



PUBLIC HOUSING DEBATE AHEAD
A proposal for a debate to discuss changes in the requirements to access public housing was approved

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BUS BAN CLOSE TO RUINS OF ST. PAUL'S

The government is considering a permanent ban on tour buses in the vicinity of the Ruins of St. Paul's

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NEW SOUTH KOREAN PRESIDENT CALLS XI

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS



CHINA's plan to build a "new Silk Road" of ports, railways and roads to expand trade across Asia and Africa is stirring unease among other governments over its strategic intentions. They welcome the investment but worry Beijing also is trying to expand its political influence and undermine theirs.
More on p11

CHINA A moderate, shallow earthquake killed eight people and injured more than 20 others in remote Xinjiang region. Most houses in the area are wood and mudbrick or rock and more than 180 collapsed.



NORTH KOREA will seek the extradition of anyone involved in what it says was a CIA-backed plot to kill leader Kim Jung Un last month with a biochemical poison.
More on p12



MYANMAR Uber is launching its private ride-hailing service in Yangon to tap into one of the world's youngest and fastest-growing online markets. The launch follows Singapore-based GrabTaxi's debut, which began a trial run about six weeks ago. More on p13

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CLOSING ARGUMENTS

Prosecutors lay out list of Ho's 'schemes'

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AHEAD OF XI'S EXPECTED VISIT

China preps HK stock market support before Handover Day

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Extra
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weekend Guide
INSIDE

ON THE LAWMAKERS' AGENDA

NEW RULES ON HELMETS Melinda Chan, Song Pek Kei and Chan Iek Lap addressed the plenary before the agenda to criticize the newly implemented rule that threatens to fine residents who do not possess a sticker on the back of their helmets with the homologation information. The lawmakers said that the policy "is hard for residents to abide by" and is likely to cause harm to the population.

BETTER GOVERNMENT After this week's visit by the chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, Zhang Dejiang, lawmaker Si Ka Lon said that Zhang remarked on the need of public administration improvement. According to Si, the central government demands more action from Macau government, directing that the government "cannot disregard the problems of daily life of the population or treat them as minor." He recalled problems such as the old buildings and leaking water infiltration systems on the buildings. Sio noted, "to elevate the government capability it is urgent to adopt an innovative mentality." This would require approaching existing problems with more creativity and innovation and abandoning "the old ways of doing things."

HOUSING SPECULATION Ho Ion Sang remarked on the recently approved measures to deter housing sector speculation. Such measures result in curbs to the ratio ceilings for housing loans for non-residents and residents acquiring a second house or more. Ho said that the government should go deeper on the problem and implement measures to control the prices based on "possession instead of transaction," noting also that exemption of property tax as well as the subsidies for the electricity and water bills should apply only for one house per resident. The lawmaker urged the government to raise the costs of owning several houses, not only when acquiring them. Another measure to implement would be to "raise the transparency on the information of real estate market."

"TWO KNIFES" According to Au Kam San, the CE has not been using well its "two knives," namely the Commission of Audit (CA) and the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC). He gave as example the recently reported case of the staff hiring by the Cultural Affairs Bureau. The lawmaker also noted that reports requested by the government secretaries when some problem arises are only delivered "after a long period of time when the problems have already dissipated and then nothing is really done," not resulting in any effectiveness. Au called on the CE to take action.

AL PLENARY

Proposal to debate public housing changes approved

Renato Marques

A proposal for a debate with the government to discuss the immediate commencement of tenders for public housing and the implementation of a permanent application mechanism was passed yesterday at the Legislative Assembly (AL).

The proposal gathered 17 votes in favor, seven against and two abstentions on the specialty and 18 in favor, seven against and one abstention at the first reading. The proposal was brought to the plenary for deliberation by lawmaker Ella Lei, who explained that "the real estate market is too expensive and the residents long for a public house to have a stable home," she said.

Lei said that the government could not claim that there were no land plots or houses available since the last time a similar tender opened was back in 2013.

It was also mentioned that people who are already on the list to receive a house are entitled to a housing subsidy from the government, situation that can ease the difficult situation on such families.

Lei concluded the presentation by expressing her hopes that her colleagues would support her proposal for a debate.

The first person to respond affirmatively was lawmaker Melinda Chan who said, "I think the proposal can be done," adding, "the government needs to review its housing policy. Only with a permanent mechanism (that should be extended to the economic housing too) can the government have a clear picture of the population's real needs and to plan accordingly."

Chan concluded by saying, "the current regime of lucky draw is like a casino bet in that it is dependent only on luck." She also remarked that people with special needs should have a priority access to public housing.



Kwan Tsui Hang and Ella Lei (right)

Lawmaker Au Kam San was also in favor of the debate.

"I think we have enough conditions to make this tender now and so this debate makes sense at this time," he said, although he also noted that social and economic housing are not the same thing and that this distinction should be kept. The vice presidents of the AL, Lam Heong Sang, Kwang Tsui Hang, Leong Veng Chai, Ng Kuok Cheong, Zheng Anting and Ho Ion Sang also expressed their support.

Lam noted that the government "during the policy address had already said it would work towards establishing a permanent mechanism for public housing," remarking that lawmakers have the duty to suggest policies and solutions to the government.

Lawmaker Ng said, "the government has to transfer resources to support people and I hope during the debate we can convince them to

do so." Ng further remarked that it was precisely "because we have different opinions that we should hold a debate." This sentiment was also shared by Kwan.

The real estate market is too expensive and the residents long for a public house to have a stable home.

ELLA LEI

On his part, lawmaker Zheng went further, saying that debate has the ability to "push the government and its departments to work faster," adding that "without

people waiting in line there is no pressure to conclude the projects."

