



MACAO LIBRARY WEEK KICKS OFF
The Library Week kicked off on Saturday and will offer a lineup of activities for book lovers throughout the week

P2



LOCAL DESIGNERS SHOWCASE CREATIONS

P4 FASHION



CHINESE JIHADIS' RISE IN SYRIA
Chinese fighters of the Turkistan Islamic Party in Syria are organized, battled-hardened and have been instrumental

P11



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WORLD BRIEFS



CHINA's foreign minister says China insists on the elimination of nuclear weapons in the Korean peninsula and will continue to pursue the resumption of talks among the involved parties.



US A 10-day swing through four Pacific Rim nations is offering evidence that U.S. Vice President Mike Pence has become one of President Donald Trump's chief emissaries on the world stage. More on p13

More on backpage

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FINANCIAL TIMES
US farm belt anxious about Trump trade threats

F1

Macron, Le Pen advance to French runoff

P7, 15

Macau debuts polling station



DEBATE WITH LAWMAKERS

Chui pledges to release report on the demand for public housing in Sept.

P3

Library Week kicks off with series of activities



THE Macau Library Week 2017 kicked off on Saturday and will offer a lineup of activities for book lovers throughout the week. Organized by the Macao Public Library, alongside the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) and the Macao Library and Information Management Association (MLIMA), the theme of this year's edition is "Reading and Images".

The event aims to broaden reading perspectives by exploring the relationship between images and reading and how visuals

can spark imagination when reading, the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) said in a statement.

Activities at the Old Court Building over the weekend included the sale of archived periodicals for charity, a book exchange and book crossing (the practice of leaving a book in a public place to be picked up, read and passed on by others). Other activities included English-language hand puppet shows and various workshops such as "Marbling Bookmarks DIY" and "Non-woven Fabric Memo Holder DIY."

This edition also includes an exhibition on German comic books (held from April 25 to May 21) and several reading game booths, among other activities. These will run until to-

morrow.

The event is held every April as a celebration of "World Book Day."

The Wu Yee Sun Library of the University of Macau (UM) is also participating by hosting a special reward scheme event titled "Fill the Campus with Reading Atmosphere", which starts today and ends Friday, April 28. This event, which aims to promote reading and thinking habits in students on the UM campus, will grant free books to library users who borrow books during this week.

The next session of the English-language hand puppet show will tell the story of Pinocchio, as part of the exhibition "Storybooks can speak" at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 6 at S. Lourenço Library.

Health Bureau closes hotel pool due to legionella cases

THE Health Bureau (SSM) last Friday ordered the temporary closure of the swimming pool of the Parisian Macao Hotel in Cotai.

The temporary closure is among a series of preventive measures taken by the bureau following three recent cases of Legionnaires' disease in Hong Kong.

SSM said two patients had stayed at The Parisian hotel between January and March. A third had stayed at the hotel in December but only showed symptoms in January.

In a statement, the SSM says it had collaborated with the Macao Government Tourism Office (MGTO) to conduct an inspection of the hotel unit, the day after being notified about the matter by the Hong Kong health authorities.

After the inspection, the SSM ordered the hotel to adopt several measures; aside from the temporary closure of the swimming pool, the hotel was also ordered to disinfect its jacuzzis, swimming pool, fountains and water

pipings system.

The SSM said it had collected water samples from all of these for analysis, and that the results would be available next week.

Legionnaires' disease is an infection caused by Legionella Pneumophila, a bacterium that can live in fresh water and other aquatic environments. These include artificial aquatic systems, swimming pools, cooling systems, fountains and home medical devices.

It is most likely to thrive and spread in temperatures between 20 and 45 degrees Celsius.

As swimming pools are continually disinfected through chlorination, and have a water temperature cooler than the ideal environment for Legionella Pneumophila, the risk of infection in swimming pools is low.

The symptoms of Legionnaires' disease include fever, dry cough, breathing difficulty, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, abdominal pain and diarrhea.

The condition can be cured by antibiotics. **RM**

Museum Day Carnival showcases local festivities

SEVENTEEN local museums are co-organizing this year's edition of the "Macao International Museum Day Carnival."

During a press conference held last week at the Science Centre, representatives of each museum introduced the event, with the opening ceremony scheduled for May 3 at 10.30 a.m. at the Red Market.

The theme of this edition of the Carnival is festivities and buildings. Several of Macau's museums, in collaboration with the Macau Fishmongers Association (Ou Mun Sin U Hong Chong Wui), will combine the traditions of the Drunken Dragon Dance and the "Dragon Boat rice" distribution with the activities of the International Museum Day Carnival.

According to the organizers, a series of activities will be held on the opening day, including an exhibition about Dragon Boat rice inside the Red Market, while models of street hawkers' stalls and an exhibition on

the history of Macau's street vendors will be set up outside the building. Billboards introducing the background of these activities will also be set up in the surround-

ing streets. Additionally, a number of workshops will be held inside and outside the Red Market, as well as guided tours dedicated to "The History and Evolution of the Red Market."

In May, each museum will organize other celebrations, exhibitions, workshops, lectures and free admission days.

ONE SHOT NEWS



The Sports Games for People with Disabilities 2017 was held yesterday at the Tap Seac Multisport Pavilion. Around 2,000 people participated, according to the organizers. The event featured nine sports and recreational activities and three physical test areas that were open to participants and their families.

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DEBATE WITH LAWMAKERS

Chui: Population to reach 710,000 in 2020



Julie Zhu

LAST Friday, the Chief Executive (CE) Chui Sai On took part in the Legislative Assembly plenary meeting to answer questions from 29 lawmakers.

Regarding Chan Meng Kam's inquiry about the region's population and aging issues, Chui said the city's population is estimated to reach 710,000 by 2020, and 750,000 by 2025. Chui noted that these estimates do not necessarily mean that Macau will have that number of people by that time, but pointed out the importance of keeping Macau's public facilities updated.

Chui remarked that "cultivating people's competencies" will be the most important aspect in developing the city's human resources.

Si Ka Lon and Zheng Anting stressed that the government should establish communication with the troubled pre-sales Pearl Horizon buyers.

Chui responded that the government is deeply concerned about the Pearl Horizon matters, and that five governmental departments have been studying ways to solve the issue.

Lawmaker Lei Cheng I raised the recent cases of around 61 families who were denied their rights to own affordable housing. Other lawmakers also inquired about when the

government will reopen the application system for affordable housing.

Chui said he noticed that some candidates who had already received approval for affordable housing have since encountered problems, but said he is confident of reopening the application system within his term.

In his reply to lawmaker Angela Leong, who asked about the future of the lands where the Macau-Canidrome is located, Chui said that the land "surely will not be used for commercial purposes."

He stated that the government is not overlooking the issue. In view of the population density around the Macau-Canidrome, the government has considered using the land to build schools or facilities for sports, leisure, or cultural events.

■ The government's full report on the demand for public housing will be released in September

"The land will not be used for hotels, residences, or anything gaming related, for sure," Chui promised.

Lawmaker Kwan Tsui Hang asked whether the government will establish a mechanism to handle corruption cases reported by the Commission Against Corruption.

Chui said that he has already signed a notice revoking the policy that allows contract employment to waive opening applications. The CE also stated that he will not use his rights to waive education and work experience re-

quirements for the leaders of public departments.

In response to other lawmakers' inquiries, Chui said that the government has reclaimed 63 illegally occupied land plots, which had a total area of 336,000 square meters. He also noted that the government had previously nullified 38 land concessions in cases where leaseholders failed to develop the land according to the timetable and terms previously stated.

The CE said the government's full report on the demand for public housing would be released in September. The report – covering topics such as the possibility of a new category of public housing, which could also include dormitories for Macau's youth – will serve as a reference point for the government when formulating long-term public housing policy.

Mak Soi Kun asked Chui questions on the Sin Fong Garden, which was evacuated due to risk of collapse. The case involves around 200 families. Mak said that these homeowners had requested that he get Chui to solve the problem.

Chui also said that the government will use reclaimed land to build public houses in Taipa's Avenida Wai Long area.

While leaving the AL last Friday, Chui did not respond to media when asked whether the government has statistics to support their decision to build the houses in the area.

Two groups protest Chui's AL appearance

AROUND 60 members of the Family Reunion Association and around 50 members of former Pearl Horizon buyers showed up in front of the Legislative Assembly (AL) to protest prior to Chief Executive (CE) Chui Sai On's arrival.

The Pearl Horizon demonstration was, as usual, led by a speaker announcing that the pre-sales buyers are willing to have their "heads cut and their blood flowing", and that they will defend their rights as buyers of the Pearl Horizon project.

Kou Meng Pok, chairman of the Pearl Horizon Condominium Owners United Association, who recently announced he would be running for lawmaker, was also seen at the scene.

The Pearl Horizon demonstration saw protesters seated in front of the AL, playing records and holding signs.

The second group, the Macau Family Reunion Association, seemed to have prepared more material for their demonstration.

Half an hour prior to Chui's arrival, the association delivered a letter to the CE, which was accepted by a government representative. Allen Wong, director of the Rector's Office of City U,

represented of the group when submitting the letter.

Wong told the media that matters concerning the association's members involve "a great number of corruption cases."

Wong also asked why children of immigrants to other countries are automatically entitled to residency together with their parents, but the same does not happen in China.

Lei Lok Lan, president of the Macau Federation Family Reunion's (MFFR), said that "one by one, all [of the lawmakers] came out to speak for the Pearl Horizon, but nobody helps us."

"Chief Executive, when I kneeled to beg you, you said that you would deliver my appeal to the Central Government. All the people in the street heard it," said Lei.

"What happens now?" he added, observing that in "three years, did he [CE] do anything? I think he did nothing."

"He [the CE] has been playing us all the way. None of the lawmakers help us [...] Everyone steps out to help Pearl Horizon. Whether there are benefits, I don't know," he continued.

"Is it interest? You all got to question it according to your heart."

ZONE A RECLAMATION ALMOST CONCLUDED

DURING FRIDAY'S session, Chui shared an update on the reclamation process of the five plots in the new urban reclamation areas. According to him, eighty percent of the reclamation work in Zone A has been completed, with the balance likely to be completed by year-end. The delay to Zone A, located next to the reservoir on the Macau peninsula, was partly related to the development of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge. The government is stepping up the planning processes regarding

Zone A, which will include a total of 28,000 public housing units. Reclamation work in Zone B – located on the Macau Peninsula – has been completed; planning for Zone C, connected to Taipa Island, will be completed this year. The government will initiate a tender process in the second quarter of the year for reclamation construction in Zone D, which is also linked to Taipa. Reclamation work in Zone E, which is also connected to Taipa Island, will be completed this year.

