

FIVE TO SEVEN TYPHOONS

Civil protection authorities are preparing for typhoon season. Five to seven typhoons are likely to occur

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ACTIVIST'S WIFE TO BEGIN BEIJING SEARCH

The wife of a Taiwanese activist who went missing last month has said she will travel to Beijing

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TRUMP-XI SUMMIT POLISHES MAR-A-LAGO BRAND

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

WORLD BRIEFS



IRAQ Islamic militants unleashed multiple suicide attacks in the city of Tikrit, north of Baghdad, killing at least 22 people, a provincial official said yesterday. Five suicide bombers on foot targeted a police patrol and broke into a police officer's house in Tikrit's al-Zihood neighborhood, according to a Salahuddin provincial council member.

CAMBODIA began construction Tuesday of a new USD157 million football stadium funded by China, the Southeast Asian country's most important ally.



THAILAND An heir to the Red Bull fortune has refused to answer questions about whether he will return to Thailand this month to meet with prosecutors over an alleged hit-and-run that killed a police officer almost five years ago. Vorayuth "Boss" Yoovidhya was standing outside a residence in an exclusive London neighborhood but refused to say why he was in Britain.

THAILAND A Vietnamese cargo ship crashed into four riverside houses yesterday near the Thai capital, splintering the wooden and corrugated metal structures but causing no injuries.

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Concerns over new plans for La Scala land

Government takes back 4 idle plots

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HONG KONG AUCTION

Pink diamond bought by Chow Tai Fook fetches record USD71.2m

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Ma: Merger between police services without major impact



Ma Ion Kun

Julie Zhu

MA Ion Kun, commissioner-general of the Unitary Police Service (SPU), said that a small change will take place within the police

force after the Security Forces Coordination Office (GCSEG) and the Unitary Police Service (SPU) merge together.

During yesterday's meeting with the civil protection services, which took place at the

Pac On Immigration Department Office Building, Ma informed that several different departments in GCSEG will merge with different departments that belong to SPU.

Currently, there are still

some members of the GCSEG staff who are from the Public Security Forces Affairs Bureau (FSM) but are not officially working for GCSEG, according to Ma, who said that these members can also choose to either continue their works at SPU or return to FSM.

Ma also said that his department is considering the possibility of establishing a new Civil Protection Operational Centre because the space available to the current one is relatively narrow. The new one would run for 24 hours per day, he proposed.

Regarding the center's loca-

tion, Ma did not make further disclosures but noted that the authority will announce it once a related law is passed.

According to Ma, SPU and GCSEG are combining two departments' total function, with those functions being merged in order to reduce the number of human resources and improve work efficiency.

A change in other departments' human resources will also occur, under different circumstances, explained Ma.

Regarding the details of how different departments will be merged, Ma pointed out that it is better to announce them after the related law is passed.

Yesterday, the Second Standing Committee concluded discussions on the law he merged between the two departments and delivered the bill to Legislative Assembly for further detailed discussions.

FIVE TO SEVEN TYPHOONS PREDICTED

THIS YEAR, five to seven tropical cyclones will hit Macau and authorities have said that the civil protection team will organize a drill tomorrow to test preparedness for typhoons. The drill will test the city's civil protection's coordination and reaction abilities. Lao Ieng Wai, a consultant from

the Macao Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau, revealed that the bureau expects the first tropical cyclone warning to be raised in the middle of June, and the last during the second half of September. According to Lao, the first predicted typhoon will be slightly later than usual.



LEGAL WISE BY MdME

Gonçalo Mendes da Maia*

LAND LAW: THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING TAPES

Since my article, "The Failed Land Law", in MDT of July last year, much has changed, but nothing in the right direction. There is certainly more awareness and a unanimous agreement that there is something very wrong with the Land Law and in the whole political process. The report released last week by the Legislative Assembly offered more clear evidence that this is so.

In the past year, there were numerous media investigations, press conferences involving legislators, legal advisors and land owners, and institutional meetings between associations and stakeholders, all raising awareness of the extreme injustice of Article 48 in the Land Law.

As we all now know, in 2010 the Government, through a special commission, concluded that for 65 plots of land (to which 16 were later added) the "causes for non-development were not imputable" to their respective owners. And, according to the Land Law, enacted in 2013, there are multiple references to exceptions granted

to concessionaires when they cannot be held liable for certain breaches or delays. To extend these exceptions to allow non-culpable concessionaires to develop their expired land concessions would not only be the reasonable solution, but also the fairest. The proposal by legislator Gabriel Tong was a viable solution to allow non-culpable concessionaires the opportunity to develop their land, but his efforts were rejected.

In response, the president of the Legislative Assembly revealed that the tapes of the meetings regarding the preparatory land law were to be released to ascertain the true intentions of the Government, namely if, as mentioned by a number of legislators, the Government had pledged at the time to find an administrative solution to allow the non-culpable land owners to develop their land plots thus avoiding the injustice of a 'blind' enforcement of Article 48.

All of this even reached the attention of the chairman of the National People's

Congress, Zhang Dejiang, who mentioned certain "profound issues" regarding land and transport, which should be solved under the 'One Country, Two Systems' and the Basic Law framework. This was a clear message to the Macau Government to determine a solution to these 'profound' problems efficiently and fairly. Moreover, it seems that now virtually all legislators – even the ones that most fiercely opposed it – consider the Land Law to have deficiencies requiring a solution by an amendment or by administrative action.

Nevertheless, according to a report released last week by the Legislative Assembly, nothing seems to be wrong with the Land Law and the proposal by Gabriel Tong was subsequently rejected. In the 562-page report nothing is mentioned as to whether Article 48 of the Land Law is fair or just to the land concessionaires that, for more than 20 years, were prevented by the Government from developing their land and are now having their properties confiscated.

However, and more shockingly, the report mentions that there are no transcripts of the tapes of the preparatory meetings because they were held in chambers. This means that for eight months, we were all waiting for something that the Government never had the intention to disclose. Or maybe they had the intention, but decided not to upon hearing the tapes... Now we can but wonder what promises were made by the Government during such meetings: probably promises as steadfast as those made to disclose the transcripts of the tapes.

Now it seems that all hope of a legislative or administrative solution is lost. The Chief Executive has been issuing declarations of expiry nearly every month. So it seems that in the absence of a Government that protects the basic foundations of our legal and political system - such as the principles of justice, equality and good faith – it is now up to the Courts to make this happen.

*Partner, MdME Lawyers

Editor's Note: The author is a partner of MdME, a law firm representing clients involved in this matter. The opinions expressed within this article are solely the personal opinions of the writer.

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Aerial photography book launched today



THE Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) will organize a book launch ceremony and video screening today at 6.30 p.m. at Jao Tsung-I Academy. The ceremony and subsequent "sharing session" is open to the public.

The book, titled "Picturesque Beauty of the Landscape - Aerial Photographs of Macau by Chan Hin Io" features a variety of aerial photographs of Macau captured by photographer Chan Hin Io.

The photographs are captured from high altitudes, such as buildings, bridges, construction projects and other heights. According to the IC, these images offer "a distinctive composition and

reveal the urban development and the city's street network from new perspectives."

"While taking photographs, Chan Hin Io shot a video at high altitude in order to allow the public to experience the process of aerial photography and feel the beauty of a view that merges sky and landscape," read a statement issued by the government bureau. This video will then be screened at the book launch ceremony today.

Chan is a senior photographer who has published several works. Among these are "The Neighbourhood of Macau - Documentary Photographs by Chan Hin Io", "Memories of the Old Crafts and Trades in Macau" and "Where the World Heritage Shines - Photographs of the Historic Centre of Macau".

The latter book, published by the IC in 2015, is a photography album covering images of the Historic Centre of Macau and has already been sold out. A revised edition will now be released, also at the book launch ceremony.

Wife of detained Taiwan activist to begin Beijing search

THE wife of a Taiwanese political activist and former Democratic Progressive Party member, who went missing last month, has said she will travel to Beijing to search for her missing husband.

Lee Ming-che, who traveled from Macau to Guangdong Province was detained in China on March 19 and has not been heard from since. He was traveling to mainland China to seek medical treatment for his mother-in-law, according to his colleagues at the Taipei City community college.

Last week, the Chinese government acknowledged that he has been detained on suspicion of being involved in "activities harmful to national security." It remains unclear whether he was detained in Macau or while crossing the border with Zhuhai.

It is thought that China's security services may have been alerted to Lee after he used the social media platform WeChat to discuss China-Taiwan relations. Lee is reported to have used the platform to "teach" users about China-Taiwan relations under the current government of President Tsai Ing-wen.

On Tuesday, Lee's wife, Lee Ching-yu, said she had booked a one-way ticket to Beijing, departing on April 10, to investigate the whereabouts of



Lee Ching-yu (third from right) holds up a photo of her missing husband, Taiwanese pro-democracy activist Lee Ming-che

Ming-che. According to a report from Taiwan News, the motivation behind her trip is the fact that Beijing is not divulging any information on the matter.

Ching-yu says she will search for her husband - or information of where he is being detained - in Beijing, even though no information has been released that suggests he is being held in the capital.

She said that she had delayed the flight so as not to coincide with Ching Ming Festival at the start of this month or Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to the United States later today.

Ching-yu has been in communication with Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council and the Straits Exchange Foundation,

neither of which has been able to draft a plan to resolve the situation, she said.

Ching-yu plans to visit the Taiwan Affairs Office in Beijing, legal prosecutors and other agencies that might be able to help with her case. She emphasized that her trip to China is not intended to create trouble in the city or protest.

After Lee Ming-che was detained, immigration officials in Macau and Guangdong also refused to release information regarding his detention.

Amnesty International has commented on the disappearance, saying that Lee's detention raises fears that China is broadening its crackdown on legitimate activism. DB

Macau Daily Times contest



BIBAP Delicious Musical

Question for readers:

What's the story of BIBAP show?

Please email the answers to: 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 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 Theatre, The Parisian Macao from April 7 to 23, 2017. Prices start from MOP/HKD180 and tickets are now available via 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!



Macau ranks lowest in '2017 Smiling Report'

THE "2017 Smiling Report," conducted by a Swedish consultancy company, has indicated that Macau was amongst the countries that smile the least in customer service, placing the region as one of territories with the lowest Smile and Greeting scores.

The report focuses on customer service data from evaluations conducted across a spectrum of industries; and provides a summary focusing on Smile, Greeting and Add-on sales metrics in 67 countries and regions in 2016.

Better Business World Wide is currently in its 13th year of publication; with the report compiled from information supplied by "Mystery Shopping Providers."

At the bottom of the list of smiling countries were Macau and Hong Kong. However, it was not the first for Macau to be at the bottom list as "it has been the case previously," according to a statement issued by the company.



Hong Kong scored 57 percent, increasing their score by a good margin from 48 percent last year.

Overall in Hong Kong, 79 percent of the customers received a smile, 81 percent were greeted, while only 58 percent received an add-on sale suggestion.

The aggregated scores have decreased, for smiling by -4 and greeting by -6 compared to 2015, the firm stated.

Ireland was placed at the top of the Smile ranking for the third year, with 96 percent, slightly lower than

their 100 percent score in the previous year.

According to the study, the highest scoring industries were Health & Beauty with 89 percent and Hospitality with 86 percent, while the lowest was Transport with only 58 percent.

Meanwhile, Macau also stood at the bottom with its lowest greeting scores of 54 percent; below Hong Kong, India and Moldova at 62 percent.

Eight countries in South America scored 100 percent on greeting, including Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras and Mexico amongst others.

The best European countries were Greece and Ireland with 97 percent, while the best country in Asia was China with 92 percent.

Add-on sales data has historically posted a lower score than Smile and Greeting, but has still maintained a steady increase since the first Smiling Report was published in 2004; it has risen in this time from 45 percent to 58 percent.

Risk of mosquito-borne virus significantly higher this year

THE Health Bureau (SSM) has called on residents to be more aware of illnesses spread by mosquitoes, as this year's ovitrap index, (measured with equipment used to trap and contain mosquito eggs), is a lot higher compared to the same period last year.

