegations to lobby and make 10-minute presenta-

tions in Aarhus at a conference of global Olympic sports officials — the first of only three set-piece events ahead of the IOC's scheduled decision in September. The audience will include some of the near 100-strong IOC membership who normally pick host cities.

The 2024 campaign is no longer normal. When Bach lamented in December a bidding process that produced "too many losers," he sparked speculation of a mid-game rule change to allow awarding both the 2024 and 2028 Games, and so avoid letting a coveted potential host slip away.

Bach has only fueled the idea since, and last month said "all options are on the table" when he asked the four IOC vice presidents to examine change. They should report back in July, days before the next bid presentation event in the IOC's home city of Lausanne, Switzerland.

Los Angeles and Paris, and their armies of retained Olympic consultants, now have to include strategizing for which games to get in a contest that no longer seems winner-take-all.

"We can't accept '28," Paris bid co-chairman Tony Estanguet said in London two weeks ago.

"It's not possible. Either the IOC family wants to choose Paris for '24 or we will not come back for '28."

LA bid chairman Casey Wasserman has taken a more cooperative public line, and published an article Friday titled: "An opportunity, not an ultimatum."

Still, Wasserman's message concluded: "LA's vision for 2024 is relevant now, and cannot wait until 2028."

Bach will be in Aarhus on Monday and see the bid city mayors — Eric Garcetti of Los Angeles and Anne Hidalgo of Paris — for a "routine meeting" with each,

the IOC said in a statement.

It is unclear which of the four-man panel of IOC VPs will attend the week-long conference, or even seek out bid leaders. Bach has said they could decide how and when to consult the candidates.

Also in Aarhus will be the IOC member, Patrick Baumann of Switzerland, overseeing evaluation of how the cities' technical operating plans shape up.

Baumann chaired a two-day meeting in Lausanne last week, ahead of his team's three-day visits to the cities in May. As expected, he declared both "great cities" that "would deliver an excellent experience for athletes, spectators and other Games participants."

The IOC news release carrying Baumann's comments referred three times in the top four paragraphs to "Olympic Agenda 2020." The big idea of Bach's presidency, it is designed to cut costs of bidding and hosting an Olympics after a decade of budget overruns and huge-spending vanity projects.

The 2024 vote on Sept. 13 in Lima, Peru, is at the exact midpoint of Bach's eight-year first term and will help define it.

LA has pushed the idea that its privately funded project with no major construction needs — eliminating white elephants — better fits Bach's vision for safeguarding the Olympic future. Paris proposes some taxpayer spending in a 3 billion euro (USD3.2 billion) budget for infrastructure, including an athletes village that bid leaders say is on a site that cannot wait four more years.

"This bid campaign isn't about whether a city is capable of hosting the Games? — it's about which city is best suited to serve the future of the Olympic Movement," Wasserman wrote on Friday.

The candidates' rival visions — though perhaps not the IOC's — should be a little clearer by Wednesday. **AP**

# More frustration for Man United in 0-0 draw vs West Brom

MANCHESTER United endured familiar frustration at Old Trafford by drawing with West Bromwich Albion 0-0 in the English Premier League on Saturday, a damaging result in its bid to qualify for the Champions League.

West Brom was the eighth side to leave Old Trafford with a draw this campaign, joining the likes of Hull, Stoke, and Burnley in defying United.

"It's an amazing unbeaten run, 19 matches in the modern Premier League," United manager Jose Mourinho said, "but too many draws at home be-

cause some draws away from home are very acceptable, positive. You can deal with it but too many draws at home."

United stayed fifth and was four points behind Manchester City — the occupier of the final Champions League qualification place — having played the same number of games. City plays sixth-place Arsenal on Sunday.

Winning the Europa League may offer United its best chance of a Champions League return at this rate. Mourinho's side is through to the quarter-finals, where it plays Belgian club Anderlecht.

**We need to kill opponents. This is deja vu all season.**

MOURINHO

The absence of Zlatan Ibrahimovic and Ander Herrera through suspension and Paul Pogba, Juan Mata, Phil Jones, and Chris Smalling through injury didn't help United on an afternoon when a

drab first half made way for a desperate second.