MACAO FASHION GALLERY

Local brands showcase collections

Lynzy Valles

THE Macao Fashion Gallery kicked off its first series of "Brand Story – Macau Original Fashion Exhibition", which showcases garments designed by Macau based brands.

The first series features Macau based brands Macon and Jade.L. The first has established a business in China's online retail Tmall, while the second has opened a store in Macau.

Macon and Jade.L are currently exhibiting 15 of their new designs on the upper floors of the gallery. The theme of Macon's exhibition is "Young Traveler on the Road", while Jade.L's theme is "Safety Corner".

The exhibition will be held in three phases, and is organized by the Cultural Bureau and Macau Productivity and Technology Transfer Center (CPTTM).

Six local fashion labels have

been selected to participate.

Each label will design their own display area at the gallery, deploying various sets of style and elements such as paintings and elements to present their collections.

Local brand Macon was established in 2013 and is currently targeting the mainland Chinese market. Macon's designer and creative director Jane Chan told the Times that this is due to the neighboring region's greater demand for fashion. Yet the company, owned by a factory firm, also sells its items in several pop-up stores and showrooms.

The market is competitive for Macon as it operates on an online platform which is already home to around 9,000 fashion brands, according to Chan.

Chan commended Macau for offering a substantial subsidy to aspiring Macau based designers, unlike neighboring regions.

Jade Leong, owner of Jade.L,

echoed the same sentiments. She said her MOP150,000 subsidy from the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) had enabled her to launch her own brand, as well as a store in a shopping mall in Macau.

Thanks to CPTTM's assistance, Leong also has consignment products in the Macau Fashion Gallery.

However, Leong admitted that it could be problematic for designers to launch their own store, citing high rental.

"It will be easier for us local designers to start [our] own business because there are government subsidies, but there are still many challenges for us, such as rental and the [limited market]," Leong said.

"Many local brands can't have their own stores, so it will be more difficult for designers to operate their businesses. We can only produce small quantities of each piece, so the cost is very high," the designer added.



Jane Chan (left), Victoria Kuan (center) and Jade Leong

Meanwhile Victoria Kuan, senior manager of the Creative Fashion and Image Department at CPPTM, shared that Macau designers have become more advanced in terms of fabric selection, workmanship and the presentation of their designs.

This, she said, was the reason the center decided to open a showroom for Macau based designers to present their masterpieces to residents and visitors.

"At least they have their own room and do what they want. They can expose themselves,"

Kuan continued.

"We have so many young designers who really have the knowledge, and now is the time for us to bring them to many cities to showcase their talents and business."

Kuan revealed that Macon and Jade.L have registered their collections at the Centerstage, a fashion event that will take place in Hong Kong this September.

The group will also join a government-backed trip to Shenzhen later this year to promote Macau's local products.

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For Rent



Kingsville, Taipa (1 Unit)

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



Jardim Lameiras Taipa

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



Camellia Court, Hellene Gardens, Coloane

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



One Central Tower 7

(Ref: 17030644)
1,292sq. ft. HKD 19,500
Furnished 2 bedroom apartment in the luxurious complex of One central. Rent inclusive of management fees which will allow you to make full use of the exclusive clubhouse with indoor and outdoor pool, gym, tennis courts and other extensive recreational facilities. This apartment has stunning lake and city views. Known as the best address in Macau and directly linked to the shopping centre. Great location with MGM, Wynn, Mandarin Oriental etc. all within walking distance.



The Carat

(Ref: 17030641)
679.79sq. ft. HKD 11,000
Nice studio apartment edging on the bays of Macau, The Carat is sculpted in the bustling Dynasty District, captures the sensational two shores and three bridges. This unprecedented waterfront hotel styled residence at the city centre is a rare jewel, at its best. At the top of The Carat, enjoy a splash of water in the 60-foot indoor swimming pool or power run in the gym room, be indulged at the Sky Club overlooking the breathtaking view of sunrise



Poplar Court, Ocean Gardens, Taipa

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



Coloane, 4 Storey Commercial Building

(Ref: 17040646)
4,003sq. ft. HKD 200,000
The property is a licensed commercial space spread over 4 floors including a basement, ground floor retail, and two upper floors in the heart of the unique Coloane village situated next door to the famous 'Lord Stow's Bakery'. The property features an elevator and staircase to access all floors, and is perfectly suited for a wide range of commercial activities including a food & beverage operation or a financial institution.



Villa de Mer – Tower 1

(Ref: 17040645)
935sq. ft. HKD 12,000
Family-friendly 2 bedroom unit with full modern furnishing. Master bedroom fitted with full-size wardrobe and extra storage capacity under queen-sized bed. Fully fitted kitchen with high quality appliances.

Located in an up-and-coming neighborhood with proximity to diverse grocery and dining options. Clubhouse facilities include gym, sauna, pool, playground and bowling alleys.

For Sale



Kam Lai Kuok

(Ref: 17035512)
1,380sq. ft. HKD 10,980M
Rate: HKD 7,956sq ft

Central Macau, wonderful three bedroom apartment with two bathrooms and modern great size kitchen. Spacious balcony although as been built in could easily be opened up again very easily. The living room is approximately 500 sq ft including the allocated dining area. The apartment comes with a parking space in the same building which is included in the asking price.

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

Office: (853) 2835 2699



Cattleya Court, Ocean Gardens, Taipa

(Ref: 16095497)
1,503sq. ft. HKD 11.20M
Rate: HKD 7,451sq ft

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

Email: Info@JMLProperty.com



Roof Top Apartment, Macau

(Ref: 15055441)
799sq. ft. HKD 4.38M
Rate: HKD 5,481sq ft

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



Wan Yu Villa, D Unit, Macau

(Ref: 17035513)
1,800sq. ft. HKD 11.5M
Rate: HKD 6,388sq ft

Beautifully furnished, bright and spacious 3 bedroom furnished apartment. Large open plan living/dining room with a long balcony off the living area. 3 double bedrooms, master bedroom has an en-suite bathroom.

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Macau debuts polling station for French Presidential Election

Renato Marques

A polling station for the French Presidential Election [see more on page 15] has been set up in Macau for the first time. The idea, initially promoted by the French Consul General for Hong Kong and Macau, Eric Berti, was “very well received by the French community in Macau,” said Éric Sautédé on the quality of election committee members.

It is estimated that around 400 French nationals live in Macau, but many are not registered to vote here. There were a total of 136 voters registered to vote in Macau. The final results of the Macau polling station were disclosed yesterday evening. Only sixty six French nationals voted and there was a tie between candidates Emmanuel Macron and François Fillon (18 votes each). Candidate Marine Le Pen was third, with 11 votes.

The Macau polling station, located at the headquarters of Alliance Française de Macao (AF), is the sixth polling station organized by the French Consu-



Macau polling station



Ballots showcase the words 'French Republic'

late for Hong Kong and Macau. The neighboring region has five other polling stations in several locations in order to serve around 8,000 registered voters.

Feedback from voters has been very positive, since the new polling station allows voters to exercise their rights “without having to go to Hong Kong and spend probably all day travelling and also the ferry tickets,” remarked Sautédé, noting that he expects more than 60 percent of registered voters to vote in this election.

“That’s what we expect for Hong Kong and Macau should

be in line with Hong Kong,” he said.

Xavier Garnier, Director of the AF, remarked that until around 5.00 p.m. yesterday there were about 50 people voting, amounting to around 40 percent of the total. This number is considered normal, he said, explaining that “usually some people will come just before the closing time because people [voters] are allowed to stay and be part of the counting of the votes and know in first hand the Macau results.”

Commenting on the French people’s expectations of yesterday’s elections, he said, “For

For the first time, this election will be really uncertain because we have four candidates in conditions to move forward to the second round.

XAVIER GARNIER

the first time, this election will be really uncertain, because we have four candidates in conditions to move forward to the second round. We are in a bit of a suspense since we don’t really know what could happen

He added that this fact might be “added interest for this election and [as further motivation for] people to vote in France.”

100 applications to enter Hengqin with single plate

More than 100 owners of Macau single-plated cars have applied to enter Hengqin, of which 20 have already completed the application process, according to a report by TDM. Hengqin disclosed this information last Friday during the trade zone’s two-year anniversary. Moreover, Hengqin revealed that the trade zone has more than 30,000 registered companies with total capital in excess of RMB1,600 billion. There are 567 and 793 companies from Hong Kong and Macau, respectively. The trade zone also announced 24 new measures designed to improve its commercial environment and reduce businesses’ operational costs.

Eight residence burglaries recorded in Q1

The Judiciary Police (PJ) announced that there were eight cases of residence burglaries reported in the first quarter of this year, representing a 60 percent decrease. Last year, there were 20 cases in total. Based on the data available, PJ believes the decline is due to residents’ improved awareness of home security. PJ Director Chau Wai Kuong said that more associations are now members of the buildings’ crime prevention system, which currently has 470 members across 540 buildings in Macau.

RETAIL

Victoria’s Secret opens full-range store this Thursday



LINGERIE company Victoria’s Secret is continuing its expansion into Asia with the opening of a full-range store at The Venetian Macao this Thursday.

The new store will carry a much wider range of products than its first store at the Venetian in

December 2011, which offered beauty products such as fragrances, accessories, and small leather goods and bags.

The establishment will be Victoria’s Secret’s first full-range store in Macau and will sell its branded accessories, cosmetics, lingerie, sportswear and more.

Located at St Mark’s Square at The Venetian Macao, the 15,000 square-foot store will feature five iconic sets of decorated angels’ wings that were presented at Victoria’s Secret shows from April 26 to May 31 to celebrate the grand opening.

The lingerie conglom-

erate will reportedly also take up prime real estate when it opens in Hong Kong next year, replacing Forever 21’s Causeway Bay store.

The South China Morning Post reported that Victoria’s Secret models will head to Shanghai this year, where a four-storey, 2,500-square meter store was opened in February.

The conglomerate is also opening another store in Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan province.

Inflation slightly up in March

Year-on-year inflation in March increased by 0.72 percent, higher than February (+0.3 percent). The inflation is mainly due to an increase in the prices of meals outside the home, school fees and gasoline, according to the Statistics and Census Bureau (DSEC). DSEC noted that the categories of Alcohol and Tobacco and Education recorded the highest growth – with increases of 8.8 percent and 7.3 percent, respectively – compared to March 2016. The rate of inflation measured by the average of the indexes of the last 12 months over the previous 12 months was 1.6 percent.

EDUCATION

New online platform to provide financial aid for tertiary education

THE Tertiary Education Services Office (GAES) last week launched a new tool for current and future tertiary students seeking to apply for financial support from the government.