During the Ching Ming Festival on Tuesday, several officers handed out pamphlets on mosquito prevention, reminding the public to be alert of the diseases.

Speaking on the sidelines of the flyer-handout initiative, Leong Yek Hou, head of Center for Disease Control and Prevention revealed that the ovitrap index is higher this year, reflecting an increasing possibility of residents being infected with mosquito-borne diseases.

"The index we have recorded this January and February is higher than the same period last year," Hou told the press, as cited in a TDM report.

"For example, the index this January is 7.3 while last year it was only 0.2. [...] The index in February has gone down to 2.4 and last year same period it was 0.6," Leong continued.

The prevalence of mosquitoes remains extremely high in the region, especially during the summer.

She correlated the high number



Members of the Inter-departmental Taskforce on Prevention of Dengue Fever hand out leaflets on the prevention of the disease

of *Aedes albopictus* (the type of mosquitos that spread dengue fever and Zika) with the increased chance of seeing mosquito virus outbreaks.

"Especially after April, the index was very high, which accounts for 60 percent of the total mosquito population," she noted, warning residents to not underestimate the outbreaks of mosquito-born diseases.

"As long as there is an imported case of dengue fever or Zika, the risk of having an outbreak is significantly high."

Leong reminded the residents to prevent mosquito virus outbreaks by avoiding stagnant water and by wearing long-sleeved shirts.

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THE Portuguese and English Press Association (AIPIM) has questioned the Electoral Affairs Commission for the Legislative Assembly Election (CAEAL) on matters regarding the impact of the recently amended Electoral Law on media coverage.

The letter, sent to the CAEAL, comes after a request for a meeting was declined by the commission, allegedly due to agenda problems. It indicates that "over the past weeks several associates have expressed doubts" over the statements made by CAEAL members.

In the letter, AIPIM highlights two of the Electoral Law articles, namely; 75-A, which defines what is considered as "Electoral Propaganda" together with the article 188 which states the penalties and fines for law breaches. The association questioned the commission in order to clarify the role and responsibilities of media companies.

The letter mentioned what was said during a CAEAL meeting with media representatives on March 8, stating that during the period between sharing the publication of the candidate list and the beginning of the campaign, the coverage of "implicit" acts of propaganda, such as "gestures, use of certain colors and dress" can be considered illegal. AIPIM finds there is a high degree of subjectivity in this ruling and asks how they would be able to

Association questions campaign rules' impact on media coverage

ensure that situations like these, when they are solved individually and "case-by-case", do not conclude in arbitrary resolutions.

Another of the points noted in the letter is a March 8 statement from the Government Information Bureau (GCS), which read: "The media should avoid the publication or interviews and reports regarding the candidates that might produce effect of electoral propaganda." This statement led AIPIM to question if the media can interview a candidate during the above-mentioned period. AIPIM also asked about an hypothetical interview situation. If a candidate makes any remarks regarding his political platform, could such an act can be considered an implicit suggestion to get votes. AIPIM also asked whether the media could be held accountable for any of these acts during interviews or live programs.

Another topic that gathered attention from the association



related to social network platforms. Their query regarded the content and comments sections of social media. AIPIM asked if media could be held accountable for the comments made by third parties on their social network platforms and, if so, what would the consequences be for the media companies.

Doubts are also extended to another section of the same statement from GCS where the CAEAL advises the media to "elaborate internal guidelines regarding the news reports" to be

followed by all staff "in order to protect themselves." In response, AIPIM is calling on CAEAL to explain exactly what is the intention and the mechanics of such a process.

Opinion columns are another topic addressed in the letter. "If a former lawmaker writes a column in a newspaper, will he need to cease to do it if he is a candidate?" the letter asks. "Is there a risk to have a punishment if there are columns where the author makes an apology of political proposals made by a certain candidate?" **RM**

Ching Ming: 9.5 percent tourist increase

Immigration authorities recorded a total of 406,769 tourist arrivals crossing the seven immigration checkpoints of the MSAR during Ching Ming Festival (from April 1 to April 4). The figure represents an increase of 9.5 percent when compared with last year, according to the police. As usual, the most used checkpoint was the Border Gate, with a total number of arrivals (including residents) of 736,710. The total number of arrivals stood at 987,369 and the total number of departures 1,015,297.

Rocha Andrade visits Macau

The Portuguese Secretary of State for Fiscal Affairs, Fernando Rocha Andrade, visited BNU and met with members of the Portuguese community yesterday. During the visit to bank, the secretary was accompanied by the General Consul of Portugal in Macau and Hong Kong, Vítor Sereno, and the representative of AICEP, Márcia Guerreiro. Rocha Andrade was in Macau to sign an agreement on new rules on tax information exchange between Macau and Portugal. However, during a meeting held yesterday morning, he was informed that the MSAR had postponed the signature, since preparatory works are still ongoing.

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Committee concerned Taipa project will be a 'Seac Pai Van 2.0'

Renato Marques

THE land reclaimed by the government from the former "La Scala" development in Taipa next to Avenida Wai Long was the highlight of the meeting of the Urban Planning Committee (CPU) held yesterday at the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT). The meeting marked the debut of Li Canfeng as president of the council, replacing the Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, who was absent.

The land plot, which is expected to be used to build 8,000 units of public housing, was a topic of debate at the CPU for the second time.

Several council members stated that they feared that this new project would be a "Seac Pai Van version 2.0." Some even claimed that the plot suffers from "a lot of pollution" and is "unsuitable for public housing."

In the initial presentation it was remarked that the land plot was divided into two parcels with a construction quota in terms of height categories (Parcel 1 maximum of 155m tall; Parcel 2 maximum of 90m tall).

The representative of the DSSOPT, Cheong Ion Man, noted that the bureau "hopes that, through this meeting, we can reach a consensus taking note the opinions expressed by the society."

He also explained that, according to the government plan, Taipa Hill will not be targeted with any further digging.

According to Cheong, there is an area of 5,000 square meters



that will be reserved for the future development of the Taipa Hill tunnel, and for now will be used as a green area.

In addition, the DSSOPT also noted that it is part of the plan for the public housing development to have a reserved area of 25,000 square meters for social and sports equipment that will include a sports ground, a library and a market as well as services to support the elderly and young children.

"We can fulfill all the needs in those areas with this reserved space," he said, noting that the ratio between housing units and social and sports equipment established for the development is 3:2 (in which housing takes the bigger share).

Cheong noted by comparison that in the Seac Pai Van social housing, the ratio is about 70 percent for housing and only 30 percent for social infrastructure.

Lawmaker and member of the CPU, Mak Soi Kun noted the "concerns of society" over this project, "especially after what happened with Seac Pai Van where [the residents are] lacking one market and other services,"

noting that is "necessary to take in good note the previous problems and experiences," asking for more concrete data.

Mak also noted that the location is "very far" and lacks transportation and support services.

The lawyer Neto Valente, also a member of the CPU, added to the words of Mak, calling for the need to "take lessons from the past and not to repeat the mistakes done at Seac Pai Van." Valente added that it is unclear how the topics of pollution and parking in the area would be addressed.

To the questions, Cheong replied that the topic was already

being considered by the government and offered the promise that the parking lot will occupy the podium of the building in the first floors.

"We can guarantee that the parking lots will be located on the podium of the building," said Cheong.

If some members questioned on some specific points, others showed themselves to be completely against the project. Opponents included Wu and Zheng Dehua, among others, who are totally against the height (155m) and disagree with the use of the land plot for public housing.

Landscape and material quality were also under discussion with member Lam Lon Wai noting that such a "block" would cover all the hill and take the view from the trails, urging the government to consider that even 90 meters is "too high" for the area.

In his opinion, the government should also change the target market for the development to the younger generation instead of the lower socio-economic class, noting that the location is also not suitable for elderly residents as it is "too far from the city center."

GOV'T TAKES BACK FOUR PLOTS

THE GOVERNMENT has declared the reversion of four land plots with a total area of almost 13,000 square meters. According to a notice published yesterday in the Official Gazette, three of the land plots are located in Coloane's Seac Pai Van industrial zone. The largest of those plots was ceded to Cheong Kong company to build

a tarmac facility. The concession ended in June 2016 and the plot remains unused. The other land plots were destined to evolve into a 10-storey parking lot and a kennel. In Macau, the reverted plot had been granted to Engineering and Industrial Guangdong (Macau) Company and their plan is to build a parking lot.

analyze rules already in place in Singapore to minimize problem gambling. These may include entrance fees for Japanese residents intending to enter casinos and a reporting system for public officials who regularly gamble at the integrated resorts.

A separate system may be established whereby problem gamblers or immediate family members can voluntarily include themselves on casino exclusion lists.

Last week, a government survey showed that 2.7 percent of almost 1,000 respondents said they had suffered from gambling addiction at some point in their life.

Although some forms

of gambling are prolific in Japan, notably arcade game Pachinko, on which the Japanese wagered more than USD200 billion in 2015, the country's gaming market is still considered immature. Analysts say that the casino market in Japan could be worth as much as USD40 billion.

Las Vegas Sands and Melco International Development have already signaled a willingness to invest billions of U.S. dollars into the opportunity.

Melco's CEO Lawrence Ho said at a February event in Tokyo that "this opportunity is priceless and we'll spend whatever it takes to win [the bid]." **DB**

CCAC concludes less criminal investigations

The Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) concluded 182 criminal cases in 2016, less 29 percent fewer than in 2015. According to CCAC's annual report published yesterday, 910 complaints were received over the year, 15 percent more than in 2015. Assessing last year's work, the report stresses the investigation related to the former Prosecutor General, Ho Chio Meng. "In the criminal cases detected, we highlighted cases of corruption related to public tenders, with cases of collusion between the suspects and persons who have no connection with the related services." Regarding CCAC's role as ombudsman, 280 cases of alleged administrative infractions were analyzed.

City of Dreams: Hard Rock name dropped

The casino operator majority-owned by Melco International Development officially changed its name from Melco Crown Entertainment yesterday to "Melco Resorts and Entertainment Ltd." Subsequently, its stock ticker name will change to MLCO from "about April 6". The company's name in Chinese will not be changed, the firm has previously said. The rebranding also involved the dropping of Hard Rock name from its City of Dreams casino in Cotai. Instead, the resort will be operating under the name "The Countdown", starting from July 2017 and lasting until March 31, 2018. After that, it will be renamed. "The hotel will feature a countdown clock timed to the unveiling of a new phase of development of City of Dreams," the firm noted in a statement. "April 2018 will mark the opening of Macau's new landmark: Morpheus [and] alongside the opening of Morpheus, the Countdown Hotel will commence its ultimate rebranding journey."

Illegal food seized from restaurants

The Macau Customs Service and the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) seized 840 kilograms of uninspected vegetables from seven restaurants in the territory before the Ching Ming Festival. The two departments seized the foods during a joint operation which took place on March 30, 31 and April 3. The Customs revealed that these vegetables are not only suspected of being sold in Macau but also of having been smuggled into the city. IACM will sue the food collectors, who, according to the city's food safety law, can be punished with a maximum of five years in prison.

Thriller Live to return to The Parisian

Sands China announced yesterday that Thriller Live, a theatrical concert paying tribute to Michael Jackson, will return to The Parisian Macao, due to popular demand, from April 28 to September 3. The concert is a 90-minute performance of pop, rock, soul and disco as it features Jackson's timeless songs and signature dance moves. Thriller Live was the debut show at The Parisian Macao's new Parisian Theatre when it opened in September last year. According to a statement issued by Sands China, the concert been performed close to 5,500 times and been seen by more than four million people in over 30 countries.

GAMING | JAPAN

Task force established to explore legal regulations

THE inaugural meeting of a government task force designed to make recommendations on legal regulations on integrated resorts in Japan was held on Tuesday and chaired by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

The task force, which will examine the necessity and implementation of regulations for the country's forthcoming integrated resorts, will make recommendations to Japanese autho-

rities on licensing and advertising matters, as well as financial and taxation regulations.