Lawmakers Tsui Wai Kwan and Chan Chak Mo had a contrary view. Tsui noted that "it is a realistic measure of the government to refrain from opening a tender until it has housing units to deliver, otherwise the line will be long and lengthy."

Chan Chak Mo emphasized the need to plan everything first before opening any tender.

"We can't start to evaluate candidates without first having houses, because changes might occur in the conditions [to access the units] before anything is finalized," he said expressing the opinion that lawmakers should allow the government to set up new requirements to access public housing first.

At the end of the session, the president of the AL, Ho Iat Seng, noted that the date for the debate would be confirmed shortly.

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Julie Zhu

COURT

THE trial of the city's former top prosecutor Ho Chio Meng has reached its last stage, with closing submissions being made. The prosecution has priority in delivering the closing speech.

The two prosecutors, Chan Tsz King and Kuok U Man, began the speech with a statement that they were "gloomy in proceeding with the closing submission" because the defendant, Ho, was formerly the highest official of the Prosecution Office (MP).

The prosecutors said the MP was "sad and ashamed" by Ho's conduct, with the prosecution stating their hope that this case would highlight to society the principle that every person is equal before the law, and the foundations of the rule of law would not be shaken because of this case.

At the beginning of yesterday's session, which commenced at 9.30 a.m., prosecutor Kuok reiterated that Wang Xiandi, said to have been an MP employee, rarely appeared at the MP facilities.

Ho said that Wang previously assisted Ho in recovering money sent overseas by the first Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Ao Man Long. Ao was the first Secretary for Transport and Public Works after the handover and he was reappointed in 2004. He is currently serving 28-and-a-half years in prison after being convicted in 2008 and 2009 of taking bribes, money laundering, and abusing his power to grant lucrative public contracts.

During yesterday's trial, it was submitted that Ho eventually abandoned efforts to recover the money Ao illicitly sent abroad. Prosecutor Chan said that Ho's decision harmed the state's interests.

Kuok alleged that Ho "cheated his boss and concealed the truth from his subordinate, and contravened legal regulations. God's mill grinds slowly

RENATO MARQUES



but surely, and past crimes leave marks."

Regarding the MP Teachers' Resting Room at the 16th floor of the Hotline Center, which Ho allegedly used for his personal needs, Ho defended his actions saying that the allegations against him were "purely absurd and chicanery." The resting room was apparently paid for by MP.

The prosecution revealed

that the room was never used for Ho to host guests from work, but rather to host non-local people for purposes unrelated to MP.

In addition, Ho was alleged to have made an attempt to become chairman of a mainland Chinese culture association, without obtaining approval from mainland authorities.

"Ho, himself, cannot provide

evidence," declared prosecutor Chan.

"It was purely Ho's personal interest and reputation, it was nothing related to the Office of the Prosecutor General," said Chan.

The prosecutor questioned Ho's previous claim that he had hosted MP guests there.

During previous trial sessions, witness Lai Kin Ian, former chief of the Office of the Prosecutor-General who was the previous director at his office, was said to have assisted Ho in misusing the place as his personal space. Many of the previous witnesses were unaware of the real utility of the teachers' resting room.

Ho ordered his previous subordinates to handle business concerning the resting room, explaining that it was "confidential". Prosecutor Chan queried this, saying, "teachers need to face students, how can it be confidential?"

Chan also said that he could not perceive the relationship between a mainland culture association and Ho to be confidential.

The prosecutor also pointed out the dubiousness of MP's employees not having the keys for the room, although Ho's brother and other defendants had them.

"It proves that Ho Chio Meng does not want other people to know what really is going on at this place," remarked Chan.

Ho is also accused of having rented a Cheoc Van villa with MP's public money, which he used for his own personal benefit.

At previous trials, Ho claimed that he would take his wife and offspring to the villa while meeting with guests, be-

cause he was simultaneously taking care of both his family and his work. Chan disputed Ho's defense, describing it as consisting of "lies".

Chan noted that regardless of what kind of guests were hosted at the villa, there were no records within MP nor with Ho personally.

The villa's key was also found in Ho's father's house. Chan said that Ho used confidentiality as a reason for not permitting MP employees to ask questions about the villa.

Over a period of 10 years, MP spent slightly more than MOP 5 million renting the villa.

Ho was also charged for fraud, in which he used MP's money to pay for personal trips to North Europe. For this, prosecutor Chan said that "Ho should be found guilty of serious fraud."

The prosecution also argued that Ho should be sentenced for organizing criminal groups, referring to the 10 shelf companies.

Chan's submissions stated that the shelf companies in the case had only one client, which turned out to be the office of the Prosecutor General.

"The companies have no human resources, no regulations, and no equipment," said Chan, who deemed the operation of the shelf companies to be a form of organized crime. "It is not a common crime," concluded Chan.

Yesterday's trial finished at 12.30 p.m. and no sessions were carried out in the afternoon as the court had other arrangements.

The trial resumes today, with both the prosecution and the defense sides proceeding with their closing remarks.

Gov't considers permanent tour bus ban near St. Paul's ruins

THE Central District Advisory Committee for Community Services revealed that the government is considering a permanent ban on tour buses in the vicinity of the Ruins of St. Paul, according to a report by Cheng Pou.

The government disclosed this on Wednesday, during a meeting with the Civil and Muni-

cipal Affairs Bureau, the Transport Bureau and the Macao Government Tourism Office.

Last August, a serious accident involving a tour bus took place near the St. Paul's Ruins, injuring 11 tourists onboard. After the accident, the local government issued a temporary tour bus restriction around the area.

Specifically, the government reduced in more than 50 percent the bus passage time allowed in the morning period around these areas.

According to several commentators, the restrictions led to more tour buses passing quickly through the region to drop off and pick up tourists, which led to an unexpected increase in

traffic jams during rush hours.

The committee suggested that the government should divert these tour buses to the Tap Seac parking lots, an operation that would involve approximately 200 to 300 vehicles.