The online platform will provide information on application requirements and other services regarding government scholarships and grants. It will also enable students to

quickly and easily check the status of their application. The platform also offers the possibility of shared data among several public entities, so that users will no longer need to fill out the same information across multiple forms to different entities.

GAES said the new measure aims to promote a more efficient use of public resources. Users can access information

about a variety of higher education scholarships and loans based on merit and financial need using the platform. The platform does not currently allow applications to be submitted electronically. Applicants must still deliver physical copies of the completed forms to the relevant departments in person. The platform is available at: www.bolsas.gov.mo

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Ignore China's credit risks at your peril, says top manager

INVESTORS in Chinese debt aren't paying enough attention to rising credit risks, according to a top bond fund manager.

Some market participants have focused on the impact of an improving economy and rising money-market rates, while overlooking the possibility that defaults will increase, said He Qian, manager of Fortis Haitong Pure Bond Fund at HFT Investment Management Co.

"It's interesting that investors were paying more attention to credit risks this time last year, when there were not as many credit events," said He, whose \$895 million fund has beaten 99 per-



cent of its competitors since 2014, data compiled by Bloomberg show. "Such risks seem to have faded from investors' memories."

Seven companies have defaulted on a total of 10 bonds onshore so far in 2017, versus 29 for all of last

year, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. The benchmark 10-year yield is near the highest in more than a year after the worst quarterly performance in at least 12 years. A strengthening economy is bolstering expectations

that yields and money-market rates will climb as the central bank guides borrowing costs higher.

The fund manager said government debt is looking more attractive after the selloff. The benchmark 10-year sovereign bond yield rose about 40 basis points this year, more than the 35 basis point increase for 10-year AAA rated corporate bonds. The yield in government debt rose 4 basis points to 3.47 percent on Friday, near this year's high of 3.49 percent on Feb. 6.

"We think sovereign and quasi-sovereign notes by and large have priced in the market expectation of consumer or producer price

gains and rising money rates," He said. "We see less risks buying into them now as they have declined even more than corporate debt."

The extra yield investors demand to hold five-year AA rated corporate notes over sovereign debt climbed to 195 basis points in February, lower than the 200 figure of April 2016. At the same time, corporate bonds saw three consecutive months of negative net financing through February, with more debt maturing than was issued, which may lead to cash-flow problems.

The People's Bank of China has twice raised the cost of open-market funds and medium-term loans this year, while keeping benchmark lending and deposit rates unchanged since October 2015. The Bloomberg Barclays China Aggregate Index tumbled 6.3 percent in the last quarter of 2016, the biggest drop since its inception in 2004. **Bloomberg**

Australia says Chow Tai Fook's Alinta takeover has won approval

David Stringer,
Edward Johnson

CHOW Tai Fook Enterprises Ltd., the Hong Kong conglomerate best known for its jewelry stores, has won Australian regulatory approval to acquire gas and electricity provider Alinta Energy Holdings Ltd.

The deal has been approved by the Foreign Investment Review Board and is subject to strict conditions, a spokeswoman for Treasurer Scott Morrison said by phone Sunday, without elaborating

on the details. Morrison decides on approvals for overseas investors on advice from the investment board.

Chow Tai Fook in March agreed to pay investors including buyout firm TPG Capital more than A\$4 billion (USD3 billion) for Alinta, people with knowledge of the matter said at the time. Alinta's assets in Australia span nationwide energy retailing through power generation for industrial customers.

Calls to Chow Tai

Fook Enterprises' head office in Hong Kong went unanswered yesterday. Alinta Energy didn't answer a phone call placed outside normal office hours. The approval was reported earlier by the Australian Financial Review, which didn't say where it got the information.

The transaction follows in the path of Li Ka-shing's Cheung Kong Infrastructure Holdings Ltd., which on Friday won approval for a A\$7.4 billion takeover of Australian power provider

Duet Group. Li-controlled companies already own stakes in Australian assets including SA Power Networks, Powercor Australia and Australian Gas Networks.

Australian utilities such as Alinta and Duet have attracted foreign interest because of steady cash flows from their gas and electricity assets. The country's power companies are overseen by national and state regulators, which decide how much network operators can charge.

Bloomberg

MACAU

IPIM streamlines business promotion regulations

MACAU has simplified and improved some of its regulations for trade and investment promotion, the MSAR's investment promotion body said yesterday.

The Macau Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM) said it has updated the regulations for companies attending promotional events, shortening the list of documents required for companies to hold or participate in promotional activities such as exhibitions or forums.

The information will instead be provided by other government departments such as the Financial Services Bureau, the institute said.

According to IPIM, companies no longer need to submit copy for business opening



or modification, commercial registration, business tax forms, occupational tax forms, or certificate copy for no outstanding tax.

The updated regulations also require that exhibition information be issued to the public every month, which will make companies and interested visitors aware of promotional activities as soon as possible. Such information was previously publicized every June and December, according to the previous regulations.

corporate bits

RESTAURANT AT THE PARISIAN PRESENTS FRENCH FESTIVAL MENU

Le French GourMay, the festival of French culinary and wine culture, will return to Hong Kong and Macau this May.

To commemorate the event, The Parisian Macao's classic French Brasserie restaurant is offering a special four-course menu with champagne pairings for the entire month.

This year's event pays homage to the most famed wine region of all, Champagne, and the restaurant has paired the promotional menu with a hand-picked range of champagnes from some of France's smaller growers, all of which will be available both by the glass and the bottle.

Dishes on the menu include



baked scallops with an onion compote and crayfish sauce, foie gras and rabbit terrine en croûte, asparagus veloute with poached egg and French poultry breast in morel sauce on cabbage compote.

NOMINATIONS FOR ASIA GAMING AWARDS 2017 OPENS

The second edition of the Asia Gaming Awards (AGAwards) is set to take place on May 16, the first evening of G2E Asia at The Parisian.

The event convenes key stakeholders from the Asian gaming industry to celebrate industry-wide achievements.

Members nominate and cast their vote, alongside a panel of judges.

A total of 12 awards will be presented across the land-based and online gaming spheres, along with a

prize for "Outstanding Contribution in the Field of Corporate Social Responsibility."

Up to eight rising stars will be recognized at the awards, according to a press release issued by Asia Gaming Brief.

This year marks the launch of a new "Best Gaming Property" category aimed at bringing in the region's smaller non-IR operations, while "Best Gaming Area Design" will include nominations for specific areas, rather than the property as a whole.

CTM COMPLETES SOFTWARE RESTORATION AND UPGRADE



CTM conducted a two-day restoration and upgrade project on April 20 and 21 to fix a software bug in a pair of Internet Servers (BRAS21 and BRAS22), which resulted in a partial Internet service blackout on Tuesday.

The project was successfully completed between 4:00 am and 5:45 a.m. on Friday.

In order to improve the compres-

sion capabilities of related network devices and enhance the stability of Internet service, CTM said in an official statement that it plans to conduct a series of software upgrades.

The telecommunication company concluded that it would continue to closely monitor network operations and make an effort to ensure the continued stability of network services.

Angola is China's third largest oil supplier in February



Sonangol headquarters in Luanda

The report adds that oil sales to China increased by 60,000 barrels per day for Saudi Arabia and 37,000 barrels per day for Russia in March, while Angolan exports fell by 317,000 barrels per day.

In March and according to secondary sources, Angola recorded production of 1.614 million barrels per day, a monthly drop of 18,700 barrels per day, while Nigeria lowered production by 29,800 barrels per day to reach 1.545 million barrels per day.

On the basis of direct communication, the difference is substantially higher, with Angola having produced 1.652 million barrels a day, with an increase of 3,000 barrels per day and Nigeria having produced 1.269 million barrels, with a monthly drop of 156,900 barrels per day.

This month the Nigerian subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell was forced to shut down an oil pipeline to repair sites where people were stealing oil. **MDT/Macauhub**

IN February Angola was China's third largest oil supplier, after Saudi Arabia and Russia, with a 10 percent share, compared to 15 percent and 14 percent, respectively, for the other two countries, according to the monthly report on the oil market for April from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

New customs tariff system feeds expectations of growth

THE introduction in the coming months of a new customs tariff in Angola is feeding expectations among economic agents that replacing the current regime will be a stimulus to the country's growth.

A new customs tariff system, submitted to the Council of Ministers and expected to be implemented this year, proposes cuts on import duties on foodstuffs such as fruit and vegetables, cooking oils and grains (including wheat flour), as well as raw materials such as iron, steel and aluminium products as well as second-hand cars, the Angolan press reported.

The aim is to replace the existing customs tariff system – introduced in 2014 before the start of the economic and financial crisis now facing the country – which is generally regarded as protectionist of local farmers and manufacturers, seeking to make imports more expensive in order to encourage diversification of an economy that is highly dependent on oil.

The current tariff has been the subject of much criticism from local and international companies as well as from the World Trade Organization (WTO).

In its most recent report on Angola, the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) said replacing the current tariff would likely be a positive move, as it had the effect of increasing the cost of domestic production and reducing competition in

the market.

Despite tariff protection, the EIU points out that operational challenges – such as a lack of electricity, poor supply chain management and lack of human resources – have kept the country dependent on imports. In addition to this, the fall in the price of oil following the introduction of the 2014 tariff has limited access to foreign currency for Angolan companies, making payments to suppliers abroad difficult and, as the kwanza has weakened, imports have become significantly more expensive.

"If and when (the new tariff is) applied, the cost of imports should fall and this should help fight inflation. A less protectionist customs regime should also stimulate Angola's trade with its neighbours and can help the country finally meet the long-standing promise of joining the Southern African Development Community's free trade zone," the EIU said.

"A review of Angola's current punitive customs regime should give a positive boost to the national economy. However, it is still unclear when the new tariffs will be applied," it said.

In 2016, Angola formalized its accession to the International Convention for the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures (Kyoto Convention) of the World Customs Organization, which aims to facilitate international trade. **MDT/Macauhub**

ADVERTORIAL

SANDS CHINA NEWS

Sands China Launches Innovative F.I.T. Programme for Local SME Suppliers

Features first-of-their-kind invitational matching sessions to further increase procurement opportunities between Sands China and local SMEs
New 30% advance payment programme for Macao young entrepreneurs

Sands China Ltd. launched its new F.I.T. programme for local Macao SME suppliers with a press conference April 6 at The Venetian Macao, which included the first in a series of unique **invitational matching sessions** for SME suppliers to connect with Sands China user departments to demonstrate their goods and services.