It will also recommend policies to alleviate problem gambling – a major point of contention among critics of the integrated resort bill – and ways to keep criminal activities, such as money laundering, out of casinos.

"The world's highest standards of casino regulations will be introduced, and policies

to deal with issues like gambling addiction will be addressed," the Japanese prime minister said during the meeting according to the Japan Times. "This will create clean, Japanese-style integrated resorts."

The task force, which is headed by Abe and Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga, would be comprised of lawyers, accountants, economists and political analysts.

The body plans to

Accused Yahoo hacker had Lamborghini, Aston Martin at 22

Kristine Owram

A Canadian accused of hacking Yahoo! Inc. email accounts on behalf of the Russian government appeared in court seeking bail ahead of a hearing to determine whether he should be extradited to the U.S. for trial.

Karim Baratov, 22, was one of four people indicted by the U.S. government last month and charged with working for Dmitry Dokuchaev, a hacker for Russia's FSB security service. It's not clear whether Baratov knew he was working for the FSB.

The 2014 hack affected at least 500 million accounts at Yahoo, damaging the company's reputation and threatening a takeover bid from Verizon Communications Inc. Verizon cut its offer by USD350 million to \$4.48 billion following news of the breach.

Baratov, who was born in Kazakhstan and is a Canadian citizen, entered court in Hamilton, Ontario, wearing black sweatpants, black t-shirt, with his ankles chained. He put on a beige blazer as he sat down in the prisoner's box.

He told the court he lived with his parents until 2015. He said he had a Mercedes and a BMW while attending high school and started his own business protecting web servers from hackers in 2014. He said earned CAD10,000 (\$7,500) a month that year, less in the ensuing years.

At 20, Baratov said he moved into a CAD642,000 home, and over time added a CAD155,000 Lamborghini, a Porsche 911, an Aston Martin and another BMW to his car collection. His parents helped pay for the cars, he said.



Baratov said he had about CAD260,000 of equity in his home when it was sold following his arrest. Baratov said he had no money in his personal bank account and about CAD5,000 in his business bank account when he was arrested. Police found about CAD31,000 in cash when they searched his home.

■ The hackers were allegedly looking for people of political interest and others who might be vulnerable to financial fraud

According to the U.S. government, Baratov was paid to gain access to 80 email accounts, including 50 Google accounts, belonging to Russian politi-

cians and bureaucrats. He used spear-phishing attacks to target his victims, using fake emails to compel them to provide sensitive information, and would then sell their passwords to Dokuchaev for \$100 each, according to the Justice Department.

The hackers were allegedly looking for people of political interest and others who might be vulnerable to financial fraud, and the list of victims included the White House and its military and diplomatic corps. They ultimately stole the contents of 6,500 Yahoo accounts in an attack the company called "state-sponsored."

The U.S. government is seeking to seize assets he is alleged to have obtained through illegal activity, including his black Mercedes Benz C54 and Aston Martin DBS.

Baratov's father offered to put up CAD845,000 equity in his home, saying it represented his life's savings.

"It's not a risk," the father, Akhmet Tokbergenov, told the judge. "It's a great desire on my part and my wife's part to help him."

Bloomberg

China Unicom said to prepare mixed-ownership announcement

Prudence Ho

CHINA Unicom (Hong Kong) Ltd. and its Shanghai-listed affiliate are poised to announce mixed-ownership-reform plans that are part of a Chinese government push to draw private capital into its state-owned enterprises, according to a person familiar with the matter.

While the person declined to specify details, including which specific companies would be attracting private capital, Daiwa Securities Group Inc. has indicated that the Shanghai-listed company would be more likely than the Hong Kong-traded carrier to be the subject of such restructuring.

Shares of Hong Kong-listed Unicom, whose market value exceeds USD30 billion, and China United Network Communications Ltd. in Shanghai were suspended from trading yesterday, pending an announcement on inside information. A Shanghai representative for Unicom couldn't immediately be reached for comment.

Unicom's parent was among six state-owned enterprises that the National Development and Reform Commission selected in September for a pilot program in mixed-ownership reform - China's preferred term for partial privatization. It's part of the government's broader push to overhaul its bloated SOEs, whose total revenue figure rivals the size of Japan's economy.

During the past months, China Unicom has signed cooperation agreements with Baidu Inc., Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. and Tencent Holdings Ltd., moves that have generated speculation that the Internet companies would get involved in the government mixed-ownership plan. Representatives at the technology companies either had



no comment or didn't immediately respond to requests for comment.

The government owns China United Network Communications Group Co. - also known as Unicom Group - which is the country's second-largest mobile-phone carrier. The group, in turn, controls Hong Kong-listed China Unicom and Shanghai-listed China United Network Communications Ltd.

Prior to yesterday, the prospect of mixed-ownership had helped boost China United's shares 80 percent since October in Shanghai, while the Hong Kong unit had gained more than 16 percent.

Ownership changes at Unicom Group could serve as a model for other state firms because of its selection in the government pilot program. The other SOEs recruited into the experiment are China Southern Power Grid Co., Harbin Electric Corp., China Nuclear Engineering Group Corp., China Eastern Air Holding Co. and China State Shipbuilding Corp.

Mixed-ownership could be emerging as key theme this year from last year's focus on mergers. Li Jin, chief researcher at China Enterprise Institute, expects consolidation to continue, estimating that the total number of SOEs managed by the central government will fall to about 80 by the end of the decade from more than 100 last year.

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Pink diamond fetches record USD71.2m in Hong Kong auction

Kelvin Chan

A stunning 59.6 carat diamond known as the "Pink Star" sold for USD71.2 million at a Sotheby's auction Tuesday in Hong Kong, setting a new world record for any diamond or jewel, according to the auction house.

The oval mixed-cut diamond smashed the \$60 million pre-sale estimate set by Sotheby's when it went on the block.

The sale comes three years after the gem was sold at an even higher price at another Sotheby's auction in Geneva. That deal later fell apart after the buyer defaulted.

The gem is the largest flawless fancy vivid pink diamond ever graded by the Gemological Institute of America.

Three telephone bidders competed for the stone during five tense minutes of bidding. The crowd in the packed auction room applauded when it was sold for a hammer price of \$63 million, not including the buyer's premium.

Sotheby's Asia Chairwoman Patti Wong said the winning bidder was Hong Kong jeweler Chow Tai Fook.

"We're very happy," Wong said. "I know there was a lot of talk about the economy in China not being as positive as it was a few years ago," but the results from its jewelry auction Tuesday, which included nearly 200 other lots, were very strong, she said.

Wong said the company is not worried about another default because the bidders were vetted and have longstanding relationships with Sotheby's. "We're very, very confident that all three bidders



had the financial capability, and of course the buyer definitely had the financial capability," she said.

Until now, the most expensive diamond ever sold at auction was the "Oppenheimer Blue," which fetched 56.8 million Swiss francs (then \$57.6 million) last May. The previous world auction record for a pink diamond was \$46.2 million for the 24.78 carat "Graff Pink" in 2010.

Sotheby's decided the time was right to bring the diamond back to the market because of rising demand from wealthy Asian buyers.

"The Asian element in the jewelry market is extremely important and from what I've been hearing from members of the trade I've been talking to, in the last six months they have become more and more important," said David Bennett, chairman of the auction house's jewelry division.

The "Pink Star" was mined in

Africa by De Beers in 1999 as a raw 132.5 carat gem and cut over a two-year period. In November 2013 it was auctioned for a record \$83 million to New York diamond cutter Isaac Wolf, who failed to pay.

The winning bidder was Hong Kong jeweler Chow Tai Fook.

The auction house was then forced to buy the diamond itself because had guaranteed a \$60 million sale price. Last year it sold an unspecified stake in the diamond, valued at \$72 million on its balance sheet, to two companies, diamond specialist Diacore and New York jeweler Mellen Inc. AP



Global shares steady ahead of Trump meeting with Xi

EUROPEAN stock markets traded in narrow ranges yesterday ahead of a raft of U.S. economic data that could determine when the Federal Reserve will raise interest rates next and the upcoming meeting between President Donald Trump and his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping.

KEEPING SCORE: In Europe, France's CAC 40 was up 0.1 percent at 5,106 while Germany's DAX fell 0.4 percent to 1,240. The FTSE 100 index of leading British shares was 0.1 percent higher at 7,331. U.S. stocks were poised for a flat opening with Dow futures and the broader S&P 500 futures unchanged.

TRUMP CHINA: Trade agreements and regional tensions will be in focus as Trump and Xi meet Thursday and Friday at the president's Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida. While some analysts expect the two sides to keep friction to a minimum by sticking to an agreed-upon script, others worry Trump's past harsh criticism of China and mounting dissatisfaction with Beijing in American business circles auger ill for the summit.

ANALYST TAKE: "This meeting is likely to have

an extra dimension added to it by last night's missile test by North Korea, whose timing can't have been coincidental, given recent hawkish rhetoric from Secretary of State Rex Tillerson," said Michael Hewson, chief market analyst at CMC Markets.

US DATA: The week culminates with Friday's non-farm payrolls report for March which could cement market expectations for another U.S. interest rate hike in June.

ASIA'S DAY: Japan's Nikkei 225 index gained 0.3 percent to 18,861.27 and Hong Kong's Hang Seng advanced 0.6 percent to 24,400.80. The Kospi of South Korea was flat at 2,160.85. Australia's S&P ASX 200 rose 0.3 percent to 5,876.20 and the Shanghai Composite index advanced 1.5 percent to 3,270.31.

CURRENCIES: The euro was up 0.1 percent at USD1.0679 while the dollar rose 0.2 percent to 110.92 yen.

ENERGY: Benchmark New York crude was up 55 cents at \$51.58 a barrel while Brent, the international standard, was 65 cents higher at \$54.82 a barrel. AP

corporate bits



SANDS CHINA AWARDS OUTSTANDING TEAM MEMBERS

Sands China Ltd. honored outstanding team members and teams last week with a ceremony for the Because We Care Team Member Awards, held at The Parisian Macao's Parisian Theatre.

Celebrating for four consecutive years to recognize outstanding team members, a total of 497 team members were named top

nominees, after being shortlisted by a judging panel of previous award winners and top nominees.

The top nominees for each award category were then decided by team members as a whole through a company-wide vote, according to a statement issued by the gaming operator.

A total of 16 team members and seven outstanding teams (totaling 248 team members) emerged as gold, silver and bronze award winners in seven categories: the Influential Service Award and the Exceptional Spirit Award amongst others.

The expansion of the awards saw more top nominees and award winners receive prizes in recognition of their performances, including cash prizes totaling over MOP440,000.

MGM DONATES MOP300,000 TO HOLY HOUSE OF MERCY WELFARE SHOP



For the fifth year in a row, MGM donated MOP300,000 to the Macau Holy House of Mercy Welfare Shop project, funding the distribution of food hampers to more than 350 local low-income households.

According to a statement released by MGM, its senior executives led a team of over 40 volunteers to help distribute food hampers and MGM's custom-made eco-friendly handcarts to the families.

Grant Bowie, CEO and executive director of MGM China Holdings Limited, presented a donation check of MOP300,000 to António José de Freitas, president of the Board of Trustees on behalf of the Holy House of Mercy.

More than 1,600 low-income families have received MGM's food hampers and handcarts under the Welfare Shop project since its launch in 2013.

During the distribution of food hampers, the volunteers divided into six groups, and each of them took up specific parts in helping to pack basic food and daily necessities, including rice, noodles, canned food, and cooking oil into MGM's tailor-made handcarts and distributed them to the families.



Mar-a-Lago is seen from the media van window, in Palm Beach, Florida

CHINA-US

Summit at Trump's resort polishes Mar-a-Lago brand

Julie Bykowitz & Terry Spencer,
Palm Beach (Fla.)

No doubt Florida's oceanfront Mar-a-Lago resort is an impressive site for a summit between the presidents of the U.S. and China. And it's a pretty nice business advertisement, too, for the owner of the luxurious, members-only private property.