The government is expected to have another meeting today to discuss these issues.



2,774 smoking offenders prosecuted this year

A total of 40,722 smoking offenders have been prosecuted by tobacco control law enforcement officers between the beginning of January 2012, when the city's Tobacco Prevention and Control Law first came into effect, and April 30 of 2017.

The Health Bureau (SSM) issued a statement this week announcing that enforcement officers inspected several areas where smoking is prohibited across Macau 1,400,031 times, which amounts to 719 daily inspections on average.

From the beginning of this year until the end of last month, officers conducted 109,493 inspections in different locations across the city, representing an average of 912 examinations per day. In total, 2,774 prosecutions were issued during these four months, specifically 2,770 smoking behaviors that violated the law, and four prosecutions of people who sold tobacco products which did not comply with the information on their labels.



Around 95 percent of offenders were male, against 5 percent female, representing 2,601 men and 169 women.

Most of the offenders (53.5 percent) were Macau residents (1,481), over 1,000 (1,134) were tourists, and the remaining 5.6 percent were non-resident workers (155). In 68 cases, police forces were involved.

During the same time frame,

the Health Bureau and the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau conducted 210 tobacco-related inspections in casinos resulting in 216 offenses, of which 202 (93.5 percent) were male and 14 (6.5 percent) were female. 181 (83.8 percent) were tourists, 34 (15.7 percent) were Macau residents and one (0.5 percent) was a non-resident worker.

LABOR

Undercover investigation reveals job agencies abuse

A Hong Kong study conducted by students has revealed that over 70 percent of recruitment agencies in Hong Kong charge excessive fees to domestic helpers, withhold their passports or engage in other illegal practices.

A group called Students Against Fees and Exploitation (SAFE) conducted a seven-month undercover investigation in the territory and revealed its findings this week.

Seventeen students worked together with 3,000 Filipino and Indonesian domestic helpers during the investigation, which examined over 100 recruitment agencies.

The study showed that the two largest groups of domestic helpers in Hong Kong do not have access to proper resting places, and are often reduced to sleeping in storage rooms, balconies and even toilets.

SAFE discovered that more than 70 percent of recruitment agencies broke the law either by overcharging clients or withholding personal documents such as passports as leverage to make them pay their debts.

"On average, the agencies that engaged in illegal practices in Hong Kong charged between HKD6,000 to HKD8,000 in placement fees," Siya Kulkarni, a student of economics and finance from India who is aged 20, was cited in a report by the

South China Morning Post as saying.

Under Hong Kong law, agencies can charge workers 10 percent of their first month's salary. Hong Kong has set the minimum wage of these helpers at HKD4,310 per month.

As a result of these policies, some domestic workers are already eyeing on moving to counties such as Japan - which recently opened its market to this sector - Australia and New Zealand. Yet some choose to stay, hoping to raise awareness of workers' rights.

Shiella Estrade, chairwoman of the Progressive Labour Union of Domestic Workers in Hong Kong, said "a friend of mine was trying to convince me to go to Japan, because they can get better wages, work eight hours and receive overtime. I am not going because I still believe that raising awareness of workers' rights in Hong Kong is more important."

Domestic workers in Macau also suffer from this kind of exploitation.

As reported by the Times, Indonesian domestic helpers complain of paying placement fees between MOP2,500 and MOP3,000 a month - totaling almost MOP24,000 for an eight-month period - while Filipino helpers reportedly fork out a one-time payment of up to MOP5,500.

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MGM Cotai will present a lineup of celebrated chefs and restaurants for its forthcoming resort which will open in the second half of 2017.

The highlights include celebrated chefs such as Mauro Colagreco, Mitsuharu Tsumura, Graham Elliott and Janice Wong, to bring some of the world's favored contemporary cuisine to the integrated resort's visitors.

In line with the region's aim to become a UNESCO City for Gastronomy, MGM Cotai has partnered with the celebrated chefs to develop new dining concepts.

Grant Bowie, CEO and executive director of MGM China Holdings, said, "Macau has become a thriving food destination, with many of the best chefs in the world contributing to our culinary scene."

According to Bowie, the gaming operator has sent its food and beverage team to seek partners in a bid to offer locals and visitors a unique culinary portfolio that is "both diverse in rice points and flavors."

"Macau already has a very impressive culinary scene, and MGM Cotai's objective is to build upon that by bringing innovative dining concepts and chefs to support Macau as a global destination," Bowie told the Times. "It's important that we create dining concepts that are unique to Macau and the palates of our customers," the CEO added.

Questioned on how MGM Cotai would contribute to Macau's aim of being a UNESCO City of Gastronomy, Bowie noted that the newly-offered dining concepts would take the diversity of Macau's culinary portfolio to the next level and fill niches in the current market.

With a menu created by

MGM Cotai unveils culinary adventures with celebrated chefs

star Argentinean-Italian Chef Colagreco that includes premium beef sourced by MGM's Master Butcher from the best ranches around the world, Grill 58° is the go-to restaurant for steak and a destination for food and wine connoisseurs from around the world.

Grill 58° also offers a selection of fish, seafood and other meats, with a 4,000-bottle wine cellar.

Chef Colagreco is a Michelin two-star award-winning chef and his restaurant Mirazur in Menton, France has recently been ranked the fourth best restaurant in the world by The World's 50 Best Restaurants 2017.

Meanwhile, the first authentic Nikkei restaurant will be at MGM Cotai.

Chef Tsumura is slated to open Aji, a restaurant with innovative food that will be matched by dramatic design.

Tsumura's restaurant, Maido, has risen from No. 13 to become the No. 8 restaurant on the list of the World's 50 Best Restaurants 2017.

According to him, the restaurant blends spices with the delicacies of the local cuisine.