This latest initiative is the first of its kind, taking its lead from **Sands China's Local Small, Medium and Micro Suppliers Support Programme**, which is focused on three types of local businesses identified in collaboration with the Macao Chamber of Commerce: small and micro companies, "Made-in-Macao" companies, and Macao young entrepreneurs.

Part of the supplier support programme, the new F.I.T. programme aims to continue driving procurement between Sands China and local SME suppliers, targeted at both existing and new local Sands China suppliers. With this programme, the company seeks to increase its spend on all three aforementioned types of local suppliers.

F.I.T. is comprised of three pillars: Financial Support, Invitational Matching, and Training and Development.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A **Sands China Young Entrepreneur Advance Payment Programme** has been created to help local young entrepreneurs who have limited financial capacity to run their business. It targets Macao young entrepreneurs with a staff of 15 or below, providing them with a 30 per cent advance payment on purchase orders.

INVITATIONAL MATCHING

Sands China is hosting targeted trade shows, inviting local SMEs to go beyond simply meeting potential Sands China buyers. These invitational matching sessions take the process a step further by providing a platform for local SMEs to present and demonstrate their products and services to potential users and buyers at Sands China properties, with the company's full support. The goal is to enhance communication between vendors and users, and to improve the procurement success rate.

The first of these new invitational matching sessions was held at the end of the April 6 press conference. It focused on food and beverage, with 22 local SME suppliers invited, giving them a chance to showcase their products and services to Sands China food and beverage management, chefs from Sands China and partner hotels, as well as representatives from food and beverage outlets located throughout Sands Shoppes. Future invitational matching sessions will target other specific areas, such as operating supplies, furniture and lighting, and others.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The new **Sands China Procurement Academy** aims to develop local SME suppliers by sharing business knowledge and skills, helping them gain experience and capacity for working with large-scale international customers like Sands China. It will provide tailor-made practical training modules to local SMEs, presenting them with a certificate upon graduating from the academy. Graduating suppliers will be given preferential procurement under otherwise equal circumstances. The academy is targeted toward local small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), micro-enterprises, young entrepreneurs, and "Made-in-Macao" enterprises.



Dr. Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China Ltd., makes remarks April 6 at The Venetian Macao, during a press conference for the F.I.T. programme and first invitational matching session of Sands China's Local Small, Medium and Micro Suppliers Support Programme.



Officiating guests participate in an inauguration ceremony during the press conference at The Venetian Macao.



Guests of honour and members of the media are led by representatives of local SMEs on a tour of Sands China's first invitational matching session for local SMEs, following the press conference.

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Fighters from the Turkistan Islamic Party hold their weapons, at an unknown place in Syria

Chinese jihadis' rise in Syria raises concerns at home

Bassem Mroue, Gerry Shih

MANY don't speak Arabic and their role in Syria is little known to the outside world, but the Chinese fighters of the Turkistan Islamic Party in Syria are organized, battled-hardened and have been instrumental in ground offensives against President Bashar Assad's forces in the country's northern regions.

Thousands of Chinese jihadis have come to Syria since the country's civil war began in March 2011 to fight against government forces and their allies. Some have joined the al-Qaida's branch in the country previously known as Nusra Front. Others paid allegiance to the Islamic State group and a smaller number joined factions such as the ultraconservative Ahrar al-Sham.

But the majority of Chinese jihadis are with the Turkistan Islamic Party in Syria, whose vast majority are Chinese Muslims, particularly those from the Turkic-speaking Uighur majority native to Xinjiang in China. Their growing role in Syria has resulted in increased cooperation be-

tween Syrian and Chinese intelligence agencies who fear those same jihadis could one day return home and cause trouble there.

The Turkistan Islamic Party is the other name for the East Turkistan Islamic Movement that considers China's Xinjiang to be East Turkistan.

Like most jihadi groups in Syria, their aim is to remove Assad's secular government from power and replace it with strict Islamic rule. Their participation in the war, which has left nearly 400,000 people dead, comes at a time when the Chinese government is one of Assad's strongest international backers. Along with Russia, China has used its veto power at the U.N. Security Council on several oc-

Unlike other rebel groups, TIP is a very secretive organization and they live among themselves

casions to prevent the imposition of international sanctions against its Arab ally.

Beijing has blamed violence back at home and against Chinese targets around the world on Islamic militants with foreign connections seeking an independent state in Xinjiang. The government says some of them are fleeing the country to join the Jihad, although critics say the Uighurs are discriminated against and economically marginalized in their homeland and are merely seeking to escape repressive rule by the majority Han Chinese.

Abu Dardaa al-Shami, a member of the now-defunct extremist Jund al-Aqsa group, said the TIP has the best "Inghemasiyoun," Arabic for "those who immerse themselves." The Inghemasiyoun have been used by extremist groups such as IS and al-Qaida's affiliate now known as Fatah al-Sham Front. Their role is to infiltrate their targets, unleash mayhem and fight to the death before a major ground offensive begins.

"They are the lions of ground offensives," said al-Shami, who fought on several occasions alongside TIP fighters

in northern Syria.

Xie Xiaoyuan, China's envoy to Syria, told reporters in November that the two countries have had normal military exchanges focused on humanitarian issues, although Chinese officials have repeatedly rejected the possibility of sending troops or weapons.

In the last year, however, Chinese and Syrian officials have begun holding regular, once-a-month high-level meetings to share intelligence on militant movements in Syria, according to a person familiar with the matter. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not allowed to reveal military secrets.

"These people not only fight alongside international terrorist forces in Syria, but also they will possibly return to China posing threat to China's national security," said Li Wei, terrorism expert at China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations and Director of the CICIR Institute of Security and Arms Control Studies.

Rami Abdurrahman who heads the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, said there are about 5,000 Chinese fighters

in Syria, most of them with the TIP fighters in northern Syria who along with their families make about 20,000. Li, the terrorism expert, said Abdurrahman's numbers are way too high, adding that he believes the number are about 300 Chinese fighters in Syria who brought with them about 700 family members.

"As the control of the passage along the borders between Turkey and Syria is being tightened, it is becoming more difficult for them to smuggle into Syria," Li said.

Syrian opposition activists and pro-government media outlets say dozens of TIP fighters have carried out suicide attacks against government forces and their allies and for the past two years have led battles mostly in the north of the country.

The suicide attackers include one known as Shahid Allah al-Turkistani. He was shown in a video released by TIP taken from a drone of an attack in which he blew himself up in the vehicle he was driving near Aleppo late last year, allegedly killing dozens of pro-government gunmen.

In 2015, members of the group spearheaded an attack on the northwestern province of Idlib and captured the strategic town of Jisr al-Shughour on the edge of Assad's stronghold of Latakia region. They reportedly damaged a church in the town and raised their black flag on top of it.

In late 2016, TIP was a main force to briefly break a government siege on the then rebel-held eastern parts of the northern city of Aleppo.

The role of the Chinese jihadis in Syria was a topic that Assad spoke about last month in an interview with Chinese PHOENIX TV, saying "they know your country more than the others, so they can do more harm in your country than others."

Unlike other rebel groups, TIP is a very secretive organization and they live among themselves, according to activists in northern Syria. They are active in parts of Idlib and in the strategic town of Jisr al-Shughour, as well as the Kurdish Mountains in the western province of Latakia.

Abdul-Hakim Ramadan, a doctor who was active in Idlib province, said one of his teams was trying to enter a northwestern village to vaccinate children when TIP fighters prevented them from entering, saying only Chinese can go into the area.

Ramadan said unlike other fighters who have come to Syria, the Chinese have not merged into local communities and the language has been a major barrier. **AP**



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China, Philippines argue over defense chief's island visit

CHINA has protested the visit by Manila's defense and military chiefs to a disputed island in the South China Sea, but the Philippine government maintained Saturday that it owns the territory where Filipino troops and villagers have lived for decades.

The public argument comes amid a thaw in once-frosty relations between the neighbors after Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte took office last June and moved to rekindle Manila's friendship with Beijing, which has been strained by the long-seething territorial disputes.

Philippine Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana and military chief of staff Gen. Eduardo Ano flew to the island, which Filipinos call Pag-asa, with dozens of journalists Friday to inspect an eroded airstrip. The Philippine government plans to reinforce and lengthen the airstrip and build a dock starting next month to accommodate ships with construction materials, Lorenzana said.

About 1.6 billion pesos (\$32 million) has been earmarked for the construction, including a fish



Military officers operate their drone amidst the presence of Chinese ships seen in the background during the visit of Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana

port, solar power, water desalination plant, improved housing for soldiers, and facilities for marine research and tourists.

Accompanied by military top brass, Lorenzana and Ano also met Filipino troops and villagers and took part in a flag-raising ceremony on Pag-asa, which is internationally known as Thitu and is called Zhongye Dao by China. It's the second-largest island in the South China Sea's hotly contested Spratlys archipelago.

In Beijing, Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang expressed China's displeasure over the high-profile Philippine visits to the island, saying China was "gravely concerned about and dissatisfied" by the island visits and

adding that China "has lodged representations with the Philippine side."

"We hope that the Philippine side could cherish the hard-won sound momentum of development the bilateral relations are experiencing, faithfully follow the consensus reached between the two leaderships, maintain general peace and stability in the South China Sea," he said.

The Philippine government replied by saying the island was part of an island municipality under its western province of Palawan, which faces the disputed waters.

"Our visits there are part of the government mandate to ensure

the safety, well being, livelihood and personal security of our citizens there," Department of Foreign Affairs spokesman Robespierre Bolivar said in a statement in Manila.

During the trip to Pag-asa, Chinese forces tried to drive away two Philippine air force planes that carried Lorenzana, Ano and others as they flew near a Chinese man-made island called Subi, just 25 kilometers away.

Lorenzana said their aircraft continued uninterrupted without any incident after Filipino pilots messaged back to the Chinese that they were flying over Philippine territory. The Chinese warned the Philippine aircraft they were entering the periphery of Chinese installations and told to avoid miscalculation.

The Chinese navy has similarly warned U.S. ships and aircraft to leave what Beijing claims as its territory, messages which the Americans also ignored.

China claims virtually the entire sea and has aggressively tried to fortify its foothold by transforming in recent years seven mostly submerged reefs into island outposts, including Subi. Three of the artificial islands were built with runways, along with buildings, towers, radars and more recently weapons systems, to the consternation of other Asian claimant governments. AP

Pence wraps up Aussie visit in Sydney


U.S. Vice President Mike Pence has wrapped up his visit to Australia with a boat cruise around Sydney Harbour and a tour of the iconic Sydney Opera House.