That would be Donald J. Trump.

Even before this week's summit, Trump and his aides had begun referring to Mar-a-Lago as the "Winter White House," a marketing coup for a man who has made millions selling his personal brand. Now the president is writing his property deeper into American history books by meeting there with China's Xi Jinping.

The two-day summit, partly to discuss sensitive trade issues, follows five previous weekend trips that Trump has made to Mar-a-Lago in the 12 weeks he has been president. On his fourth weekend in office, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe joined him there, and the two heads of state huddled on the restaurant's patio before making headlines with a televised joint response to a North Korean missile test.

VIP visits to presidential homes are a tradition dating to shortly before World War II, when Franklin D. Roosevelt began inviting dignitaries to his Hyde Park estate north of New York City, according to the U.S.

State Department's historical website. More recently, George H.W. Bush brought leaders to the family's Kennebunkport, Maine, compound, and his son George W. Bush invited them to his Crawford, Texas, ranch. President Barack Obama hosted Xi at Sunnylands, an estate in the California desert formerly owned by late philanthropists Walter and Leonore Annenberg.

Mar-a-Lago isn't just a vacation home for Trump; it's a for-profit part of his global real estate empire

But Mar-a-Lago isn't just a vacation home for Trump. It's a for-profit part of his global real estate empire. That makes "Winter White House" more than a charming phrase; it's good for business.

Breaking with presidential precedent, Trump held onto ownership of his businesses when he took office, meaning he makes money when his properties do well. The resort doubled its membership fee to USD200,000 after he was elected. And "Winter White House" is working its way into marketing materials.

The Trump Organization has

agreed not to exploit any aspects of the presidency, but those who lease and visit the properties are more than happy to do that work. When the Distressed Investing Summit convened in Palm Beach last month, its brochure noted the opening reception would be "at the famed Mar-a-Lago club, one of the most highly regarded private lairs in the world and the new Winter White House."

Trump hasn't been shy about mentioning his Florida property, either. A few days before he took office, he tweeted a photo of himself with the message, "Writing my inaugural address at the Winter White House, Mar-a-Lago, three weeks ago."

While the president and vice president are exempt from the promotional prohibitions facing other government employees, there's an overarching principle that all public officials should avoid using their offices for private gain, said Kathleen Clark, a former ethics lawyer for the District of Columbia and a law professor at Washington University in St. Louis.

"The president's recurrent trips to Mar-a-Lago and other properties he owns, particularly with leaders that make the visits newsworthy, means he is in effect using the presidency to promote his business," Clark said. "He's a very effective marketer, and he's using the presidency as though it's just part of him being famous and

doesn't come with other moral, if not legal, obligations."

Trump's presidential visits to his commercial properties go beyond Mar-a-Lago. Since his Jan. 20 inauguration, Trump has made 17 trips to three of his golf courses (two in Florida and one in Virginia) and twice dined at his new hotel in Washington, just down Pennsylvania Avenue from the White House.

Trump's son Eric, who is helping to lead the Trump Organization in his father's absence, said the Florida property is "his Crawford, Texas."

"You go back at it — all these foreign leaders remember their time in Crawford. They all talk about being there," Eric Trump said. He said his father similarly forges strong relationships at the Florida property.

"That's how you get a deal done," he said. "Mar-a-Lago is an impressive place; it makes sense to be there. He's working. This is how he works."

That's just fine with local Trump supporters and others who say the visits bring welcome attention, drawing tourists and business.

"I think we are all proud here in Palm Beach that we have a president who lives here. We are glad to have him," says Sid Wrightman, retired owner of an import-export business.

But others are unhappy about the detours and extra cars clogging roads during Trump's frequent visits — and the local money that goes for law enforcement overtime and other ex-

penses.

"If this was Barack Obama," says attorney Tim Morell, the Trump supporters "would be yowling. I would like to see what would happen if the town of Palm Beach and the county said, 'We aren't paying, we aren't sending our guys.'"

Trump's use of the property is a version of what the original owners always imagined.

Cereal heiress Marjorie Merriweather Post and her financier husband, E.F. Hutton, built the property in the 1920s and had hoped future presidents and dignitaries would use it as a winter retreat. Upon her death in 1973, Mar-a-Lago was donated to the government, but when presidents declined to use it, it fell into disrepair and was returned to her estate.

Trump bought it for \$10 million in 1985 and later turned it into a 500-member club in addition to a private vacation home.

So far, Trump has not expressed any interest in using Camp David, the government-owned Maryland mountain retreat 62 miles northwest of the White House. Just as the positive P.R. from Trump's visits to his properties may boost his own bank account, Camp David would be less costly for taxpayers.

Trump could eventually face blowback from voters over that, said Clark, the former ethics lawyer.

"The combination of a perceived abuse of office to enrich himself and the irony of it happening while he is recommending deep budget cuts for public services — I think resentment will build," she said.

White House press secretary Sean Spicer dismisses that possibility. Asked during a recent briefing whether the president is concerned about the pushback on the cost of his trips, Spicer said, "No, he feels great." AP

China blasts India over Dalai Lama visit to disputed area

CHINA criticized India yesterday for allowing the Dalai Lama to visit a disputed border region, saying it did not consider the matter a purely internal Indian affair and warning it would damage bilateral relations.

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told reporters that the visit by the exiled Tibetan Buddhist leader "severely harms China's interests and the China-India relationship."

Hua rejected arguments that the trip was solely religious in nature, and said China would lodge a formal protest with New Delhi.

India "in disregard of China's concerns, invited the Dalai Lama to visit the disputed border area between China and India," Hua said. In doing so, India had violated its commitments to China on Tibet-related issues, a move that would "stir up troubles over the border issue and go against the sound development of bilateral ties," she said.

Hua said China adhered to the principle of not interfering in other countries internal affairs,



Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama arrives at the Thubchok Gatsel Ling Monastery in Bomdila, Arunachal Pradesh, earlier this week

but the Dalai Lama's visit "is not an internal matter anymore."

India said Tuesday that China should not interfere in its domestic issues, as the Dalai Lama began a weeklong visit to Arunachal Pradesh in India's remote

northeast.

The 81-year-old monk was greeted by cheering supporters as he arrived in the partly ethnically Tibetan Himalayan state that China claims as its own territory.

Indian Junior Home Minister Kiren Rijju said earlier that New Delhi respects Beijing's "one China" policy and expects China to accept India's policies.

"Arunachal Pradesh is an inseparable part of India and China

should not object to the Dalai Lama's visit and interfere in India's internal affairs," Rijju said.

The visit is the Dalai Lama's seventh to Arunachal Pradesh and his first since 2009. China has criticized previous visits, but they did not spark any major rift between the two nuclear-armed Asian giants.

The Dalai Lama fled to India in 1959 amid an uprising against Chinese rule in Tibet, which Communist forces had occupied earlier in the decade. China considers him a separatist seeking Tibet's independence, while the Dalai Lama says he merely advocates substantial autonomy and protection of the region's native Buddhist culture.

The Dalai Lama is to travel to the district of Tawang Today, where he is scheduled to consecrate a monastery and address his followers. People from nearby areas, including from the Himalayan country of Bhutan, which borders Arunachal Pradesh, were already gathering at Tawang, local officials said.

The border between the two Asian giants remains tense more than 50 years after they fought a brief but bloody war high in the peaks.

China claims about 90,000 square kilometers in Arunachal Pradesh, while India says China is occupying 38,000 square kilometers of its territory on the Aksai Chin plateau. **AP**

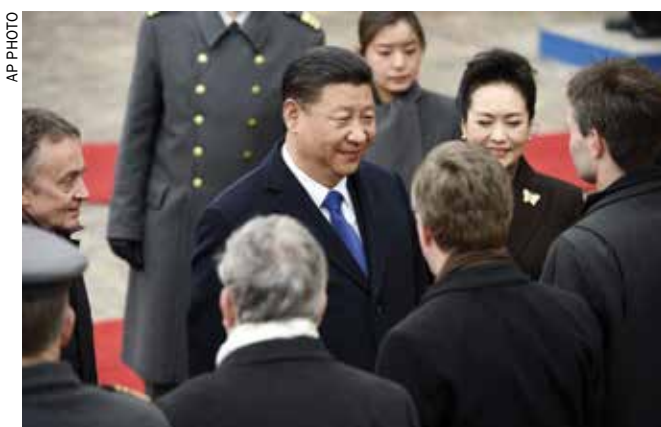
Xi promises pandas to Finland on state visit

CHINESE President Xi Jinping yesterday agreed to send a pair of pandas to Finland, the latest installment of his country's "panda diplomacy" that makes use of one of China's cutest natural assets to gain international concessions.

After talks with Finnish President Sauli Niinisto, the two countries signed protocols, including finalizing an agreement on panda protection as well as sending the pandas to a Finnish nature reserve. Officials have been talking about conditions for sending pandas to Finland since December 2014.

Ahtari Zoo nature reserve said the animals will be loaned for 15 years and are expected to arrive by the end of the year. It said it has also signed an agreement on the research and protection of giant pandas with Chinese panda protection officials.

Niinisto said he was grateful to China for the pandas. "I would like to thank President Xi for the trust you have extended to Finland over the protection of pan-



Xi Jinping and his wife Peng Liyuan are greeted during the official welcoming ceremony at the Presidential Palace in Helsinki yesterday

das," Niinisto said. "We know that pandas are a national treasure of China and we shall respect and value that."

Officials also signed agreements on environmental and judicial cooperation.

The two-day state visit by Xi, accompanied by his wife Peng Liyuan, is the second-ever visit to Finland by a Chinese leader. Xi today will head to Washington, D.C., to meet with U.S. President Donald Trump and other U.S. officials.

Niinisto hosted welcoming

ceremonies at the presidential palace in downtown Helsinki.

On arrival, Xi noted that Finland opened political ties with China in 1950 and was the first Western country to sign a governmental bilateral trade agreement with Beijing. He also congratulated the Finns on the centenary of their independence from Russia.

During his visit, Xi will also meet Finnish Prime Minister Juha Sipila and Speaker of Parliament Marja Lohela. **AP**

ANTITRUST

US, EU clear Chinese takeover of Syngenta

U.S. and European regulators have cleared a Chinese conglomerate's proposed USD43 billion acquisition of Swiss agribusiness giant Syngenta on condition it sells some businesses to satisfy anti-monopoly objections.

The Federal Trade Commission's announcement comes alongside the approval by European regulators of the purchase by state-owned ChemChina. It would be China's biggest foreign acquisition to date.

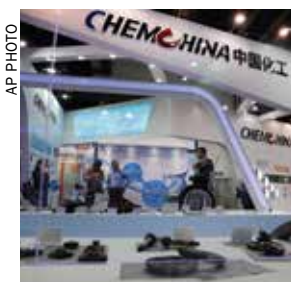
ChemChina, also known as China National Chemical Corp., agreed to sell businesses that make an herbicide, an insecticide and a fungicide whose combined market shares with Syngenta would harm competition, the FTC and European Commission say yesterday.

"ChemChina has offered significant remedies, which fully address our competition concerns. This has allowed us to approve the transaction," Margrethe Vestager, the EU's antitrust commissioner, said.

Chinese companies are engaged in a multibillion-dollar global buying spree to acquire technology and brands to improve their competitive edge as explosive growth in their home economy slows.

At the same time, the global industry that supplies farm chemicals, biotechnology and other inputs is in the midst of a shake-up as tumbling commodity prices squeeze spending by farmers.

A U.S. government national security panel approved the ChemChina-Syngenta tie-up in August despite com-



plaints by some legislators who cited the potential for "risks to our food system."

ChemChina subsidiary Adama Agricultural Solutions Ltd. agreed to sell businesses in the United States that produce the herbicide paraquat, the insecticide abamectin and the fungicide chlorothalonil to American Vanguard Corp. and its affiliate Amvac Chemical Corp.

The FTC said Syngenta owns branded versions of all three chemicals, while Adama is the No. 1 or 2 supplier of generic versions in the United States.