"There is a story that the original point of entry of chili peppers to Asia was in fact from Macau - by the Portuguese. That is the name of our restaurant, 'Aji' - which means 'taste' in Japanese, and 'chili pepper' in Peruvian. We are blending our spice and spiciness with local cuisine," said Chef Tsumura.

Taking inspiration from America's relaxed West Coast lifestyle, Coast will be overseen by Chef Elliot, an award-winning Michelin starred chef and television personality from popular cooking show Top Chef.

Coast will offer dishes that capture the spirit of California and West Coast flavors and bring them to Macau.

Having lived in California, Chef Elliot said, "I know what it means to cook light, seasonal, and most importantly, delicious food! I am excited to share my whimsical approach to cooking with the sophisticated foodies and diners in Macau."

Furthermore, award-winning modern pastry chef Janice Wong MGM is set to offer customers a full sweets experience, offering Cakes, Eclairs, Mochis, Tarts, Ice Cream, Crepes, Chocolates and Confectioneries and Plated Desserts.

Chef Wong is a native Singaporean who was voted Asia's Best Pastry Chef for 2013 and 2014 at the prestigious San Pellegrino Asia Top 50, as well as Pastry Chef of the Year in 2011, 2013 and 2015 at the World Gourmet Summit.

Janice Wong MGM is a sweets shop where customers can observe a live chocolate, crepe and dessert station, take away confectioneries and pastries, or dine in for a dessert experience beside one of the biggest chocolate fountains in the world - a 7.3-meter high sculpture spouting rivers of dark, milk and white chocolate. LV



Chef Mauro Colagreco



Chef Mitsuharu Tsumura



Chef Graham Elliott



Chef Janice Wong

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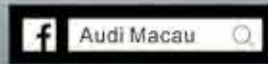
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Govertsen bullish over USD45b gaming market

Lynzy Valles

WITH Macau posting its ninth straight month of rising gaming receipts – beating analysts' expectations – a gaming analyst has agreed with recent statements made by Melco's Lawrence Ho, who said that Asia's gaming center would return to its peak in the next five years – just before the end of its concession contract.

Earlier this month, Ho expressed his prediction to Bloomberg TV that Macau would bounce back to the USD45 billion gaming market, stressing that the figures are solely in relation to gaming.

His projections recalled the region's highest annual peak in 2013.

"Definitely within the next five years, it will grow back to the USD45 billion gaming market," said Ho, who also serves as Chief Executive Officer to Melco. "And that's just gaming alone, because the non-gaming part is significant," Ho told the American-based

satellite business news television channel.

Meanwhile, Union Gaming analyst Grant Govertsen suggested that the prospect is likely to happen based on the current gaming numbers.

The Macau-based analyst was speaking on the sidelines of a talk he delivered at the breakfast meeting of the British Business Association of Macau (BBAM) yesterday.

He clarified that achieving a USD45 billion gaming market is feasible if the VIP and mass market continues to grow at 6 percent and 8 percent respectively, or otherwise.

"The point is if Macau grows at roughly the same rate as China's GDP, we're going to be back at an USD45b market at the end of the concession period five years from now, and that's a good thing," he told the Times.

Meanwhile as mogul James Packer and Ho have bid farewell to a decade-long gaming partnership in Macau, the analyst hinted that there may not be immediate

changes. However, there are at least "no longer two parties driving the ship, who might not be on the same page at all times."

The analyst implied that, with the exit of Crown's Packer, on a medium and long-term basis, it would be advantageous for Macau, as Melco would not have a competition of interest at the highest level of the company.

"They can purely focus – have one vision and one drive," he added.

Questioned about the factors leading to the continuous growth of the region's gaming receipts, Govertsen is confident that the mass market has been the core of recovery.

The mass-market segment continues to grow 14 to 16 percent each year – while the VIP market for several months has finally become positive.

"I believe at least in the month of April, you probably have a dynamic where both the mass and VIP markets were experiencing around 15 to 16 percent growth," he said.



"But I think the important thing to think about in the coming months is that mass market gross story has been in the double digits for months. That's the key, the core of the recovery," Govertsen explained. The analyst further reiterated that mass market is the most pro-

fitable segment in Macau, alongside the government's goal. He added that the VIP is just an extra bonus.

"We absolutely want to see the VIP continue to grow, but the mass market is the key to Macau's future," he concluded.

ATM FACIAL SCANS HAVE NO IMPACT OVER AFFLUENT GAMBLERS

THE MSAR government has required facial recognition and identification card checks at ATMs before Chinese UnionPay cardholders can withdraw cash in a bid to strengthen anti-money laundering rules. Yet Govertsen remarked that such restrictions are less likely to affect mainland gamblers. "We've seen several restrictions being put in place

over the years, it didn't seem to have had a material impact." He added that most of the high-value players would not be affected by the ATM restriction, which does not seem to negatively impact the city's gaming market. The ATM rules follow a ban last year that prohibits proxy betting by telephone, aimed at staunching bets from gamblers in China.

Local gaming operators among the AGAwards 2017 nominees

WITH more than 1,000 nominations received from across the industry, the second edition of the Asia Gaming Awards has announced the shortlisted nominees of the AGAwards 2017.

The organizing committee has announced that Bloomberry Resorts, Galaxy Entertainment Group, Melco Resorts & Entertainment, MGM China, NagaCorp, Sands China, and Wynn Resorts are nomi-

nees under the category of the Best Gaming Operator. Galaxy Macau, Studio City, Wynn Palace, The Parisian, and The Venetian Macao are amongst the seven Best Integrated Resorts, listed alongside Ma-

laysia's Genting Highlands and Singapore's Marina Bay Sands. Meanwhile Grand Lisboa and Galaxy Starworld are the Macanese nominees under the 'Best Gaming Property' category, inclu-

ding The Grand Ho Tram and Widus Resort and Casino.