Pence joined his family and local officials from New South Wales aboard a yacht yesterday for a cruise near the Harbour Bridge. The vice president and his family then met with the governor of New South Wales, David Hurley, and his family at Sydney's Government House. The afternoon was capped by a tour of the city's famed opera house. Pence departs for Hawaii on Monday for meetings with military leaders and a tour of the USS Arizona at Pearl Harbor.

Malaysia reaches deal with Abu Dhabi

The battle over the repayment of 1MDB bonds may be coming to an end. Malaysia has reached an agreement to pay Abu Dhabi USD2.5 billion as partial debt settlement for embattled government fund 1Malaysia Development Bhd., according to a person familiar with the matter. Under a deal that's expected to be announced today on the London Stock Exchange, Malaysia will pay Abu Dhabi \$1.2 billion before the end of this year, said the person, who asked not to be identified as the information isn't yet public. Malaysia will also assume the coupon obligations for two dollar bonds issued by 1MDB and co-guaranteed by Middle Eastern sovereign wealth fund International Petroleum Investment Co., the person said.

AD



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Grant Govertsen co-founded Union Gaming in 2009 after spending 12 years on Wall Street predominantly in equity research covering the gaming sector.
Mr. Govertsen was responsible for establishing and developing the company's presence in Asia in 2011, and today remains the only gaming analyst based in Macau.

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Grant Peck, Bangkok

IT'S a whodunit worthy of a Dan Brown novel: a small bronze plaque commemorating Thailand's 1932 revolution is ripped out from a very public place by parties unknown and substituted by one praising the Chakri Dynasty, whose 10th king took the throne in December. A disinclination by the authorities to find those responsible adds another element of mystery.

The original plaque, installed in 1936, marked the spot where a group of progressive army officers and civil servants proclaimed the end of the absolute monarchy in order to steer the country toward democracy.

"At this place, at dawn on June 24, 1932, we the People's Party have given birth to the constitution for the progress of the nation," is a translation of the words engraved on the brass disc.

The ideal still hasn't taken hold. A royalist military government that took power in a coup three years ago still rules Thailand, and its newly enacted constitution aims to limit the power of elected officials and give it instead to institutions traditionally associated with the palace, including the courts, the civil service and the military.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha said last week that he has ordered an investigation into the plaque's disappearance, but warned against making a political issue of it.

He could understand why some people might be upset, he told reporters.

"But look at what we are doing today," he said. "Would it be better for us to look ahead at the future? Old subjects are just history."

The old plaque, about 30 centimeters in diameter and lying flush with the pavement, was embedded in Bangkok's Royal Plaza, a vast open area in the midst of government buildings and military installations.

It was so neglected as a landmark that its disappearance could only be estimated to have taken place between April 3 and 7.

As a symbol of democratic change, however, it was revered. For the same reason, it

Stolen plaque in Thailand a sign of antidemocratic sentiment



In this April 14, 2017, photo, a new bronze plaque praising the Chakri Dynasty, whose 10th king took the throne last December

was despised.

Debate on social media over the plaque's disappearance has evoked a strong streak of antidemocratic sentiment, decrying the 1932 revolution for imposing unsuitable Western-style democracy causing corruption and all sorts of social ills; slamming the 1932 coup makers as evil; and even suggesting that the plaque was the physical incarnation of a curse on the nation.

Royalist resistance began almost immediately after the revolution, and slowly clawed back influence for the palace. By the late 1950s an accommodation was reached with the military, which sought its prestige, and by the late 1970s the constitutional monarchy was the country's most powerful

institution, inviolable under the protection of the army.

This balance of power began to unravel in 2001, when billionaire populist Thaksin Shinawatra used his fortune to win an unprecedented electoral majority and become prime minister. Thaksin, accused of corruption, abuse of power and disrespect for the monarchy, was ousted by a military coup in 2006, setting off a sometimes violent struggle for power between his supporters and opponents, with the military strongly in the latter group.

Thaksin's opponents saw democracy as the problem, and some identified the 1932 revolution as the original sin.

"It seems to me that the junta has come to the view that

the problems associated with Thaksin and erasing his regime involves a more deep-rooted issue of dealing with the notion of people's sovereignty that was embedded in the 1932 proclamation and first draft constitution," said Kevin Hewison, a senior research fellow at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University. "In this sense, the removal of the plaque is a symbolic act of delayed counterrevolution," he said.

Although a fringe group of ultra-royalists openly vowed late last year to remove or destroy the plaque, there is plenty to fuel speculation of a higher-level conspiracy.

Photos purportedly taken at the plaza during the period the plaque went missing show sca-

ffolding at the spot, more suggestive of a public works project than a thief in the night. City officials asked to produce surveillance videos from the 11 cameras at the plaza say they were shut for maintenance during the same period. Police said they could not accept a criminal complaint of theft except from the plaque's owner, who was unknown. Pressed on the point, they threatened to sue an outspoken politician who suggested they weren't doing their duties.

Prime Minister Prayuth's suggestion that the case was a stone better left unturned was not idle advice. A government reform activist who sought to petition him on the matter was seized by soldiers and detained for 10 hours.

Police said they could not accept a criminal complaint of theft except from the plaque's owner, who was unknown

The plaque's removal also coincided with the signing of the new constitution by King Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkorn, who succeeded his late father, King Bhumibol Adulyadej, last year.

Ploenpote Atthakor, editorial page editor of the Bangkok Post, saw an upside to the affair.

"In the case of the ill-fated plaque, the silver lining is that its sudden disappearance has triggered an interest in this particular period of Thai history like never before," she wrote. "The people who removed it probably didn't expect that." AP

N.Korea detains US citizen; at least 3rd American being held

NORTH Korea recently detained a U.S. citizen, officials said yesterday, in the latest case of an American being held in the country.

The Swedish Embassy in Pyongyang said it was aware of a Korean-American citizen being detained recently, but could not com-

ment further. The embassy looks after consular affairs for the United States in North Korea because the two countries do not have diplomatic relations.

South Korea's Yonhap News Agency, citing unnamed sources, reported that a Korean-American man was arrested Friday

at Pyongyang's international airport while trying to leave North Korea. It said the man, in his late 50s and identified by his surname, Kim, has been involved in aid and relief programs to North Korea and was a former professor at the Yunnan University of Science and Technology in China.

South Korea's Unification Ministry and its intelligence agency both said they were unable to confirm the report.

At least two other Americans are currently detained in North Korea. Last year, Otto Warmbier, then a 21-year-old University of Virginia student from

suburban Cincinnati, was sentenced to 15 years of hard labor in prison after he confessed to trying to steal a propaganda banner. Kim Dong Chul, who was born in South Korea but is also believed to have U.S. citizenship, is serving a sentence of 10 years for espionage.

At least one other foreigner, a Canadian pastor, is also being detained in North Korea. Hyeon Soo Lim, a South Korean-born Canadian citizen in his 60s, was convicted and sentenced to life in prison in 2015 on charges of trying to use religion to destroy the North Korean system and helping U.S. and South Korean authorities lure and abduct North Korean citizens. AP

Macron, Le Pen on course for French runoff as Fillon concedes

NATIONAL Front leader Marine Le Pen and centrist Emmanuel Macron are on course to qualify for the second round of France's tightly fought presidential election after Republican candidate Francois Fillon conceded defeat. Fillon called on supporters to support centrist Macron against the far-right leader Le Pen.

The selection of Le Pen and Macron presents voters with the starkest possible choice between two diametrically opposed visions of the European Union's future and France's place in it.

With Le Pen wanting France to leave the EU, and Macron wanting even closer cooperation between the bloc's 28 member states, the projected outcome Sunday means the presidential runoff would have undertones of a referendum on France's EU membership.



Emmanuel Macron supporters react as the first partial official results and polling agencies projections are announced

It also represents a seismic shift in the French political landscape, with neither of the candidates from the mainstream left Socialists or the right-wing Republicans party — which have governed post-war France — making the runoff.

Pollsters projected that conservative former Prime Minister Francois Fillon was trailing the two leading candidates and that Socialist Benoit Hamon was far behind. Hamon quickly conceded defeat but declared "the left is not dead" and urged supporters to back Macron.

Macron supporters went wild



Supporters of far-right leader and candidate for the French presidential election, Marine Le Pen, celebrate

Voting took place amid heightened security in the first election under France's state of emergency, which has been in place since gun-and-bomb attacks in Paris in 2015.

Macron supporters went wild

at the announce of the polling agency projections, cheering, singing "La Marseillaise" anthem, waving French tricolor and European flags and shouting "Macron, president!"

Le Pen supporters were equally enthusiastic. "We will win!" Le Pen supporters chanted in her election day headquarters in Henin-Beaumont. They burst into a rendition of the French national anthem, and waved French flags and blue flags with "Marine President" inscribed on them.

Fillon called on supporters to support centrist Macron

Mathilde Jullien, 23, said she is convinced Macron will be able to win over Le Pen and become France's next president.

"He represents France's future, a future within Europe," she said. "He will win because he is able to unite people from the right and the left against the threat of the National Front and he proposes real solutions for France's economy."

MDT/Agencies

Venezuelans march in memory of those killed in unrest

Fabiola Sanchez, Caracas

THOUSANDS of Venezuelans dressed in white marched in the capital Saturday to pay homage to the at least 20 people killed in anti-government unrest in recent weeks.

Protests have been roiling Venezuela on an almost daily basis since the pro-government Supreme Court stripped congress of its last powers three weeks ago, a decision later reversed amid a storm of international rebuke.

But for the first since the protests began, demonstrators managed to cross from the wealthier eastern side of Caracas to the traditionally pro-government west without encountering resistance from state security.

Opposition lawmaker Freddy Guevara, relishing the feat, likened the protesters' arrival in the city's more humble neighborhoods as "crossing the Berlin wall."

Once assembled out-



side the headquarters of the Roman Catholic bishops' confederation, religious leaders led the crowd in a moment of silence and asked God for strength. Then a string of political leaders passed around a megaphone and from the back of a pick-up truck repeated their demand of recent days for immediate elections and freedom for dozens of jailed government opponents they consider political prisoners.

"Let it be heard: The dictatorship is in its

final days," said Maria Corina Machado, who was stripped of her seat in congress in 2014. The crowd responded with shouts of "Freedom! Freedom!"

Many Venezuelans blame the socialist policies of President Nicolas Maduro's administration for triple-digit inflation and widespread shortages of food and medical supplies. Among the demonstrators gathered in Caracas was Andres Ramirez, a 34-year-old agricultural engineer who marched with a

giant cross draped in the Venezuelan flag.

"I am here carrying this cross for the peace of all Venezuelans," he said beneath a punishing sun. "We ask God to protect us in these moments of crisis and suffering."