ChemChina has also agreed to sell significant parts of its European operations in pesticides and plant growth regulation products. **AP**

PHILIPPINES

Duterte's approval rating drops, but popularity remains high

RESULTS of an independent poll released yesterday showed a drop in the number of Filipinos who trust President Rodrigo Duterte, although he was still considered trustworthy by three-quarters of the respondents despite an impeachment complaint pending against him.

Results released by Pulse Asia Research Inc. showed that 76 percent of the 1,200 respondents expressed trust in Duterte, down 7 percentage points from December. Some 78 percent of respondents approved of his performance, down from 83 percent.

The nationwide survey was conducted March 15-20 — around the time a lawmaker filed an impeachment complaint against Duterte because of alleged corruption and the thousands of deaths in the president's anti-drug crackdown.

Rep. Gary Alejano's complaint alleges that Duterte violated the constitution, committed bribery and corruption, and betrayed the public trust with his actions, including the crackdown, which has sparked extrajudicial killings. It also alleges that Duterte failed to declare huge bank de-



posits as required by law.

The impeachment bid faces an uphill battle, with the president's allies holding an overwhelming majority in the House of Representatives.

The survey has a margin of er-

ror of plus or minus 3 percentage points, according to the pollster.

On Tuesday, President Duterte sacked his interior secretary and close political ally over reports of alleged corruption, in what

his officials said was a warning that he will not tolerate wrongdoing even in his Cabinet.

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said Duterte announced the dismissal of Interior and Local Government Secretary Ismail Sueno at the end of a Cabinet meeting late Monday after asking him some questions, citing loss of trust and confidence.

"The summary dismissal served as a warning that Mr. Duterte would not countenance any questionable or legally untenable decisions by any member of the Cabinet," Abella said in a statement.

Sueno was in charge of local governments and the national police, making him among the most powerful Cabinet members. He denied the corruption allegations, saying Duterte "must have been fed with the wrong information."

"If only the president asked Department of the Interior and Local Government personnel from the central down to the regional and field offices, he would have known who amongst us are more credible and trustworthy," Sueno said in a statement, adding he was ready to face an

investigation.

Regarding an allegation that he was linked to irregularities in the import of firetrucks, Sueno said the contract was finalized and signed by previous officials, not by him.

Sueno was among political allies who convinced Duterte, a longtime mayor of southern Davao city, to run for the presidency last year, "but this did not deter the president from pursuing his drive for a trustworthy government by addressing issues like corruption," Abella said.

Duterte won last year's election with a wide margin on a promise to fight crime, particularly illegal drugs, corruption and terrorism. Since taking office in June, Duterte's anti-drug crackdown has left thousands of suspects dead, alarming Western governments led by the United States and the European Union and U.N. rights officials.

Sueno had a reported rift with his three undersecretaries, who accused him of corruption, shielding a politician linked to illegal drugs, and other wrongdoing.

Abella said the president checked those accusations before he decided to dismiss Sueno.

He is the highest official to be removed from office over alleged wrongdoing, though Duterte has fired a number of lower-ranking officials in other government agencies.

It's not clear if Sueno will be formally investigated or prosecuted. **MDT/AP**

Red Bull heir silent when asked about Thai crash case

AN heir to the Red Bull fortune has refused to answer questions about whether he will return to Thailand this month to meet with prosecutors over an alleged hit-and-run that killed a police officer almost five years ago.

Vorayuth "Boss" Yoovidhya was silent yesterday as The Associated Press asked about his plans. Standing outside a London residence, he didn't say why he was in Britain or whether he will meet with prosecutors in Thailand April 27.

He has been ordered to face charges of hit-and-run and reckless driving in the 2012 death. He has not appeared for earlier meetings with prosecutors, including last week, but



In this image made from video, Vorayuth "Boss" Yoovidhya, whose grandfather co-founded Red Bull, waits to enter a London residence yesterday

no arrest warrant has been issued.

An AP inquiry last week revealed that he has been living a jet-set lifestyle, attending Formula One races, snowboarding in Japan and cruising in

Venice, though it had been widely assumed that he was lying low.

Many in Thailand and beyond reacted with anger to the report, which was based in part on social media postings from

friends and family that also helped the AP determine where Vorayuth has been living while in London.

"In the pyramid of privilege, the boss stays on top," the Bangkok Post said in an opinion piece. "In the food chain of injustice, the boss reminds us again, and again and again, who the boss is."

Vorayuth's attorneys have not responded to repeated calls or to a faxed series of questions. They have contended that he has been treated unfairly.

Since last week's AP story ran, Vorayuth's Facebook page was updated with a photo of him with a Red Bull race car and information that he was attending art school. **AP**

AUSTRALIA

Court rejects British painkiller firm's appeal

AUSTRALIA'S highest court yesterday rejected British company Reckitt Benckiser's appeal of a 6 million Australian dollar (USD4.5 million) fine for misleading consumers about the effectiveness of a popular painkiller.

The High Court full-bench refused to hear the appeal after Reckitt Benckiser's lawyers outlined its argument for why the fine imposed by the Federal Court in December was too high.

The Federal Court had upheld an appeal by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, the watchdog that launched the court action, against the leniency of a AUD1.7 million fine.

Reckitt Benckiser sold Nurofen painkillers that were marketed to relieve specific ailments, such as back pain and menstrual pain, when all of the products contained an identi-

cal amount of the same active ingredient, ibuprofen lysine. The court ordered the company to remove the products from Australian stores.

The specific pain products were nearly double the price of Nurofen's standard ibuprofen painkiller and other general pain relief products sold by competitors. The company sold 5.9 million packets of the specific pain products over four years for AUD45 million.

Rod Sims, chairman of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, welcomed the High Court ruling. He told Australian Broadcasting Corp that the same offenses would likely be punished by fines of between AUD40 million and AUD50 million under proposed amendments to consumer law that could be legislated this year. **AP**

ARMAMENT

North Korea may have tested new technology in latest missile

Hyung-Jin Kim, Seoul

THE missile in North Korea's latest launch didn't fly very far, but it may have been the second test of a technology that worries experts.

The launch yesterday into waters off North Korea's east coast came shortly before U.S. President Donald Trump's first meeting with Chinese leader Xi Jinping later this week, raising speculation that it might have been timed to get their attention.

Initial U.S. and South Korean assessments indicate it was a KN-15 medium-range missile, whose first known test by North Korea was in February.

The KN-15, known as "Pukguk-song-2" in North Korea, uses pre-loaded solid fuel, which shortens launch preparation times, boosts its mobility and makes it harder for outsiders to detect ahead of liftoff. Most North Korean missiles use liquid propellant, which generally must be added to the missile on the launch pad before firing.

The South Korean military said the missile was fired from land near the east coast city of Sinpo and flew about 60 kilometers. The earlier one in February flew about 500 kilometers. Analysts were trying to determine if the shorter distance meant yesterday's launch was a failure.

One expert said it could have been a test of a new missile intended as a stepping stone toward developing a solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile that could reach the U.S. mainland. Kim Dong-yub, an analyst at Seoul's Institute for Far Eastern Studies, questioned why North Korea would do a shorter launch of the KN-15.

"There's absolutely no reason for North Korea to fire the KN-15 again this way; the launch measurements show something similar to when developing missiles are flight-tested for the first time for data-gathering purposes," he said.

The KN-15 is believed to be an upgraded version of the submarine-launched "Pukguk-song" launched last summer. Many experts say a "Pukguk-song-2" missile would be a greater security threat, because it can be launched anywhere from a mobile vehicle. While submarines are a stealthy way to do that, North Korea doesn't have enough of them.

Ralph Cossa, president of the Pacific Forum CSIS think tank in Honolulu, said he was expecting North Korea would do something to coincide with the Trump-Xi summit, perhaps conduct a nuclear test. The missile launch may be a precursor, with more to come as the summit starts Today, he said.



TV screen showing a news program reporting about North Korea's missile firing, at Seoul Train Station showing Kim Jong-Un

China wants to make efforts with all sides involved, to make denuclearization a reality.

HUA CHUNYING
FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON

ANALYSIS

Tillerson's terse words seen as tactical change



THE response of America's chief diplomat to North Korea's latest missile launch was an abrupt departure from the usual — which may be a turning point, analysts in Asia say.

The statement from U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson totaled 23 words: "North Korea launched yet another intermediate range ballistic missile. The United States has spoken enough about North Korea. We have no further comment."

While Tillerson's statement was unusually short and vague, experts in South Korea and Japan saw

it as a sign of consistency on how the United States under President Donald Trump will deal with North Korea as it speeds up its nuclear weapon and missile developments.

North Korea with its missile launches probably wants to create attention and use it as leverage for concessions, but Tillerson with his statement has sent a stern message that the United States won't be a party to it, South Korean experts said.

"It seems Tillerson purposefully issued a short statement to send a tough signal," said Kim Sung-han, a professor at Seoul's Korea University and a former South Korean deputy foreign minister. "He is making it clear that, no matter what North Korea does, the United States won't commit to direct negotiations unless Pyongyang shows real willingness for disarmament."

Bong Youngshik, a researcher at Yonsei University's Institute for North Korean Studies in Seoul, said Tillerson's statement

would have also been aimed at China ahead of President Xi Jinping's first meeting with Trump later this week in Florida.

Trump is likely to urge China's leader to take up stronger role in pressuring the North to abandon its nuclear ambitions, and Tillerson's statement is a way of stressing it's time for action on North Korea, not just talk, Bong said.

Tillerson also might stop making routine statements after every North Korean provocation or missile launch, Bong said.

"It is what it is," Bong said. "There's really no need for Tillerson to react every time when North Korea does something. The United States has moved on and is now trying

The US has spoken enough about North Korea. We have no further comment.

REX TILLERSON

"I've joked before that they don't mind being hated but they definitely hate to be ignored," Cossa said.

Recent satellite imagery shows possible preparations for a test at North Korea's main nuclear test site, including the laying of communication cables used to initiate a test and collect data.

North Korea's state media have said the world will soon witness what they called "eventful successes" in the country's space development. The United States, South Korea and others call North Korea's space program a cover for its long-range missile development program.

South Korea's Foreign Ministry called the North's latest missile launch a "reckless provocation" that posed a threat to international peace, while Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said his country lodged a strong protest over the launch.

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson acknowledged the launch in a brief statement but said the U.S. had spoken enough about North Korea and would not comment further.

Trump has said China must do

more to pressure North Korea to halt its nuclear program. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said that all sides needed to be involved.

"If we are serious about solving this issue, we need to tackle the root of it," she said at a regular news briefing. "We need to balance the interest of each side. China wants to make efforts with all sides involved, to make denuclearization a reality, and ensure peace in the region."

Analysts say North Korea might time nuclear and long-range rocket tests to the April 15 birthday of North Korea founder Kim Il Sung, the late grandfather of current leader Kim Jong Un.

North Korea is pushing hard to upgrade its weapons systems to cope with what it calls U.S. hostility. Many weapons experts say the North could have a functioning nuclear-tipped missile capable of reaching the continental U.S. within a few years. North Korea carried out two nuclear tests last year.

The North's latest missile launch also came during annual military drills between the United States and South Korea. North Korea sees the drills as an invasion rehearsal.

Two weeks ago, the South Korean and U.S. militaries said they had detected a failed North Korean ballistic missile launch. Earlier in March, North Korea fired four ballistic missiles that flew about 1,000 kilometers, with three of them landing in waters that Japan claims as its exclusive economic zone. **AP**

to resolve problem through a larger scale, such as the summit with China shows."

While Trump and his top policymakers continue their tough talk on the North Korean issue, it's unclear such rhetoric would be enough to effectively influence North Korea and China, Pyongyang's only major ally.

Every North Korean nuclear test and missile launch reminds the United States and its allies of the limited options they have on Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions.

A military strike on the North's nuclear or missile facilities risks triggering a devastating war that could quickly kill hundreds of thousands. The

effect of further sanctions is questionable as North Korea puts the survival of its ruling elite before the wellbeing of its struggling populace and already is one of the most heavily penalized places on earth. Renewing negotiations with Pyongyang would require trust that it won't pocket aid and renege on any promises.