The nominations closed on April 28. The shortlist of nominees in each category has been increased from five to a maximum of seven following the significant number of submissions in the inaugural edition.

A total of 12 awards will be presented across the land-based and online ga-

ming spheres, along with a prize for "Outstanding Contribution in the Field of Corporate Social Responsibility."

Last year, the awards collated more than 1,000 nominations and 8,000 votes across the categories, according to a statement released by the organizers.

Winners will be announced at the Award's Ceremony Dinner, held at the Parisian Macao on May 16.

corporate bits

SANDS CHINA CELEBRATES MOTHER'S DAY WITH LOCAL ASSOCIATION



A group of approximately 60 children and parents from the Association for the Parents of the Mentally Handicapped celebrated the upcoming Mo-

ther's Day with close to 40 Sands China Care Ambassadors on Saturday afternoon.

The group visited Ice World

together at The Venetian, according to the gaming operator's press release.

Sands China's celebration also featured flowers and a donation to the association.

The Care Ambassadors also helped the children gift flowers to their parents in honor of the holiday, courtesy of the company's in-house floral department.

In addition, Sands China has purchased handmade flowers made by members of the association to give to female diners at selected Sands China restaurants on Mother's Day – which has been a tradition at Sands China since 2012.

This Sunday, the handmade flowers will be distributed during lunch and dinner hours at several restaurants within Sands China.

MGM SIGNS 'OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH CHARTER'



To further promote occupational health and safety (OHS), MGM signed the "Occupational Safety and Health Charter", witnessed by the Labour Affairs Bureau (DSAL).

The signing ceremony was held at MGM Macau's back-of-house area on May 10.

Meanwhile, an OHS game fair was held on the same day in the back-of-house

area to raise awareness of OHS issues among team members through interactive and educational games.

Grant Bowie, CEO and executive director of MGM China Holdings, said, "The 'Occupational Safety and Health Charter' is an important pledge an employer makes to its employees. [...] As we expand our Golden Lion Team with the opening of MGM Cotai, we will continue to promote a positive health and safety culture with the support of DSAL."

MGM's OHS approach is guided by the Occupational Health and Safety Policy and Manual, which aligned with the OHSAS 18001 Occupational Health and Safety Standard. Its performance is monitored by our Board-level Risk and Safety Committee.

REAL ESTATE MATTERS

The Best Places to Live in Macau - 2017 - Part III

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

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

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JULIET RISDON

Welcome back to the third part of this article on the most popular places to live in Macau for expatriates.

Last week we highlighted property in Macau, Taipa and Cotai. This week we will focus on Taipa, namely Nova City, Ocean Gardens and Supreme Flower.

Of course there will always be pros and cons in any property and location, so its good to know what is essential and what is desirable to make it a good choice for you.

Nova City, Taipa

Area: Central Taipa Area residential.

Amenities: Walking distance to restaurants, supermarkets, banks, healthcare, and schools. Bus Stops and taxis nearby. New local park and underground Public Park are right outside.

Building facilities: Gym, pool, tennis courts, entertainment rooms, security personnel. Car Parking available in the building, children's play areas.

Property Features: Good size living space in a large complex.

Rental Prices: Mid Range Advantages: Convenient location and value for money

Drawbacks: Bumping in to everyone you work with, limited balconies

Ocean Gardens, Taipa

Area: Outskirts of Taipa

Amenities: Local children's play areas, supermarket 7/11, restaurants are nearby. There is also a shuttle bus service.

Building facilities: Access to members' only gym and pool. Car Parking available. Some buildings have a private gym.

Property Features: Good layout and floor plans, good views for apartments situated along the front. Some apartments are recently renovated.

Rental Prices: Mid Range

Advantages: Bigger apartments.

Drawbacks: Aging facility, location can be isolated

Supreme Flower City, Taipa

Area: Central Taipa.

Amenities: Walking dis-

tance to restaurants, supermarkets, banks, healthcare, schools. Bus Stops nearby. New local park and underground public park are walking distance.

Building facilities: None but this is reflected in the relatively reasonable rental prices.

Property Features: Good quality kitchens with ovens. Large windows making the properties light and airy.

Rental Prices: Mid- high Range

Advantages: Great quality apartments, convenient location

Drawbacks: No club facilities, no balconies

In the remaining article we look at the final three most popular areas for expatriates in a mix of locations in Taipa and Macau Peninsula. If you would like further information on these properties or a copy of the information mailed to you in pdf format, please e mail me at Juliet@JMLProperty.com and we will be happy to send you the information.

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Trump Taj Mahal sold for fraction of cost

Wayne Parry

DONALD Trump wrote "The Art Of The Deal," but it was Florida's Seminole Indians who made a truly amazing deal to buy the opulent casino built by the man who is now president.

The Trump Taj Mahal, the Atlantic City casino that the real estate mogul built for USD1.2 billion in 1990, went for 4 cents on the dollar when it was sold in March. Documents filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission this week revealed the price that billionaire Carl Icahn got from Hard Rock International for the shuttered casino: \$50 million. The sale was publicized at the time, though the purchase price wasn't.

Trump, now the nation's 45th president, dubbed the Taj Mahal "the eighth wonder of the world" when it opened. He cut most of his ties with Atlantic City in 2009, though he retained a small stake in its parent company, Trump Entertainment Resorts, in return for the right to use his name.

At the end, Trump had no ownership interest at all: His stake was wiped out last year when Icahn acquired Trump Entertainment Resorts from bankruptcy. Icahn and Atlantic City's main casino workers' union were unable to agree on a new contract to restore health insurance and pension benefits,



A plaque bearing the likeness of Donald Trump at the entrance to the Trump Taj Mahal Casino resort

and the union went on strike in July.