Elsewhere in the city, smaller pockets of violent protesters, some of them with their faces covered and throwing rocks, clashed with riot police, who responded with tear gas.

The opposition contends rogue armed pro-government groups have been fomenting the violence that has swirled around protests. Government leaders claim the violence is generated by right-wing opposition forces working with criminal gangs in an attempt to remove them from power.

"These are terrorist groups on a mission to sow hate and death," Diosdado Cabello, leader of the ruling socialist party, told supporters this week. **AP**

Author and conservationist Kuki Gallmann shot in Kenya

THE Italian-born author and conservationist Kuki Gallmann was shot at her Kenyan ranch and airlifted for treatment after herders invaded in search of pasture to save their animals from drought, officials said yesterday.

Gallmann, known for her bestselling book "I Dreamed of Africa," which became a movie by the same name starring Kim Basinger, was patrolling the ranch in Laikipia when she was shot in the stomach, local police chief Ezekiel Chepkowny said.

The 73-year-old Gallmann had been with rangers from the Kenya Wildlife Service, assessing damage done to her property Saturday by arsonists who burned down buildings at one of Laikipia Nature Conservancy's tourism lodges, said Laikipia Farmers Association chairman Martin Evans.

After the attack, the rangers transported her to a location where she could be airlifted to Nanyuki town, Evans said. British Army medics attended to her before she was airlifted to the capital, Nairobi, he said.

On Sunday night, Evans said Gallmann was in stable con-

dition after surgery but had serious injuries. He cited a family member.

Richard Constant, the association's deputy chairman, said suspicion falls on herders from the Pokot community who have invaded Gallmann's ranch several times. Lodges belonging to Gallmann were burned by the herders last month.

This East African nation is facing a drought that has affected half the country and has been declared a national disaster.

Herders, whose livelihoods depend on their cattle, and large-scale farmers in parts of Kenya's Rift Valley have been desperately waiting for seasonal rains that were to start last month to ease the drought and conflicts over grazing land in which more than 30 people have died.

Kenya's military and police have been working to disarm and drive the hundreds of herders and their animals out of ranches they've invaded, but their actions appear to have escalated the violence. When the military and police drive herders from one ranch they move into another, the farmers' association said. **AP**

what's ON



MACAO ARTIST SOCIETY YOUTH COMMITTEE MEMBER'S EXHIBITION 2017

TIME: 11am-10pm

UNTIL: June 25, 2107

VENUE: Lakeside Gallery - S1 Room, Anim' Arte Nam Van

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6866

FLOWING HUES - PAINTING EXHIBITION BY PAN JIN LING AND PAN JIN XIA

TIME: 9am-7pm (Open on public holidays)

UNTIL: May 7, 2017

VENUE: Chun Chou Tong Pavilion, Lou Lim Ioc Garden, No. 10, Est. de Adolfo Loureiro

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4000

MONKEY KING

TIME: 8pm daily (No performances on Thursdays)

VENUE: Sands Cotai Theatre

ADMISSION: MOP420, MOP520, MOP780, MOP1080, MOP1580

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2882 8818

SEARCH FOR: OUR SPIRITUAL HOME II - INSTALLATION BY YEN-HUA LEE

TIME: 8pm daily

TIME: 12pm-7pm (Closed on Tuesdays)

UNTIL: May 7, 2017

VENUE: Intersection of Av. do Coronel Mesquita and Av. do Almirante Lacerda

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2853 0026

FORMER HOME OF REVOLUTIONARY LEADER YE TING

TIME: 10am-6pm daily (Except Wednesdays, open on public holidays)

VENUE: 76, Rua Almirante Costa Cabral

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8399 6699

MACAU GRAND PRIX MUSEUM & WINE MUSEUM

TIME: 10am-8pm daily (Except Tuesdays)

VENUE: Rua Luis Gonzaga Gomes, 431, basement (Tourism Activities Centre-CAT)

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8798 4108 / 2833 3000

Offbeat

STARBUCKS BARISTA HAS MELTDOWN OVER UNICORN FRAPPUCCINO

A Starbucks barista has taken to social media hoping to make orders for the coffee chain's much buzzed about Unicorn Frappuccino disappear.

Starbucks' entry into the unicorn food craze was released Wednesday and its popularity was too much for 19-year-old Colorado barista Braden Burson. He posted a video (now-deleted) on Twitter after his shift complaining that it was difficult to keep up with orders for the drink and he's "never been so stressed out" in his life.

The Unicorn Frappuccino is a sweet and sour pink and blue cream swirl topped with what Starbucks calls "fairy powder." Burson says in the video that a day of making the treat left him with sticky hands and residue from the drink stuck to his clothes and in his hair.

Burson tells The Associated Press that he didn't think his rant would get this much publicity and he didn't intend to "downgrade" the drink.

"It's a great drink. But it is difficult to make when there are like 20 fraps all at once both front and drive thru," he wrote in a Facebook message.

Starbucks said in a statement Thursday that the popular reception of the drink has "exceeded everyone's expectations." It added that it is reaching out to Burson "to talk about his experience and how to make it better."



TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	RTPi Live
16:10	Documentary Serie
17:10	Revenge S1
17:50	Now Generation (Repeated)
18:40	Non-Daily Portuguese News (Repeated)
19:40	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Sport
22:10	Now Generation
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Champions League Magazine
00:05	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:40	RTPi Live

cinema



CINETEATRO

24 APR



THE BOSS BABY

ROOM 1

(2D) 2:30, 4:30, 7:30pm

(3D) 9:30pm

Director: Tom McGrath

Starring: Alec Baldwin, Steve Buscemi, Jimmy Kimmel

Language: Cantonese (English)

Duration: 97min



SHOCK WAVE

ROOM 2

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

Director: Herman Yau

Starring: Andy Lau, Jiang Wu, Philip Keung, Ron Ng

Language: Cantonese (Chinese)

Duration: 119min

FAST & FURIOUS 8

ROOM 2

(2D) 2:15, 4:45, 9:45pm

(3D) 7:15pm

Director: F. Gary Gray

Starring: Vin Diesel, Jason Statham, Dwayne Johnson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 136min

MACAU TOWER

13 APR - 26 APR



FAST & FURIOUS 8

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

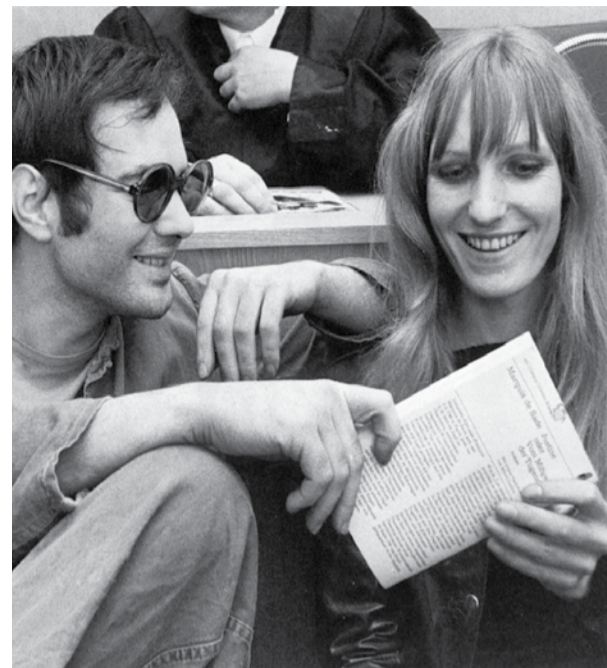
Director: F. Gary Gray

Starring: Vin Diesel, Jason Statham, Dwayne Johnson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 136min

this day in history



1975 BAADER-MEINHOF BLOW UP EMBASSY

A tense stand-off at the West German embassy in Stockholm has ended in violence, with the death of at least three people.

Five Baader-Meinhof guerrillas had been holding 11 people hostage, including the German ambassador to Sweden, for almost 12 hours. Shortly before midnight, a cache of dynamite detonated, setting the building on fire. Staff in the embassy could be seen at the windows, calling for help.

Journalist Roger Schoter described the scene as one of "turmoil and confusion". "From what we can see the entire first floor of the embassy is ablaze," he said. "Flames are shooting out of the windows."

The extent of the injuries suffered by those inside the embassy is still not clear, although at least one of the guerrillas is believed to have died.

The group are thought to have shot dead two of the hostages, both attachés at the embassy, during the 11-hour siege.

Military attaché Colonel Andreas von Mirbach died soon after the embassy was seized. The economics attaché, Heinz Hallagaart, was also shot shortly before the blaze which destroyed the four-storey building.

The guerrilla group were demanding the release of the 26 Baader-Meinhof group members currently in prison in Germany.

Among them are four of the founders of the group: Gudrun Ensslin, Andreas Baader, Ulrike Meinhof and Jan-Karl Raspe, due to go on trial in Stuttgart next month.

The German government were anxious to avoid a second humiliation after being forced to release five Baader-Meinhof prisoners in exchange for the kidnapped opposition leader Peter Lorenz two months ago, and refused the demands point-blank.

The Swedish justice minister, Lennart Gerjer, was given the task of breaking the news to those inside the embassy. "They could not believe this," he said. "We told them the only realistic thing they could do was to leave the country, and the Swedish government was prepared to help them do this on condition they released their hostages."

Immediately after the explosion, police said most of the guerrillas, gave up without a fight. At least one is said to be critically injured.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Four of the five Baader-Meinhof members were immediately deported back to West Germany. The fifth was too badly injured to be moved, and later died in hospital.

The German ambassador and the remaining nine hostages escaped from the embassy, most with only light injuries.

The trial of the 26 Baader-Meinhof prisoners began in 1976 and lasted almost two years in all, the longest and most expensive trial in West German history.

Three of the four main defendants were sentenced to life imprisonment. The fourth, Ulrike Meinhof, committed suicide in prison during the trial. The other three hardliners also committed suicide in 1977, bringing to an end the "German Autumn", in which the country was gripped by a series of terrorist attacks. The Baader-Meinhof gang continued to be active until the early 1990s, when it was finally disbanded.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 You might not realize it at first, but whenever you're in a group of people today, laughing and having a good time, you are actually creating something - energy, strong support, and friendship.