Tillerson in a visit to China last month declared an end to the Obama administration's "strategic patience" policy to wait out Pyongyang until it caves and decides to denuclearize, but the Trump administration has yet to reveal any meaningfully different approach.

Narushige Michishita, an expert from Tokyo's National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, said Trump's efforts to "sound scary" won't work with Pyongyang and Beijing if he fails to back his words with action.

"The Trump administration's credibility will be undermined if it fails," he said. **AP**

As the residents of Russia's second-largest city try to regain their nerve in the wake of a fatal subway bombing, officials announced yesterday that six people have been arrested on suspicion of recruiting terrorists.

The statement from the Investigative Committee gave few details, but said those arrested came from Central Asian countries that once were part of the Soviet Union. Officials have said the suicide attacker behind Monday's blast that killed 14 people in St. Petersburg was a native of the Central Asian country of Kyrgyzstan.

There was no immediate information tying those arrested with the suspected bomber, identified as 22-year-old Akbardzhon Dzhililov. Fifty-five people wounded in the blast remain hospitalized, deputy mayor Anna Mityanina said.

The parents of Dzhililov have arrived in St. Petersburg for questioning.

State-owned Rossiya 24 television yesterday showed footage of a middle-aged woman in a red coat and a white headscarf and a man in a black jacket, chased by journalists.

Akbardzhon is believed to have moved to St. Petersburg from Kyrgyzstan when he was a teenager.

The predominantly Muslim Central Asian states are seen as a prime recruiting ground for Islamic militants.

Meeting with the heads of security services from a regional alliance that includes most of Russia's Central Asian neighbors, President Vladimir Putin warned that terrorism remained a threat to all in the region.

Putin met yesterday with heads of the security services from the Commonwealth of Independent States, a grouping of most former Soviet republics.

TERRORISM | RUSSIA

Six arrested for terrorism in wake of St. Petersburg bombing

The meeting came two days after a bomb blast on a subway in Russia's second-largest city killed 14 people.

"We see that, unfortunately, the situation is not improving. The recent tragic events in St. Petersburg are the best confirmation of this," Putin said. "We know that each of our countries, practically every one, is a possible and potential target of terrorist attacks."

Earlier yesterday, the Investigative Committee said in a statement they searched the home of Dzhililov in St. Petersburg. They also examined CCTV footage from outside Dzhililov's home which shows him leave home with a bag and a backpack.

The bomb went off on a train under Russia's second-largest city on Monday. Another bomb, hidden in a bag, was found and de-activated at another St. Petersburg station just half an hour before the blast. Dzhililov's DNA was found on the bag.

After the attack, several Russian politicians have called for ending the moratorium on capital punishment. But parliament speaker Vyacheslav Volodin dismissed the statements as attention-getting devices and upbraided the politicians, saying "One must not use a tragedy to promote oneself."

One of the stations where the attack took place was closed by a bomb threat Tuesday and again yesterday as officials checked for anything suspicious. **MDT/AP**



People gather at a symbolic memorial at Technologicheskii Institute subway station in St. Petersburg

CZECH COURT TO DECIDE ON ALLEGED RUSSIAN HACKER EXTRADITION

A RUSSIAN man who faces charges in the United States of hacking and stealing information from computers at LinkedIn, Dropbox and other San Francisco Bay Area companies can be extradited either to the United States or Russia, the state prosecution in Prague said yesterday.

Yevgeniy Nikulin, who remained in detention, was arrested in Prague on Oct. 5 after Interpol issued an international warrant. Czech officers cooperated with the Federal Bureau of

Investigation in the case.

Moscow wants him extradited on a separate charge of internet theft in 2009. Spokeswoman Stepanka Zenklova said the Czech prosecution established that both extradition requests are acceptable and Prague's Municipal Court will decide. A date for an extradition hearing has not been set, but court spokeswoman Marketa Puci said it's a question of days or a week. Justice Minister Robert Pelikan will have the final say.

GREECE

Officials say a deal on unfreezing the bailout is close



Alexis Tsipras (left) speaks with Donald Tusk

TOP Greek and European officials indicated yesterday that it's possible to reach a breakthrough in the country's difficult bailout talks over the next two days. Greece's prime minister said that if a deal on paying Athens the next bailout installment fails to materialize, the eurozone should hold a special summit.

Alexis Tsipras said negotiators are "just a breath away" from an agreement at tomorrow's scheduled meeting in Malta of the so-called eurogroup, the gather of finance ministers from countries that use the euro.

But Tsipras blamed unnamed negotiators among Greece's European creditors and the International Monetary Fund for "mo-

ving the goalposts" each time Greece was getting close to meeting approval conditions for the bailout.

"We are not playing games here [...] that must stop," he said, after talks in Athens with EU Council President Donald Tusk.

Greece has to agree on budget measures to get access to its loans. But the talks have dragged on for

months, freezing the latest loan payout and hurting chances of a Greek economic recovery after years of recession and turmoil.

Without the bailout payment, Greece would struggle to make a debt payment in July, raising anew the prospect of default.

Tsipras' left-led government is pushing for a comprehensive deal that

would cover more than just spending cuts and harsh reforms by Greece, but also alleviate the country's debt burden and ease its access later this year to international bond markets.

"If the eurogroup is not in a position to [reach an agreement] on Friday, I have asked President Tusk to convene a eurozone summit to achieve an immediate agreement," Tsipras said.

"I don't think that will be needed, because there will be a result on Friday, but these delays cannot continue."

Tusk voiced hope that a breakthrough is close, pointing to "significant progress" in talks in Brussels this week between Greek ministers and lenders.

"The responsibility for reaching an agreement is shared by all the participants of this process," he said.

Greece has depended on international bailouts since 2010. To receive the funds, successive governments slashed incomes, hiked taxes and implemented market reforms, boosting state revenues but also deepening a recession that wiped a quarter off the economy and left nearly one in four workers jobless.

Currently demanded cutbacks include new pension cuts, a broadening of the tax base, labor reforms and privatizations. These will require approval by Greece's parliament, where Tsipras holds a three-seat majority. **AP**



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what's ON



99999 - PHOTOGRAPHY BY IEONG MAN PAN
 TIME: 2pm-7pm (Closed on Sundays and public holidays)
 UNTIL: April 29, 2017
 VENUE: Creative Macau, G Floor, Macao Cultural Centre, Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2875 3282

MONKEY KING
 TIME: 8pm daily (no performances on Thursdays)
 VENUE: Sands Cotai Theatre
 ADMISSION: MOP420, MOP520, MOP780, MOP1080, MOP1580
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2882 8818

A DRAGON IS HERE, OR MAYBE NOT
 TIME: 8pm (April 6-7, 10)
 3pm & 8pm (April 8-9)
 VENUE: Black Box TheatreatOld Court Building,
 ADMISSION: MOP150
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2855 5555

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

CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY, LOCAL AND PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING COUNTRIES ARTIST
 TIME: 3pm-8pm (Mondays)
 12pm-8pm (Tuesdays to Sundays)
 UNTIL: April 16, 2017
 VENUE: Albergue SCM - Gallery A2, No. 8, Calçada da Igreja de São Lázaro
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2852 2550, 2852 3205

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

Offbeat

STEAL OF THE YEAR: SHOPLIFTER TRAPPED IN STORE AFTER CLOSING CALLS 911

Ohio police say a suspected shoplifter called 911 for help after she hid in a fitting room at closing time and got locked inside a department store.

Brimfield Township police say surveillance video from the incident at a Kohl's store late last month shows her taking clothing items, then realizing she's trapped in the store near Kent, roughly 35 miles (56 kilometers) south-east of Cleveland. Police say officers already were heading to the store when she called 911 because she set off alarms.

WJW-TV (bit.ly/2oBol3Q) reports 35-year-old Joanne Havens told police she heard the store-closing announcements and simply didn't leave in time.

But officers say they found stolen items in her purse. The Ravenna woman has pleaded not guilty to a misdemeanor theft charge. Court records listed no attorney for her.

TV canal macau



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

cinema



CINETEATRO

06 APR - 07 APR

A SILENT VOICE: THE MOVIE

ROOM 1

2:15, 7:15pm

Director: Naoko Yamada

Starring: Miyu Irino, Saori Hayami, Aoi Yuki

Language: Japanese (Chinese)

Duration: 129min

SWORD ART ONLINE THE MOVIE: ORDINAL SCALE

ROOM 1

4:45, 9:45pm

Director: Tomohiko Ito

Starring: Ryan Bartley, Christine Marie Cabanos

Language: Japanese (Chinese)

Duration: 119min

GHOST IN THE SHELL

ROOM 1

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

(3D) 7:30pm

Director: Rupert Sanders

Starring: Scarlett Johansson, Takeshi Kitano

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 106min



BYE BYE MAN

ROOM 3

2:00, 3:45, 5:30, 9:45pm

Director: Stacy Title

Starring: Douglas Smith, Lucien Laviscount

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 96min

IN THIS CORNER OF THE WORLD

ROOM 3

7:15pm

Director: Sunao Katabuchi

Starring: Megumi Han, Yoshimasa Hosoya

Language: Japanese (Chinese)

Duration: 118min

MACAU TOWER

30 MAR - 12 APR



GHOST IN THE SHELL (3D)

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



1997 FAULT CUTS SHORT SPACE SHUTTLE MISSION

The US space agency, Nasa, has aborted the latest space shuttle flight and ordered its crew to return to Earth because of a defective fuel cell.

Nasa officials insist that the other two fuel cells are working normally and that the spacecraft and its crew of five men and two women are in no danger.

But after a day of intensive discussion, the decision was taken to bring Columbia back early, with touch-down at 1434 local time (1834 GMT) today.

The shuttle had been in orbit for just four days, out of a mission planned to last over two weeks.

Tommy Holloway, manager of the US space shuttle programme, told a news conference the fault in the fuel cell meant the supercold liquid hydrogen and oxygen it uses to generate electricity might overheat and mix, causing a disastrous explosion.

"We have come to the conclusion that the conservative thing to do is to land the shuttle," he said. "We have learnt always to be conservative in issues of research."

There are three electricity generating units on board Columbia, providing the power to conduct planned experiments and also to make drinking water for the crew.

Each of them is made up of 96 cells, arranged in three 32-cell "substacks".

Almost immediately after lift-off on Friday, engineers noticed lower than expected power from one of the substacks in unit two.

The unit continued to weaken during the next 18 hours of the flight. It was feared that allowing it to continue deteriorating would seriously jeopardise the safety of those aboard.

Nasa is still haunted by the Challenger disaster more than 10 years ago, when the space shuttle exploded just after lift-off. All seven crew members died.

The Columbia crew was to have carried out an ambitious program of research. It included lighting controlled fires in space to see the effect of zero gravity on flame.

The shuttle also carried a greenhouse unit for plants to study the effect of weightlessness on growth.

The Columbia space shuttle is the oldest of the four shuttles in the fleet.

It has had problems with fuel cells before, causing an earlier mission in 1981 - only the second Nasa shuttle mission - to be cut short.

There has been only one other aborted shuttle mission, in 1991, when a navigation device developed a fault.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The aborted flight was relaunched on 1 July 1997 with the same crew of seven on board Columbia. This time the mission was carried out in full, landing on 17 July without mishap.

Columbia continued carrying out shuttle missions without a problem until February 2003, when disaster struck.

Right at the end of a routine mission, just as it re-entered the Earth's atmosphere 16 minutes before its scheduled landing, Columbia disintegrated, killing all seven astronauts on board.

An independent investigation confirmed initial suspicions that a piece of insulating foam from an external fuel tank which hit the shuttle's left wing as it took off was to blame.

The foam had damaged the shuttle's heat shield, causing it to break up on re-entry.

Shuttle flights have since been suspended. Nasa has set a target date to resume shuttle missions in May 2005, with stringent new safety procedures in place.