In October, Icahn shut the casino down, saying he saw no way to make a profit from it, and lamenting losses of \$350 million on it.

Icahn retains ownership of the former Trump Plaza casino, which shut down in September 2014.

Hard Rock, which is owned by Florida's Seminole Indian tribe, plans to reopen the Taj Mahal in 2018 after scrubbing it of its minarets and ubiquitous mentions of Trump. Hard Rock says it plans to spend \$375 million on a renovation that will draw on the world's largest collection of music memorabilia. Hotel guests will even be lent Fender electric guitars to play in their rooms. **AP**

Uber suffers setback in clash with cabbies

UBER Technologies Inc. suffered a legal setback in its fight against being regulated as a traditional taxi service, after an adviser to the European Union's top court rejected the argument that the car-hailing application is just that, an app.

The question has vexed regulators and lawmakers across the region for years and yesterday's non-binding opinion gives an indication that Uber might not be able to shake off national restrictions, such as the obligation to get a license or other authorizations.

"The Uber electronic platform, whilst innovative, falls within the field of transport," Advocate General Maciej Szpunar, of the EU Court of Justice, said in a statement on his opinion in Luxembourg on Thursday. "Uber can thus be required to obtain the necessary licenses and authorizations under national law."

The car-hailing application accessed via smartphones and tablets has faced roadblocks, real and regulatory, across Europe, amid complaints brought by taxi drivers who say the company tries to unfairly avoid regulations that bind established competitors. Uber sees itself as an app, and defended that position last month again in the EU court in a separate, French case, which continued to puzzle the EU's top judges.

Uber claims it should be exempt from the obligations normal transportation operators face under EU rules. Its lawyers told the court last year that the company's activities can't be reduced to a mere transport activity.

In a statement yesterday, Uber said it will now wait for the final decision. The EU court's decision, expected in a few months, will be binding and can't be appealed. **Bloomberg**

AD

MOTHER'S DAY

Treat your mum to something special this Sunday. Whether you want to celebrate with stunning jewels, a trendy new timepiece, the chicest new shoes or a bag that ensures she stands out from the crowd, Sands Shoppes has it all and more. Make this Mother's Day one to remember.



1. Franck Muller Watch 2. Links of London Pendant 3. Van Cleef & Arpels Earrings 4. Emporio Armani Bag
5. Lukfook Ring 6. Lukfook Charm 7. Follie Follie Necklace 8. Giorgio Armani Scarf 9. Michael Kors Perfume 10. De Beers Bracelet
11. Van Cleef & Arpels Brooch 12. Montblanc Earrings 13. Giorgio Armani Sandals

CELEBRATE WITH RALPH LAUREN CHILDRENSWEAR

Mum's will have an extra special experience when they visit Ralph Lauren Childrenswear in Shoppes at Cotai Central this weekend. Shop the new kids collection in store on 13 and 14 May and receive a complimentary flower bouquet.

Shop 2149, Level 2, Shoppes at Cotai Central



DOLCE&GABBANA FOR MAMMA

Dolce&Gabbana's iconic Sicily bag is a tribute to the beauty of the picturesque Mediterranean island and has become a classic suited to any occasion. Now you can personalise it with hand-painting from Dolce&Gabbana's finest artisans. What better gift for mum than an exclusive creation? Join the Sicily Painting event at Shoppes at Four Seasons from 12noon to 8pm on Friday 12 May and treat your mamma to a one-of-a-kind Dolce&Gabbana.

Shop 2850a/2855, Level 2, Shoppes at Four Seasons

SANDS MEGA BRAND SALE

More than 150 international designer brands will take part in our Sands Mega Brand Sale in May. Comprised of a range of retailers from Shoppes at Venetian, Shoppes at Four Seasons, Shoppes at Cotai Central and Shoppes at Parisian, it's a time to shop like never before with up to 80% off designer goods for a limited time only.

The Sands Mega Brand Sale runs until 14 May, from 11am to 10pm, at Cotai Expo Hall D, The Venetian Macao.



To keep up to date with the latest news from Sands Shoppes, follow us on Facebook and Weibo



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China said to prep Hong Kong stock support for Handover Day

CHINA'S government has made preparations to support the Hong Kong stock market if needed to create a positive atmosphere before July 1, when Xi Jinping is expected to visit the city for the first time as president to mark 20 years of Chinese rule.

State-backed institutions have set aside funds to ensure stable trading before the anniversary of Hong Kong's 1997 handover, according to people with direct knowledge of the matter, who asked not to be named as the information isn't public. It's unclear how much money has been earmarked or what market conditions would trigger government action. The Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office of China's State Council didn't immediately reply to a faxed request for comment. The office of Hong Kong's Chief Executive declined to comment.

While state-directed funds intervene regularly to manage swings in China's USD6.6 trillion equity market, the government hasn't been known to take an active role in Hong Kong. The former British colony, which sits near the top of global free-market rankings, is supposed to enjoy a high degree of autonomy under the "one country, two systems" principle enshrined in China's power-transfer agreement with the U.K. Any attempt to influence Hong Kong stock prices risks provoking critics who say China is interfering too much in the city's affairs under Xi's leadership.

It could also add fuel to the debate over Hong Kong's future as a financial center. Much of the city's appeal to international investors and businesses comes from its strong rule of law and minimal government interference, attributes that set it apart from mainland China. Lines between the two markets have blurred in



recent years with the introduction of cross-border exchange links and cooperation agreements between the Chinese and Hong Kong securities regulators.

"The stock connect has already brought mainland markets closer to Hong Kong, but there will be a lot of people who will be dissatisfied with this, at least in principle," said Peter Garnry, head of equity strategy at Saxo Bank A/S in Copenhagen. "Expect some political noise."