Taurus April 20-May 20 Some weird behavior that has been going on in your social circle right now might be meant to get a rise out of you - and you simply can't ignore it anymore. Give it some of your attention today.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 New people can add vitality and energy to your life, but they can also distract you from other important things. There are many work or school issues that need your full attention right now.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Just as one bad apple can spoil the whole barrel, one bad idea (if left unchecked) can ruin a healthy team dynamic. So watch out for unusual, untested theories today.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 You can be proud of being a bit wiser than certain people - but if you get too cocky about it, you're sure to end up making a fool of yourself, too! Humility makes wise people like you seem even wiser.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 It's time to stop waiting for other people to make things happen! Reorganize your day - do your morning routine in the afternoon for a while, and see how that feels.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Someone you know very well could be working too hard at having a good time. This person wants to be the life of the party but is perhaps losing sight of what 'fun' really means.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Change affects different people in different ways. Expect your reaction to a major transition to be unlike anyone else's. You have always been open to new experiences.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 you definitely can't make things personal. If a debate gets too heated today, you should be prepared to agree to disagree, and just walk away before things go too far.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Today, try to lay the foundation for a few important things you hope to do someday - whether that means requesting vacation time from work, upping the ante on your retirement savings.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 In all your activities, your enthusiasm will bubble up from deep inside you without any effort on your part - and this enthusiasm will be contagious. Without realizing it, you'll show people options they've never considered before.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 If you have a somewhat busy day today, make an effort to get things done as soon as you can -- you will need some free time in the afternoon so you can daydream about your future.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

4 2 | | 8 | | | | | |
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Easy+

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Medium

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| | | 8 | | 2 | | | | |
| | 8 4 | 5 | | 6 | | | | |
7 | | 1 | | 5 | | | | |
| 4 5 | 6 9 | | | | | | |
1 | | | 3 | 7 | | | | | |
4 | | 2 | 9 6 | | | | | |
| | 1 | | 8 | | | | | | |
| | 7 | | | | | | | 2 3

Hard

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| | | 6 | 8 | | | | | | |
6 | | | 3 | 4 | | | | | | |
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| | | 1 | 9 | | | | | | |
7 | 2 | | | | | | | | |

WEATHER

MIN MAX CONDITION

CHINA

Table with 4 columns: City, Min, Max, Condition. Includes cities like Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, etc.

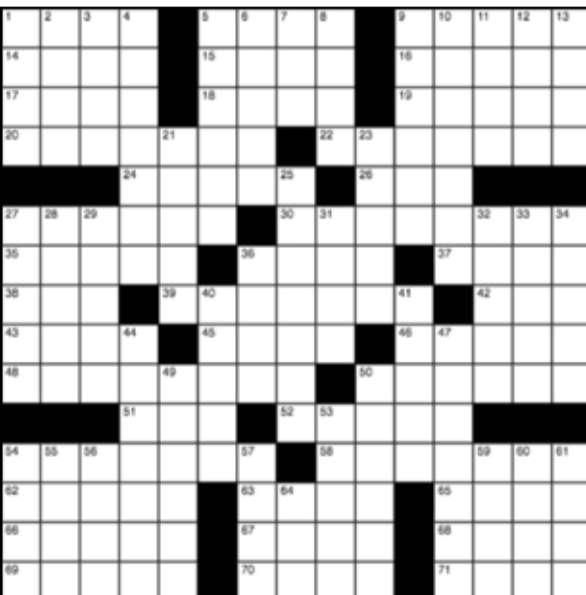
WORLD

Table with 4 columns: City, Min, Max, Condition. Includes cities like Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, etc.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Doctrines; 5- Rational; 9- Stagnant; 14- Fall birthstone; 15- Winter Palace ruler; 16- Caught congers; 17- State bird of Hawaii; 18- Env. notation; 19- Expressed disapproval; 20- Cheat; 22- Rapturous delight; 24- Tractor pioneer John; 26- ___ loss for words; 27- Become visible; 30- Advocate of citizen sovereignty; 35- Bit of wisdom; 36- Stringed instrument; 37- Ivy League school; 38- Beam; 39- Farm vehicle; 42- Coal container; 43- Prefix with plasm; 45- Jacob's brother; 46- Surround snugly; 48- Least lengthy; 50- Ship apartments; 51- Paris's Pont ___ Arts; 52- Name on a bomber; 54- Medieval steel helmet; 58- Abscess on the gum; 62- Solo; 63- Dutch name of The Hague; 65- Actress Heche; 66- Herring type; 67- "Tosca" tune; 68- Asta's mistress; 69- Closes; 70- Are you ___ out?; 71- "___ Tu" ('70s hit);

DOWN: 1- Charged particles; 2- Gush forth; 3- The ___ Love; 4- Thin; 5- Not as fresh; 6- Fall bloomer; 7- Writer Hentoff; 8- Sea eagle; 9- Begins; 10- Having a valid will; 11- ___-Seltzer; 12- Dregs; 13-Swirl; 21- Distributed cards; 23- Walk-on role; 25- Send to school; 27- ___-ski; 28- Fuzzy fruit; 29- Check words; 31- Caesar's accusation; 32- Temple leader; 33- Extraterrestrial; 34- Looks after; 36- Glasgow gal; 40- Pee Wee of the Dodgers; 41- Kingdom; 44- In sequence; 47- Capital of Swaziland; 49- Beliefs; 50- Puma; 53- Marsh of mystery; 54- Low in pitch; 55- Mont Blanc, par exemple; 56- Marsh bird; 57- Bangkok tongue; 59- ___ about; 60- About, in memos; 61- Grazing sites; 64- Prince Valiant's son;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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The Venetian hosts China Music Awards



Christine Fan



Jackie Chan



Jintaka



Dr. Wilfred Wong



Da Zhang Wei



Leo Ku (left) and Joey Yung



Twins



Rita Ora



Jane Zhang

THE 21ST Channel [V] China Music Awards and Asian Influential Power Grand Ceremony was held at The Venetian Macao for the sixth consecutive year.

The red carpet event featured celebrity guests from the entertainment industry, followed by the awards presentation ceremony in the Cotai Arena on Thursday night.

Celebrities such as Jackie Chan, Joey Yung, Hacken Lee, Leo Ku, Twins, Jane Zhang, Christine Fan, Jeff Chang and Da Zhang Wei were welcomed by Wilfred Wong of Sands China Ltd.

British star Rita Ora and Japanese boy band JINTAKA also attended.

A total of 45 awards were presented at the star-studded ceremony, including 'Most Popular Male Singer (HK & Taiwan)', 'Most Popular Female Singer (HK & Taiwan)', 'Most Popular Male Singer (Mainland China)', 'Most Popular Female Singer (Mainland China)', 'Global Chinese Film Song Extraordinary Contributions Award', 'Asian Most Popular International Artist' and 'Asian Most Popular Japanese Group', among others. The annual China Music Awards was originally launched in 1994, and gathers the nation's top talent from the music industry in host cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu, Hong Kong, Macau and Taipei.

It is the only Chinese music awards show telecast in China and around the world.

The Venetian Macao has co-organized the China Music Awards with Star Group Ltd. China since 2012.

TENNIS

Nadal beats Ramos-Vinolas to win 10th Monte Carlo Masters

Jerome Pugmire, Monaco

DEFENDING champion Rafael Nadal easily beat Albert Ramos-Vinolas 6-1, 6-3 in an all-Spanish final yesterday to win the Monte Carlo Masters for the 10th time and clinch the 70th title of his career.

It was Nadal's first title of the season, having lost his previous three finals — two of those to Roger Federer.

Nadal faced little opposition on his way to becoming the first player to win 10 tournaments at the same venue in the Open era, and the first to reach 50 on clay. He was previously level on clay titles with Argentine Guillermo Vilas.

"When I came here for the first time (in 2003) I reached the third round after coming through the qualifiers," Nadal said. "Ten titles is something I never dreamed of. See you next year." The only final the 30-year-old Nadal has lost at Monte Carlo was to Novak Djokovic in 2013.

Ramos-Vinolas never looked like posing a threat. Appearing in his first Masters final, the 15th-seeded Ramos-Vinolas saved three break points in his first service game and was 0-40 down in his next. Nadal served out the set in 30 minutes with an ace.

Nadal's 29th Masters title moves him one behind Djokovic's



AP PHOTO

record. He will also have his sights set on a 10th title in Barcelona next week — Nadal's previous career title was there, almost one year ago.

Since then, Federer has beaten him in finals at the Australian Open and the Miami Masters, either side of a win for big-serving American Sam Querrey at Acapulco, Mexico. Federer also beat Nadal in the fourth round at Indian Wells, but the 18-time Grand Slam champion skipped Monte Carlo this year.

Ramos-Vinolas had lost his

two previous matches to Nadal in straight sets — both in Barcelona. He competed better in the third set, holding to love in the seventh game to provoke sympathetic applause, but a second career title never looked realistic.

Ramos-Vinolas saved two match points after matching Nadal's aggression, but a poor unforced error gave Nadal a third match point and Ramos-Vinolas double-faulted to lose in 1 hour, 16 minutes of a one-sided contest.

Nadal's celebrations were somewhat muted, and he gave Ra-

mos-Vinolas a sympathetic pat on the back. Nadal tilted his head back and put both hands on his head as his achievement began to sink in, while his opponent buried his head into a towel. He never really stood a chance against the player widely considered the greatest ever on clay.

Nadal's 70 titles are three better than Djokovic, who is a year younger. Nadal is fifth on the all-time list, but seven behind John McEnroe. Further ahead, the 35-year-old Federer has 91; Ivan Lendl 94 and Jimmy Connors is

a long way away with 109.

Nadal watched smiling as each of his Monte Carlo trophy presentations over the years was played on the big screen. The first photo, of him raising the trophy in 2005 as a distinctly shy 18-year-old who was taking tennis by storm, made Nadal laugh. There was nothing amusing for his opponents.

He won every year after that — including the next three finals against Federer, who could never crack him on clay. Djokovic did, in the 2013 final. Stan Wawrinka won in 2014 and Djokovic again in 2015, comfortably beating Nadal in the semis.

■ Nadal's 70 titles are three better than Djokovic, who is a year younger

Nadal looked emotional when the Spanish national anthem was played.

His first appearance in Monte Carlo was as a 16-year-old in 2003, when he beat Slovak Karol Kucera in the first round. That win was impressive enough, but he then stunned the tennis world by knocking out defending French Open champion Albert Costa in a second-round match that finished as night was falling.

It was the start of Nadal's stellar career on clay.

He will be among the favorites at the French Open this year, which was the last of his 14 Grand Slam wins in 2014.

Nadal will be hunting for a 10th title at Roland Garros, too. **AP**

ATHLETICS

Mary Keitany breaks a marathon record with 3rd London win

Rob Harris, London

KENYAN runner Mary Keitany broke Paula Radcliffe's women-only marathon world record on yesterday with a third victory in London, while Daniel Wanjiru won the men's race for the first time.