Former United midfielder Darren Fletcher hit the bar late in the game after a hopeful drive slipped through David de Gea's grasp, but it was West Brom goalkeeper Ben Foster — another ex-United player — who shone brightest, his best stop being a one-handed save to deny Marcus Rashford in the second half.

United drew an 11th league match of the season and the final whistle was greeted by jeers.

Mourinho was critical of his attackers. "We need to kill opponents. This is



Jose Mourinho (center) looks out during the match against West Bromwich Albion

deja vu all season," Mourinho said. "And when you score a goal against these teams, you don't win 1-0, you win 3-0 or 4-0 because you score a goal and then the game is open.

"We miss easy chances, we have moments or pe-

riods to push really, but then a couple of players they disappear, and there are 10 minutes when you don't see them. You see always the same people, always the same guys — always the same guys in front of the train pulling the train." **AP**

opinion

**Rear Window**

Severo Portela



**LUCKY NUMBER SEVEN**

We are aware that once we are about to enter the popular narrative realm of a fairy tale, the tone is set to "once upon a time." Similarly, we are sure to dive into bizarre trivia should we read the warning "believe it or not."

However, in the absence of a clear sign to guide us through the strangeness of politics, and electoral things in particular, we can do nothing but accept the simplicity of chance, embrace the random, and take both as tools to help us frame our understanding of the Hong Kong chief executive election outcome: 777 votes to endorse Carrie Lam.

777 odd ballots (from a 1,200 strong small-circle election committee) constitute an involuntary coincidence and a sound and heavy gap between Lam and the other two permitted contestants to the top job: John Tsang (365) and Woo Kwok-hing (21). Tsang was leading all polls to replace one-term CY Leung... that is to say, the long-term Finance Secretary would be elected if the anachronistic small-circle was to be replaced by universal suffrage. But there goes conventional wisdom: you do not have to believe in coincidences!

Coincidentally, John Tsang was the one to run with a pro-Beijing platform which common sense would describe as "an agenda by Regina Ip with common sense". Tsang highlighted economic development, taxation, education, and furthermore he mentioned the idea of boosting government accountability - a wink towards the moderates. But Tsang went further, plying for talks on political reform, and making a full circle slam, he compromised on national security legislation (Article 23).

Some time ago one would say this agenda was a kind of Carrie Lam copycat line; even unhappy former judge Woo Kwok-hing's progressive platform was nothing more than a timid proposal to inflate representation in the electoral committee. He would be inside the circle of trusted political development that China would be comfortable with.

But then came along the 777 votes for Carrie Lam - ex-Chief Secretary under CYL - despite the fact that the winning candidate has been blatantly avoiding the enactment of the national security law and merely talking up political reform in the SAR. One has to wonder what Carrie Lam will really be about as the next powerful chief executive.

Besides general issues regarding economics and civil service reform, we would do better to listen to the CE-in-waiting when she promises to mend political divisions: "to heal the divide and to ease the frustrations and to unite our society to move forward". The morning after, and more than two years later, Occupy Movement activists were told by the police they will be charged with committing public nuisance. The Department of Justice allegedly confirmed that the police would be prosecuting nine people based on legal advice.

Occupy Central and Demosisto star activist Joshua Wong has no doubts about Beijing's ultimate strategy to wipe out democrats in Hong Kong: from the prosecution of those involved in the Umbrella Movement to unseating democratic lawmakers (oath controversy). Demosisto and UM announced they will organize citywide demonstrations.

Being just a CE-elect, Carrie Lam did not say much about the eventual decision taken during CY Leung's time to arrest Benny Tai and the others; not much more than an allusion to the need to abide by the rule of law.

As for the million-dollar question, it goes like a riddle: why fuel political tensions in the countdown to the usual demonstration on the First of July, on the 20th anniversary of the handover and Carrie Lam's first day in office?

We do not know... but try numerology: 777. Seven is a combination of Yin, Yang and the Five Elements. The triple seven is a must in the gaming business... some say that for odd numbers, seven is both a lucky and an unlucky number.