China has a history of influencing domestic markets during important political events. In the latest example, regulators have stepped up scrutiny of local stock traders as the government prepares to host representatives from more than 100 countries at a summit attended by Xi this weekend, according to people with direct knowledge of the matter. Policy makers were said to intervene during the last two annual meetings of Chinese lawmakers in Beijing.

Authorities may be especially keen to project an image of stabili-

HK Exchanges & Clearing said the bourse doesn't comment on rumors, adding that market manipulation is an offense under Hong Kong law

ty in 2017 as they prepare for a twice-a-decade Communist Party leadership reshuffle toward year-end.

China hasn't confirmed that Xi will visit Hong Kong, but past leaders have tended to make the trip for every fifth year of the handover anniversary. Xi is expect-

ed to make a three-day visit for this year's celebrations, the South China Morning Post reported this month.

The anniversary comes against a backdrop of elevated political tension in Hong Kong. The Occupy protests paralyzed parts of the city in 2014 and many residents are still angry over the lack of a direct election for their chief executive. Behind-the-scenes backing from China helped Carrie Lam win a resounding victory among the business and political elites who picked the city's leader in March. She beat an opponent more popular with the general public.

Not all Hong Kong markets have been insulated from Chinese interference. When the yuan sank in offshore trading in January 2016, intervention by China's central bank led to a short squeeze in Hong Kong. The episode dented the yuan's appeal as an international currency, but criticism of the government's actions was limited because influencing foreign-exchange markets is a common

economic-management tool for governments around the world.

Meddling in Hong Kong's stock market may be a different story. Aside from a Hong Kong government rescue package during the Asian financial crisis in 1998, shares in the city have been thought to be largely free of official interference.

If China's government were to intervene, the purchases could run contrary to Hong Kong regulations on maintaining an orderly market, Low Chee-keong, an associate professor at the CUHK Business School and a former member of the Hong Kong exchange's listing committee, said before Bloomberg News reported on China's preparations. Low said that proving market manipulation is often difficult.

A Hong Kong Exchanges & Clearing Ltd. spokeswoman said the bourse doesn't comment on market rumors, adding that market manipulation is an offense under Hong Kong law. The city's Securities and Futures Commission didn't immediately reply to an emailed request for comment.

"The government's intervention is unwelcome in Hong Kong as it could boost risk premiums and pressure the valuation of stocks in the long term," Daniel So, a Hong Kong-based strategist at CMB International Securities Ltd., said by phone. "Though it could boost stock prices in the near term."

The government may decide it doesn't need to intervene. Hong Kong's benchmark Hang Seng Index is trading at the highest level since July 2015 after climbing 14 percent this year, outperforming the MSCI All-Country World Index by about 5 percentage points. The Hong Kong gauge is valued at 14 times trailing 12-month earnings, the most expensive level since December 2010, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. The gauge rose 0.4 percent yesterday.

"I don't think anyone needs to support Hong Kong shares or the Hang Seng Index," said Sandy Mehta, chief executive officer of Value Investment Principals Ltd. in Hong Kong. "It's one of the world's top-performing markets." **Bloomberg**

8 dead, 20 injured after moderate quake in remote Xinjiang

A moderate earthquake that struck close to the earth's surface killed eight people and injured more than 20 others in far western China yesterday, the region's earthquake administration said.

The morning quake struck in Taxkorgan county, a remote mountainous area that borders Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan in China's Xinjiang region. The Xinjiang Earthquake Administration said 23

people had been injured, including one seriously, and more than 180 houses had collapsed in the lightly populated area. Most houses in the area were made of wood and mudbricks or rock, it said.

Search and rescue work was under way, it added.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the 5.4-magnitude quake struck at a depth of 10 kilometers at 5:58 a.m. yesterday. Shallow quakes cause greater

shaking at the surface, which can cause more damage.

The county has a population of around 33,000, and is notable for being a stop on the Karakoram Highway, built along the ancient Silk Road connecting China's far western city of Kashgar to the Pakistani capital of Islamabad.

The official Xinhua News Agency said there had been frequent aftershocks.

Earthquakes are common in China's west, although the low population density there often means casualties are low. However, in 2003, a 6.8-magnitude quake in a nearby county to yesterday's quake killed 268 people.

China's deadliest earthquake this century, a 7.9 magnitude temblor with a depth of 19 kilometers, struck Sichuan province in May 2008, killing nearly 90,000 people. **AP**



Residents gather near damaged houses following an earthquake in Kuzigun Village, in Xinjiang, yesterday



Sri Lankan Buddhist monks and villagers protest against a plan to take over private land for an industrial zone in which China will have a major stake

'Silk Road' stirs unease over its strategic goals

Joe McDonald, Munir Ahmed & Gillian Wong, Beijing

IN a mountain valley in Kashmir, plans are under way for Chinese engineers guarded by Pakistani forces to expand the lofty Karakoram Highway in a project that is stirring diplomatic friction with India.

The work is part of a sprawling Chinese initiative to build a "new Silk Road" of ports, railways and roads to expand trade in a vast arc of countries across Asia, Africa and Europe. The Asian Development Bank says the region, home to 60 percent of the world's people, needs more than USD26 trillion of such investment by 2030 to keep economies growing.

The initiative is in many ways natural for China, the world's biggest trader. But governments from Washington to Moscow to New Delhi worry Beijing also is trying to build its own political influence and erode theirs.

Others worry China might undermine human rights, environmental and other standards or leave poor countries burdened with debt.

India is unhappy Chinese state-owned companies are working in the Pakistani-held part of Kashmir, the Himalayan region claimed by both sides. Indian leaders see that as an endorsement of Pakistani control.

"We have some serious reservations about it, because of sovereignty issues," said India's

finance and defense minister, Arun Jaitley, at an Asian Development Bank meeting this month in Yokohama, Japan. China has previously said its highway work "targets no third country."

China's initiative is ramping up as President Donald Trump focuses on domestic issues, downplaying foreign affairs.