Discussions continue over how to replace the ageing fleet of space shuttles when they reach the end of their original design life in 2010.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 You're no angel - especially when your fabulously mischievous side comes out to play.

Taurus April 20-May 20 Are there so many shiny happy people around you that it makes you feel, well, grumpy and dull?

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Your forthright mood leads you to say things that have been at the back of your mind but that you haven't had the courage to voice - until now.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 A casual comment by an acquaintance or a chance meeting could have unexpectedly far-reaching developments in your life plans.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Not only will it save lots and lots of confusion, but you'll feel brave and adult for actually facing this situation head-on rather than trying to pretend it's not there.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Is it possible to expect the unexpected? Maybe not literally... but it is absolutely necessary to keep your mind, heart and soul open to all the wonderful possibilities that are about to come your way.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 How far should you go? How much is too much? What a dilemma! Your loved ones have plenty of advice, but in the end, you have to rely on your own counsel.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Ah, the game of love. Sometimes you roll the dice and you get to pass 'Go' and collect a sweet chunk of change.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 You're loving the attention, but remember to be selective. After all, you don't want to gorge yourself on Twinkies when there's the possibility of creme brulee, do you?

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Do whatever you can to feel good about yourself. It's very important to care for others, but make sure you're not neglecting yourself in that - after all, you're a person, too.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Are you postponing taking that next big love step because you're afraid? And are you afraid because everything's not 'perfect'?

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 Relations with your significant other will take a decided turn for the better if you're attached, and if you're single, you'll find that your status has some delightful surprises in store.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

8 3 7 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle.

Easy+

5 2 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle.

Medium

4 8 5 3 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle.

Hard

8 6 7 5 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle.

WEATHER

MIN MAX CONDITION header for weather table.

CHINA

Table with weather data for cities like Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, etc.

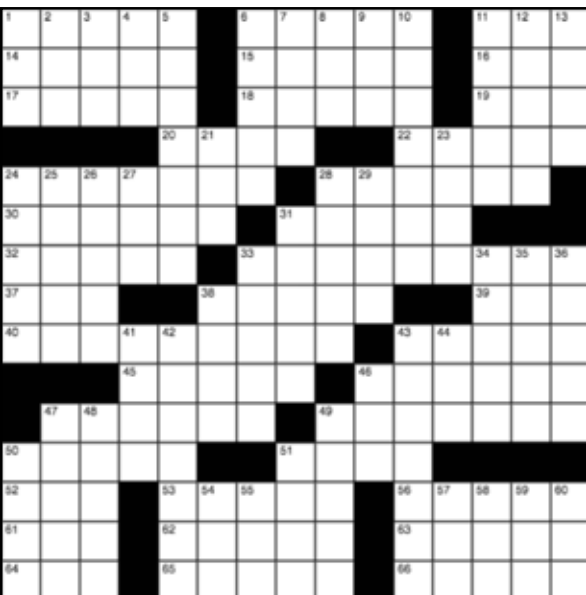
WORLD

Table with weather data for cities like Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, etc.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Narrow mountain ridge; 6- ___ in the right direction; 11- Stutz contemporary; 14- Chairman's hammer; 15- Conductor Georg; 16- Conger; 17- can of worms; 18- Tortilla topped with cheese; 19- Part of TNT; 20- Matches a bet; 22- Marsh of mystery; 24- Agitated; 28- Come out; 30- Five iron; 31- ___ Grows in Brooklyn; 32- Org.; 33- Or else; 37- 1959 Kingston Trio hit; 38- Sensational; 39- Thieves' place; 40- Pertaining to symphony; 43- Unable to see; 45- Puccini opera; 46- Remove from office; 47- Go by; 49- Belted; 50- Rubbish; 51- Muslim pilgrimage; 52- Vase; 53- Curved letters; 56- Small bay; 61- Lawyer's charge; 62- Bothered; 63- Requirements; 64- NFL 6-pointers; 65- Hang; 66- Farm birds;

DOWN: 1- Gone by; 2- Music style performed by Dr Dre and Eminem; 3- Adam's madam; 4- 1980's movie starring Bo Derek and Dudley Moore; 5- Flexible; 6- Good ___; 7- In order (to); 8- Pampering, briefly; 9- Biblical verb ending; 10- Explorer; 11- Put a new price on; 12- Spine-tingling; 13- Potpourri; 21- A really big shoe?; 23- Increased in size; 24- Mosque officials; 25- Foul; 26- Indian state; 27- HBO alternative; 28- Moral principle; 29- TV horse; 31- Skylit lobbies; 33- Pound part; 34- Numbskull; 35- Have a feeling about; 36- Finished; 38- A pitcher may take one; 41- School orgs.; 42- Opium addict; 43- Capital of China; 44- CD forerunners; 46- June honoree; 47- Messed up; 48- Ways to the pins; 49- Squander; 50- Clump of hair; 51- Pile; 54- Orch. section; 55- Poseidon's domain; 57- Bridal bio word; 58- Golfer Trevino; 59- Begley and Wynn; 60- Half a fly;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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

FOOTBALL

UEFA President Ceferin criticizes Europe's top leagues

James Ellingworth, Helsinki

UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin accused Europe's top leagues of attempting to "blackmail" the governing body yesterday.

The European Professional Football Leagues, which represents leagues from 25 countries, has been critical of UEFA since being left out of key talks on changing Champions League entries and prize money distribution.

A deal between the EPFL and UEFA to avoid schedule clashes expired last month, and the EPFL said its leagues would now be free to organize games at the same time as Champions League or Europa League matches.

"We will never give in to the blackmail of those who think they can manipulate small leagues or impose their will on the associations because they think they are all powerful on account of the astronomical revenues they generate," Ceferin said at the UEFA Congress.

Ceferin also said UEFA was considering action on sexual abuse in youth soccer after numerous accusations in Britain over recent months.

"We cannot shut our eyes," Ceferin said. "The solutions we are exploring include a charter, the establishment of records, training and education for players and coaches, legal aid for victims and lobbying the European institutions regarding statutes of limitation."

The UEFA Congress unanimously approved a package of reforms proposed by Ceferin requiring the organization's top officials to also hold positions in their own countries' national association. There will also be a limit of three four-year terms at UEFA. The measures aim to make sure officials aren't "out of touch with reality," Ceferin said.

FIFA President Gianni Infantino attended the congress and said Ceferin's election last year had ended years of feuding between the governing bodies.

We will never give in to the blackmail of those who think they can manipulate small leagues.

ALEKSANDER CEFERIN

"This stupid rivalry between UEFA and FIFA does not exist anymore and does not have to exist," Infantino said before hugging Ceferin.

Relations between FIFA and UEFA became strained in recent years under the leadership of Sepp Blatter and Michel Platini. Both have since been banned

from soccer for corruption.

Seats on the FIFA Council were confirmed for Sandor Csanyi (Hungary), Dejan Savicevic (Montenegro), and Costakis Koutsokoumnis (Cyprus), who will serve through 2021. They were unopposed because Icelandic candidate Geir Thorsteinsson withdrew and Russian candidate Vitaly Mutko failed eligibility checks because of his role as Russian deputy prime minister.

A special election will be held in September for a fourth FIFA Council spot.

Separately, German soccer association president Reinhard Grindel was appointed to finish predecessor Wolfgang Niersbach's spot on the council, to run through 2019. Niersbach was banned from soccer last year after the FIFA ethics committee ruled he failed to report possible misconduct related to Germany being awarded hosting rights for the 2006 World Cup.

Former Polish great Zbigniew Boniek was among eight candidates elected yesterday to places on the UEFA executive committee, along with Grindel, John Delaney (Ireland), Michele Uva (Italy), Karl-Erik Nilsson (Sweden), Michael van Praag (Netherlands), David Gill (England) and Servet Yardimci (Turkey).

Candidates from Albania, Azerbaijan and Wales were not elected, and two from Kazakhstan and Cyprus withdrew. **AP**

AD



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Macao Travel Association


澳門旅行社協會


TQM
TRAVEL QUALITY COUNCIL OF MACAO

EPL

Late equalizer provides little solace for Man United

Steve Douglas, Manchester

WINNING the Europa League is looking increasingly like Manchester United's best chance of getting back in the Champions League for next season.

It's 20 Premier League games without defeat for United after Zlatan Ibrahimovic, back from suspension, converted a stoppage-time penalty to salvage a 1-1 draw against Everton at Old Trafford on Tuesday.

Ten of those games have been

draws, though, and United is still struggling to bridge that gap to the top four where Chelsea, Tottenham, Liverpool and Manchester City reside.

"One point or zero points, it's not a huge difference," said a glum-looking Jose Mourinho, United's manager.

United is four points behind fourth-place City with nine games left. Making the job even harder is United's involvement in the Europa League, where the team is through to the quarterfinals and plays Anderlecht in the first leg next week.

It means that in April, United has eight games — one every three or four days — and Mourinho has already suggested he might start prioritizing his key players for the Europa League if his side's league performances don't start improving.

With five draws from its last six home games in the league, United is clearly stuttering domestically.

Many of United's recent setbacks have stemmed from its failure to turn possession and clear-cut chances into goals, but this wasn't one of those oc-



Manchester United's Zlatan Ibrahimovic scores from the penalty spot

casions.

Ander Herrera and substitute Paul Pogba may have struck the crossbar either side of halftime, but Everton caused problems and defended well after Phil Jagielka gave the visitors the lead in the 22nd minute from a corner.

At times, United's play was chaotic and untidy, and they resorted to long balls by the end as Marouane Fellaini went up front alongside Ibrahimovic.

The pressure paid off deep in injury time when substitute Luke Shaw's shot was blocked

in Everton's area by the hand of Ashley Williams, who was given a straight red card. The clock had ticked into the 94th minute when Ibrahimovic slotted home the penalty.

It was hardly a celebratory mood inside Old Trafford after the final whistle.

"The performance was not very good," Mourinho said. "The spirit in the second half was phenomenal, but with some players really in trouble — some by the physical point of view, some others clearly with the confidence levels low." **AP**

LA Olympics campaign gets lots of likes - from Pakistan

MORE than a million Facebook users like the idea of hosting the 2024 Olympic Games in Los Angeles. Many of them, oddly enough, from Pakistan.

A report prepared for The Associated Press says most of LA's likes have come in the past six weeks from far away from Southern California.

"The fan growth evolution for the LA2024 Facebook page does seem suspicious," said analyst Michaela Branova, whose Prague, Czech Republic-based firm, Socialbakers, drew up the report. "Countries such as Bangladesh and Pakistan suddenly spike from almost zero to tens of thousands of fans within a few days in February."

LA campaign spokesman Jeff Millman said there was nothing suspicious about the figures. He said LA kicked off a series of Facebook advertisements starting Feb. 3. The scale and the mechanics of the advertising campaign weren't made clear - Millman declined to divulge how much LA 2024 had spent on promotion - but he noted that Facebook ads were "more efficient in countries where there are fewer competing brands."

He argued that it made sense to seek fans internationally. "We are a global campaign, as the Olympic movement is global," he said.

Socialbakers' figures, which



Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti (center) speaks during a news conference

were commissioned by the AP, give some insight into the dynamics of both the Paris and Los Angeles' social media campaigns.

By the end of 2016, Los Angeles had 209,000 or so likes, nearly all of which came from the United States, according to Socialbakers. Paris had 62,000 or so fans, 80 percent of which came from France.

By last week both sides' figures had grown. Paris' Facebook page tripled its following, but four out of five endorsements came from France, with many of the others originating in Algeria and Tunisia, former French colonies.

Los Angeles saw an explosion in support from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Indonesia, Egypt, India, Afghanistan and other low-income countries, according to Socialbakers' research. In Bangladesh alone, the number of supporters of the U.S. Olympic bid rose from a few dozen

to 113,335 in a month-and-a-half. In Pakistan, the number of supporters leapt from 55 to 99,336 over the same period.