**THE HACKED NEW YORK POST APP SENDS BUZZ OUT 'HEIL PRESIDENT' ALERT**

The New York Post app has been hacked on April Fools' Day, sending out push alert notifications that included "Heil President Donald Trump."

The Post apologized Saturday night, shortly after its app sent out a series of alerts. The Post said in a follow-up alert: "Our push alert notification system was compromised this evening. We are working to resolve the issue. Please accept our apologies."

The messages appeared directed at Trump. One message said, "Open your heart to those you do not understand and listen to all those you fear and look down upon."

The alerts even included lyrics from Nirvana's song "Come As You Are": "Take your time, hurry up, the choice is yours, but don't be late..."

The Post is owned by Trump-friendly media mogul Rupert Murdoch.

**Dylan finally gets his hands on his Nobel prize**



Bob Dylan performs in Los Angeles

**David Keyton, Stockholm**

**B**OB Dylan finally has his hands on his Nobel Literature diploma and medal.

Klas Ostergren, a member of the Swedish Academy, said the 75-year-old American singer-songwriter received his award during a small gathering Saturday afternoon at a hotel next to the conference center where Dylan was performing a concert later that night.

Ostergren told The Associated Press that the ceremony was a small, intimate event in line with the singer's wishes, with just academy members and a member of Dylan's staff attending.

"It went very well indeed," he said, describing Dylan as "a very nice, kind man."

Other members of the academy told Swedish media that Dylan seemed

pleased by the award.

During his show hours later, Dylan made no reference to the Nobel award, simply performing a set blending old classics with tunes from his more recent albums.

Dylan had declined the invitation to attend the traditional Nobel Prize banquet and ceremony on Dec. 10 — the date of Alfred Nobel's death — pleading other commitments.

But in order to receive the award worth 8 million kronor (USD894,800), Dylan must give a lecture within six months from Dec. 10. He has said he will not give his Nobel lecture this weekend but a recorded version of it will be sent later.

Taped Nobel lectures have been occasionally presented, most recently in 2013 by Canadian Nobel literature laureate Alice Munro.

"I think he has said it all

already as you heard in the acceptance speech. And you know, Dylan didn't apply for the Nobel prize. People seem to forget that. It wasn't a competition, he didn't ask for it, he was bestowed it. It's not for the giver of a gift to expect something in return," said Shmuel Burger, a 61-year-old physician and die-hard Dylan fan who traveled from Israel for the concert.

The 2016 Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to Dylan "for having created new poetic expressions within the great American song tradition." He had expressed awe at receiving the Nobel Prize and thanked the Swedish Academy for including him among the "giants" of writing.

Besides his two concerts in Stockholm, Dylan will also play in the southwestern city of Lund on April 9. **AP**

**THE DECISIVE MOMENT**

Xinhua/Li Zhiming



A train runs through a field of peach flowers near the Juyongguan Pass of the Great Wall in Beijing, March 26.

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	40-60 Moderate	
High Density Residential Area	65-95 Moderate	
Ambient	65-95 Moderate	

SOURCE: DSI/MG

**WORLD BRIEFS**

**SOUTH KOREA** A cargo ship being used by a South Korean shipping company went missing near Uruguay with 24 crew members and authorities said two people have been rescued.



**GIBRALTAR** The British territory of Gibraltar will be "protected all the way" as the U.K. negotiates its exit from the European Union, said Defense Secretary Michael Fallon. The government is under pressure over the rights of Gibraltar's 33,000 residents after European Union President Donald Tusk handed Spain a determining say on whether any Brexit deal will apply to the territory.



**SOUTH AFRICAN** parliamentary Speaker Baleka Mbete said she's considering a request to recall lawmakers to debate an opposition-sponsored motion of no confidence in President Jacob Zuma, after he made sweeping cabinet changes that top ruling party officials said was done without their consultation.



**VENEZUELA**'s president and Supreme Court backed down Saturday from an unprecedented move to strip congress of its legislative powers that had sparked widespread charges that the South American country was no longer a democracy. **More on p14**

**ECUADOR** In the latest test of whether left-of-center rule in Latin America has staying power, Ecuadoreans headed to the polls to pick a successor to Rafael Correa, the self-declared socialist who has led OPEC's smallest member for a record 10 consecutive years.