The 35-year-old Keitany completed the 42.2-kilometer course in 2 hours, 17 minutes and 1 second to shave 41 seconds off Radcliffe's 12-year-old mark.

The retired British athlete still remains a world-record holder. Radcliffe fought six years ago with the IAAF to ensure her 2003 marathon time of 2 hours,

15 minutes, 25 seconds — with two male pacemakers — was still recognized as a record rather than just a world-best.

Keitany was on track to break that outright world record halfway through Sunday's race in the British capital in sunny conditions, but the pace eased up. She still ran to victory to seize the women-only record. Tirunesh Dibaba was 55 seconds behind Keitany while fellow Ethiopian, Aselefech Mergia, was third.

"It was very fast pace and I tried to follow it," Keitany said. "I think the course has changed a little bit and it felt better than before. The

weather was really good this year. Last year it was very, very cold. My body felt fit enough and I have trained well and I tried to push all the time. I'm very happy with the finish time. Parts of the course are hilly but I train in a very similar area in Kenya so it was not too different for me."

The women's marathon was missing its defending champion. Keitany's compatriot, Jemima Sumgong, tested positive for the blood booster EPO in a surprise out-of-competition doping test in Kenya in February.

The men's race had a royal start, with Prince William, wife Kate and

brother Harry pressing a button to sound the klaxon. The 24-year-old Wanjiru won his first major marathon in 2 hours, 5 minutes, 48 seconds. That was nine seconds faster than Kenenisa Bekele of Ethiopia, while Bedan Karoki was third.

"In the beginning the race was very fast and we were inside world record pace. It was the pace I was preparing for," Wanjiru told the BBC. "We tried to maintain that pace for half of the race. From there it was becoming tougher and tougher. The sun was coming and the day was beautiful, but we don't need too much sun!"



AP PHOTO

Kenya's Mary Keitany crosses the finish line to win the London Marathon

There was a British winner in the wheelchair race, with David Weir storming to his seventh victory in the event to end four years of frustration since his last success. The 37-year-old Weir retired from track competition last year after the six-time Paralympic champion failed to win a medal at the Rio de Janeiro Games.

"It's the first time I've felt comfortable in years," Weir said. "It's been a tou-

gh four months personally. I've had a lot of background problems in my personal life. It's been tough, especially after Rio. I needed to focus and sort out my head. I knew I had it in the last corner. All I was thinking was 'win, win, win.'"

In the women's wheelchair winner, Manuela Schar of Switzerland followed up her Boston win on Monday with success in London. **AP**

opinion

Rear Window
Severo Portela



FESTIVAL OF IDEAS

Trying to copy, rather borrow or emulate, from scenario-building methods in order to get a light reading on the immediate future in the Macau Special Administrative Region, we foresee an overload coming to the already overworked courts. Extra-judicial traffic will be banked-up from two different sources of possible litigation: Legislative Assembly election guidelines and the invitation to craft ideas to solve the Pearl Horizon paradox.

In short, these are two examples of unwelcome (bad) creativity that contributes to blemishing the prestige and profile of the courts, adding up to a perception of erosion of the Macau legal system - probably undeserved. It's nigh impossible to be extensive or comprehensive in discussions on these matters; actually this is just one column, merely attempting to address some areas of public interest.

Beginning with the (new) regulations framing this coming September elections of the Legislative Assembly...we would say that the particular guidelines regarding both the message and the messengers (media, candidates, associations, staff) may have only one virtuous consequence: courts may have the chance to pass a sentence(s) that forces the Electoral Affairs Commission to at least blush and regret its bill of wrong doings!

From the "faux pas" of the disqualification rules to the mandatory report on events, it looks like, apparently, as if, the Election Affairs Commission (CAEAL) went all out to demonstrate that all electoral/political propaganda is impossible, since in one way or another all information is biased and misleading. Some call this politics!

Given such a regulatory environment - a case study in lack of objective criteria - Jason Chao's monitoring project comes at the right time to provide a channel for residents to give and take information and submit complaints related to the elections to be held this September. The former leader of pro-democracy New Macau Association is about to compile a record of complaints and monitor authorities such as the CAEAL, because he believes the "Project Just Macau" to be an alternative to the official channels with their "lack of transparency."

The other source of the potential wave of litigation has its roots in the Polytex/Pearl Horizon 'situation'... our choice of wording, a euphemism that encompasses the right to repossess land according to the Land Law, as the government did, and the rights of apartment (presale) buyers in the Pearl Horizon development to that land no longer belonging to... Polytex.

The imbroglia is/was so evident that soon legislators, meaning the legislator Gabriel Tong, dared to propose that the only way out of the Pearl Horizon fiasco was in the form of an amendment of the Land Law. Tong found himself alone as soon as the unavoidable truth that the new land law was not to be touched hit the Legislative Assembly floor.

Later on, aware of the draft amendment to the Land Law, a majority of AL legislators - 19 - wrote to the Chief Executive claiming to have solutions to help square the circle, that is to say "ideas" to accommodate the unfortunate buyers' alleged rights, thus providing social stability, without amending the law. Not much came out of that brain-storming session, but judging from the one solution already disclosed... the sky is limited by the imagination. Meanwhile the court rejected Polytex's claims, arguing precisely that the Macau Government acted according to the Land Law.

Finally, we can only conclude that both the regulatory framework to the AL elections and the solutions based upon compliance with the law, general interests and something called acceptance of society to overcome the Land Law, may not only pose a challenge to the judicial independence and the rule of law, but definitely will divert the burden of such bad legislative choices to the courts.

THE BUZZ DUTERTE: 'GIVE ME VINEGAR, AND SALT, I'LL EAT HIS LIVER'

The Philippine president has warned that he can be 50 times more brutal than Muslim extremists, saying he'd even eat them if they're captured alive by troops.

President Rodrigo Duterte has repeatedly threatened drug suspects with death, but he raised his shock rhetoric to a new level yesterday when he said in a speech during the opening of a national sports

tournament what he could do to terrorists who have staged beheadings and other gruesome attacks.

Duterte ordered troops to kill fleeing Muslim militants behind a foiled attack in the central resort province of Bohol, calling the extremists "animals." He said he can "go down what you can 50 times over ... just give me vinegar and salt, I'll eat his liver."

Clinton makes surprise appearance at Tribeca Fest

Jocelyn Noveck, New York

THE premiere of a virtual reality short by Oscar-winning director Kathryn Bigelow was already a high-profile event at the Tribeca Film Festival on Saturday night. And then Hillary Clinton walked onstage.

Clinton was an unannounced panelist, there to discuss the scourge of elephant poaching - the subject of Bigelow's eight-minute film "The Protectors: Walk in the Rangers' Shoes," about park rangers trying to save elephants in Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

She spoke about her work to save elephants from poachers slaughtering them for their ivory tusks, both as secretary of state in the Obama administration, and later with her family foundation, the Clinton Global Initiative.

"We've got to bust this market so it can't come back," she said of the illegal ivory market.

Before Clinton and the three other panelists were interviewed by Bigelow, the audience donned virtual reality headsets at their seats and experienced - in 360 degrees - what it's like to be one of the 200 rangers fighting well-armed poachers in the park the size of Delaware. The film gives the viewer both the experience of being in the grass and searching for poachers, and up in the air looking down. A wrenching scene shows the rangers arriving at the carcass of a slaughtered elephant.

"I realized that there was



Former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (second from right)

an intersection between poaching and terrorism, which led me to this project," Bigelow said. The director of "The Hurt Locker" and "Zero Dark Thirty" directed the short along with Imraan Ismail, a virtual-reality veteran, who also was on Saturday's panel. "They're outmanned and outgunned and they're putting themselves in the line of fire," Ismail said of the rangers.

Clinton told the audience that she first became focused on what she called "the horrific slaughter of elephants" when she was secretary of state.

"It became clear to everyone that this was not just a terrible crisis when it came to the elephant population, it was a trade, a trafficking that was funding a lot of bad folks, a lot of bad actors," she said. "It was being used to take ivory and sell it in order to buy more weapons, and support the kind of terroristic activity that these and other groups were engaged in."

Clinton noted that while China was the biggest market for illegal ivory, the United States was the second-biggest. "So China is going to be a key player but we are, too," she

said. The former Democratic presidential candidate noted that Saturday was Earth Day, "and we are marching on behalf of science," referring to marches throughout the U.S. on Saturday.

"And part of science is understanding the intricate relationships that we share with all those on this planet and particularly large mammals like elephants, who have a role to play both in reality and in our imaginations," she said.

Clinton told Bigelow that her virtual reality film was "so critical, because it is a portal - a portal that people can go into and think about, 'Here we are in New York, what can I do?' And there is a lot that can be done - stop the killing, stop the trafficking, and stop the demand."

The Tribeca appearance was one of a series Clinton has made lately in New York, including turning up at several Broadway shows, speaking at a recent women's conference, and accepting an award this week from an LGBT community group. Audiences have greeted her with loud cheers and ovations, as they did on Saturday night. AP

THE DECISIVE MOMENT



A French woman pushes a baby buggy in front of posters of presidential election candidates as she leaves after casting her vote for yesterday's first-round presidential election at a polling station at the consulate general of France in Hong Kong.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	35-55 Good
High Density Residential Area	40-60 Good
Ambient	40-60 Good

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS

THAILAND A stolen plaque commemorating Thailand's 1932 revolution is a sign that democracy still has not taken hold in the country, and a disinclination by the authorities to find those responsible adds another element of mystery. More on p14

SYRIA Israeli airstrikes killed an unknown number of Syrian soldiers at a weapons depot in rural Quneitra province. Yesterday's strike came after several projectiles from Syria hit the Israeli-controlled Golan Heights on Friday.



FINLAND's economic stewards, used to presenting bad news, are getting positively giddy. The self-described sick-man of Europe is now showing signs of real progress after years of tough budget cuts and tax increases. That may allow the country to avoid further austerity, its finance minister, Petteri Orpo, said in an interview Helsinki



SPAIN A large ferry slammed bow-first into a breakwater in the Canary Islands, injuring 13 passengers, Spanish authorities said Saturday. Manolo Vidal, a spokesman for Naviera Armas, the company that owns the ferry, said a "loss of electrical power" caused the accident Friday night as the boat was leaving the port of Puerta de la Luz on the island of Gran Canaria.

KENYA The Italian-born author and conservationist Kuki Gallmann was shot at her Kenyan ranch and airlifted for treatment after herders invaded in search of pasture to save their animals from drought, officials said yesterday. Gallmann, known for her bestselling book "I Dreamed of Africa," which became a movie by the same name starring Kim Basinger, was patrolling the ranch in Laikipia when she was shot in the stomach. More on p15