Socialbakers' report said that more than 700,000 of the 1 million accounts that liked LA 2024's Facebook page had done so within the past six weeks. The surge helped LA blow past Paris (about 235,000 likes) and hit the million mark at an opportune moment. An Olympics conference started Tuesday in Denmark, the first of three events between now and September, when the International Olympic Committee is scheduled to pick one city over the other.

Socialbakers said it wasn't working for the LA or Paris bid, and that its work was transparent.

"It's all publicly available, taken directly from the Facebook API," said spokeswoman Claire Wilson, referring to Facebook's data interface.

Branova and outside experts

said it was possible that a large chunk of LA's social media support was drummed up by advertisements or other paid methods.

"It's consistent with what you'd expect to see from paid endorsements," said Daniel Mochon, who teaches social media marketing at Tulane University's A. B. Freeman School of Business. "They tend to come from developing countries [...] You're going to see sudden spikes that are not necessarily tied to anything external."

Social media support has been invoked as a selling point by the LA bid, which is locked in competition with Paris for the chance to host the Summer Games. On Monday, LA 2024 released a statement crowing about how its campaign had passed the 1 million follower mark.

That was endorsed by Nathan Cowan of Seattle-based digital marketing analytics firm Rival IQ, which wasn't involved in the report. Cowan said that while hadn't seen the raw data, Socialbakers' work "appears to be entirely accurate."

Cowan echoed Socialbakers' suspicions about LA's numbers, noting the "extreme spike in followers" and their unusual geographic breakdown.

Paris 2024 officials declined to comment. Facebook declined comment, saying in an email that it was up to advertisers to disclose how they promoted their pages. The IOC did not offer any comment, but the group's rules of conduct note that promotion of a city's bid must take place "with dignity and moderation." **AP**

Coach, players detained as Spain police probe match-fixing

Tales Azzoni, Madrid

SPANISH police investigating match-fixing said this week they have detained the coach and two players of a third-division club that lost 12-0 to Barcelona's "B" team over the weekend.

Eldense coach Filippo Vito di Pierro, who is Italian, was detained in the small eastern city of Elda. The man who served as the club's general director and represented the group of Italian investors that recently partnered with Eldense, Nobile Capuani, also was detained. Authorities did not immediately name the two players taken into custody.

Police detained them after interrogating some Eldense players following a complaint made by the club's president.

They have denied any wrongdoing.

"This is a very delicate subject and it needs to be treated very seriously," Barcelona coach Luis Enrique said. "In other countries we have seen similar situations and they are very unfortunate. Too many people are trying to benefit from football."

Eldense temporarily ceased its sporting activities on Sunday, a day after the loss sealed its relegation. The team also ended its contract with the group of Italian investors.

The 12-0 loss equaled a record for Spain's third division. Extremadura routed Portuense by the same score in 1993.

Eldense striker Cheikh Saad told local media that four teammates were involved in the scheme, including some who were seen in tears and were being consoled by Barcelona players after the final whistle.

Saad said he found out that the arrangement was for the score to be 8-0 at halftime and 12-0 at the end.

He did not name the teammates.

opinion

Made in Macao

Jenny Lao-Phillips



PERSONAL SHOPPERS WITHOUT BORDERS

We often hear comments that there is not much opportunity for career diversity in Macao. While anyone can find a job in this city where the number of unfilled positions is higher than the number of unemployed, we do not seem to have much choice aside from working in the tourism industry or joining the public services. But with a bit of creativity, local entrepreneurial youth managed to create alternative careers for themselves.

The development of international businesses in the last century has been credited to the innovation in transportation and technology, of course the lowering of economic barriers as well. As it has become easier for businesses to transport products from one end of the world to another, and to communicate with business partners across the globe, consumers are also becoming more demanding in the variety of choices in merchandise.

We are no longer impressed by one shop selling Korean fashion in Macao, we want to choose among different boutiques in Korea. The ease of travelling and the convenience of online shop nowadays made this not only possible, but easy to do. The creation of Taobao has especially contributed to the new shopping sensation in town, allowing us to buy anything we want with the click of a mouse. Even the problem of having to cross the border to pick up our purchase has been solved.

Whether strolling down the streets or browsing on the net, one cannot fail to notice the increasing number of shops promoting their purchasing agents services. Just five or six years ago, patrons of Taobao were constantly hustling across the border to pick up their purchases. There were one or maybe two retail shops in Macao providing pick-up service for regular customers for purchases on Taobao from Gongbei.

In a few short years, this idea has flourished; many retailers have resorted to becoming part-time purchasing agents. It must have been a real good business because now there are quite a number of these shops. Moreover, the success of these type of brick-and-mortar purchasing businesses has led to more customized services created by young, entrepreneurial ladies who love shopping.

A few years ago, students from the Mainland told me that their part-time job was to shop for customers from their hometown in Macao. Simple enough, their clients placed orders, transferred the money, and these students bought and shipped the products back home for a small service charge. Not much unlike the job of personal shoppers. Whether consciously or not, they have successfully exploited the opportunity from ease of transportation, communication and the marketing of local retailers which is to offer membership discount to secure customer loyalty.

From here, a new type of career is a-dawning in this small town, a combination of the trading and personal-shopper business. With the easy access from Macao to nearby Asian countries, some local entrepreneurs are expanding this purchasing service further.

From shopping for unique products abroad to be sold in their shops, to collecting orders ahead of travelling, more entrepreneurial ladies are using the ease of communication for real time cross border shopping. They take photos of products and shops in Korea, Japan, Thailand, etc. then post the photos online for customers to choose from. These shoppers buy the exact products ordered without having to guess what products can sell, or bearing costs on inventory, some of them don't even need to have physical shop. So, who doesn't like making a living out of travelling and shopping? Perhaps our young people will come up with more diversified careers themselves instead of waiting for career opportunities to come up for them.

THE BUZZ NETFLIX LOOKING FOR A THUMBS-UP AS STAR RATINGS FADE AWAY

Netflix's video-streaming service is officially scrapping its familiar star-rating system, hoping to make it easier for its 94 million subscribers to signal whether they liked a movie or TV show.

The service is compressing its familiar one-to-five star system into a simpler choice of thumbs-up or thumbs-down. The change, first discussed by a Netflix official last month and officially unveiled

yesterday, is aimed at soliciting more viewer feedback and helping the service make better program recommendations.

Netflix believes its star system has been confusing to many people. The five stars allowed subscribers to tell Netflix whether they "hated," "didn't like," "liked," "really liked" or "loved" a particular video.

BOOZE & WOMEN

Portugal official was in frame for top eurozone job, PM says

PORTUGAL'S prime minister said this week the country's finance minister was recently asked whether he would be available to become the eurozone's top official, replacing Jeroen Dijsselbloem.

Antonio Costa said in an interview with Lisbon's Radio Renascenca that Portugal rejected the approach because Finance Minister Mario Centeno is still guiding the country out of its recent financial crisis.

Costa did not say who approached Portugal nor when, but he confirmed a report in Portuguese weekly Expresso last weekend that said Centeno was a potential candidate to chair meetings of the 19-country eurozone's finance ministers.

Portugal called last month for Dijsselbloem to quit after he made what some saw as derogatory remarks about southern EU nations.

In an interview last month with German newspaper Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Dijsselbloem said: "I cannot spend all my money on liquor and women and then ask for your support," in reference to European countries that needed state bailouts. Those countries include three from southern



Prime Minister Antonio Costa (center) and Finance Minister Mario Centeno (right)

Europe — Greece, Portugal, and Cyprus — as well as Ireland.

Dijsselbloem's future is unclear after his Labor Party's weak showing in recent Dutch elections and he faced fierce criticism in the European Parliament this week for not attending a meeting.

I cannot spend all my money on liquor and women and then ask for your support.

JEROEN DIJSSELBLOEM

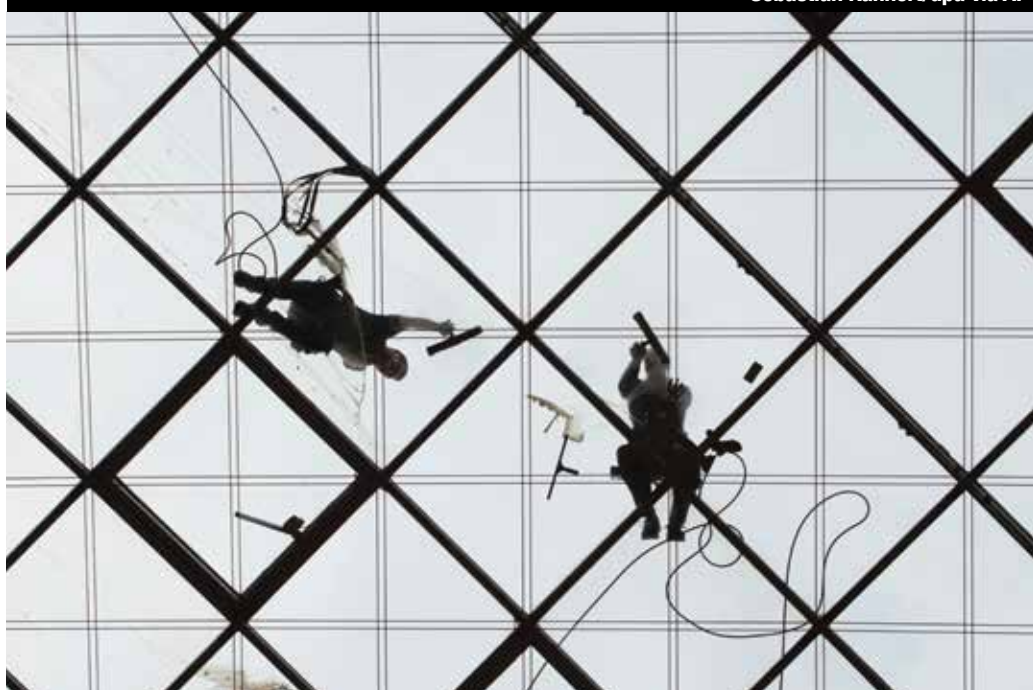
Leftist German European lawmaker Fabio De Masi called Dijsselbloem "gutless" for not showing up and said his comments in the German newspaper "demonstrate his incompetence and utter lack of character."

In a letter to members of the European Parliament on Tuesday, Dijsselbloem said his comments in the interview were intended to underscore "the importance of solidarity and reciprocity within the European Union" and were not aimed at southern EU member states.

But he also expressed regret at having caused offense. "Choice of words is of course personal as is the way they are picked up," Dijsselbloem wrote. "I shall be even more careful in the future as it is never my intention to insult people." AP

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Sebastian Kahnert/dpa via AP



Eurozone tops. Two workers clean the glass roof of the World Trade Center in Dresden. The 19-country eurozone economy has just enjoyed its strongest quarter for nearly six years, a closely watched survey showed yesterday.

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	40-60 Moderate	
High Density Residential Area	45-65 Moderate	
Ambient	55-75 Moderate	

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

PHILIPPINES Coldplay's lead vocalist visited a fan with cancer on Tuesday, hours before the group played a packed concert at Manila's seaside Mall of Asia Arena Concert Grounds.

MADAGASCAR A sapphire rush has brought tens of thousands of people into the remote rainforests of eastern Madagascar, disfiguring a protected environmental area and prompting calls for military intervention.

SYRIA International donors pledged billions of dollars in aid for war-ravaged Syria as the U.N. Security Council convened yesterday for emergency talks over a suspected chemical attack that killed dozens in a rebel-held province.

GREECE Top Greek and European officials indicated yesterday that it's possible to reach a breakthrough in the country's difficult bailout talks over the next two days. Greece's prime minister said that if a deal fails to materialize, the eurozone should hold a special summit.

More on p14



NETHERLANDS Turks living in the Netherlands have begun voting in a referendum that could give Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan more power. Booths opened yesterday in Amsterdam, The Hague and Deventer so that around 250,000 Turkish voters who live in the Netherlands can take part in the referendum.

BRAZIL-COLOMBIA Brazilian club Chapecoense beat Colombia's Atletico Nacional 2-1 on Tuesday in a highly emotional match that commemorated the victims of last year's fatal air crash in South America.