American officials say Washington wants to work with China on infrastructure. But some political analysts say Beijing is trying to create a political and economic network centered on China and push the United States out of the region.

Trump's decision to pull out of the proposed 12-nation Trans-Pacific Partnership deprives China's neighbors of a tool they hoped

would counter its rising influence, said Max Baucus, the U.S. ambassador to Beijing until January.

"Southeast Asian countries would tell me 'we want you, we want the TPP, then we can balance China with the United States,'" Baucus told The Associated Press.

Dubbed "One Belt, One Road" after ancient trade routes through the Indian Ocean and Central Asia, the initiative is Chinese President Xi Jinping's signature project.

Details such as financing are vague. But since Xi announced it in 2013, Beijing has launched dozens of projects from railways in Tajikistan, Thailand and Kenya to power plants in Vietnam and Kyrgyzstan.

Countries including Pakistan and Afghanistan welcome it as a path out of poverty. India, Indonesia and others want investment but are wary of Chinese strategic ambitions.

Indonesia's political elite have a "fear of regional hegemony" by China, said Christine Tjhin, senior researcher at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Jakarta.

Moscow worries Beijing is diluting Russian influence in Central Asia by linking Uzbekistan and other countries more closely to China's more dynamic economy.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has responded by proposing a "Great Eurasia Project," with Beijing leading on economics and Moscow on politics and security.

"This vision enables the Kremlin to maintain an appearance that it retains the political initiative in its neighborhood," said a report by the Center for Eastern Studies, a Warsaw think tank.

In a possible effort to defuse unease, China has invited governments to a two-day forum starting Sunday and led by Xi. Leaders from 28 countries including Russian President Vladimir Putin are due to attend, but none from major Western countries.

Chinese officials reject suggestions the initiative is a power play by Beijing.

"The Chinese government has never wished to control any other

country's government," a Cabinet official, Ou Xiaoli, told The Associated Press. "We feel in contacts between countries, we need to talk about studying benefits, studying mutual profit."

The bulk of Chinese financing is to be loans, which Ou said will be mostly on commercial terms based on "market principles." That might add to debt burdens in countries where dealing with Beijing can be politically sensitive.

The state-run China Development Bank announced in 2015 it had set aside \$890 billion for more than 900 "One Belt, One Road" projects across 60 countries in gas, minerals and other sectors. The government's Export-Import Bank of China said it would finance 1,000 projects in 49 countries.

We have some serious reservations about it, because of sovereignty issues.

ARUN JAITLEY
MINISTER, INDIA

In Pakistan, the proposed \$1.3 billion effort to expand the Karakoram Highway is part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, which involves dozens of projects including power plants, roads and railways.

Pakistani officials say much of the Chinese money for power projects is investment, not loans but have given few details, raising questions about whether other projects can pay for themselves.

"I feel that our several generations will have to repay these Chinese loans for decades," said Azeem Khalid, a lecturer at the Commission on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development in the South, a non-government group in Islamabad. **AP**

Four tons of garbage collected in Everest cleanup

WORKERS and volunteers have collected four tons of garbage from the Chinese north side of Mount Everest in the first five days of a cleanup operation, state media reported yesterday.

Hoping to find a more permanent solution, the local government in the Tibet region is setting up stations to sort, recycle and break down the garbage, which includes

cans, plastic bags, stove equipment, tents, oxygen tanks and other mountain climbing paraphernalia, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

The nine-day cleanup that began Saturday targets climbing trails and campsites between 5,200 and 6,500 meters (17,000 and 21,300 feet).

Parts of Everest are in China and Nepal. Each year, about 60,000 clim-

bers and guides visit the Chinese north side of the mountain, which China refers to by its Tibetan name, Mount Qomolangma.

On the Nepalese side, mountaineering expedition organizers have begun sending huge trash bags with climbers during the spring climbing season to collect trash that then can be winched by helicopters back to the base camp. **AP**



PHONE DIPLOMACY

S. Korea's Moon to send delegation to China amid frayed ties

CHINESE President Xi Jinping called his new South Korean counterpart Moon Jae-in yesterday to congratulate him on his inauguration, the first time such a call has been made from Beijing to Seoul and one that raises the prospect of a thaw in relations between the Asian neighbors.

Chinese leaders don't often make congratulatory telephone calls to new foreign leaders right after they take office, normally sending envoys days or weeks later carrying personal letters instead. The call to Moon took place just a day after he took office and comes amid increased regional tensions over North Korea as well as the deployment of a U.S. missile-defense shield in South Korea.

Moon told Xi during the 40-minute call that he plans to send a special delegation to Beijing for talks on both topics, Moon's office said in a statement. China has been upset by the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense system that was approved by Moon's conservative predecessor as a hedge against North Korea, placing Seoul in a difficult spot between its closest military ally in Washington and its largest trading partner in Beijing.

China has already taken commercial retaliation against South Korean business interests on its soil, but will be hoping Moon follows through on his campaign pledge to review the



South Korean President Moon Jae-in talks on the phone with Xi Jinping

missile system's deployment if elected. Beijing sees the system as a threat to its own security.

During yesterday's call, Xi reaffirmed China's opposition to the THAAD deployment, Moon's office said. Moon responded that he's aware of China's concerns and asked Xi to help resolve the difficulties facing South Korean businesses in China, it said.

Moon told Xi that it would be easier to settle the missile-defense issue if North Korea wasn't engaging in provocations, the statement said.

Moon said he hopes to meet Xi at an early date and Xi formally invited Moon to visit Beijing, it said.

While Moon may try to soothe Chinese anger over the missile-defense system, many observers

say it appears too late to call for its withdrawal, which would greatly undermine South Korea's relationship with Washington.

Given that, the prospect for improved ties between Seoul and Beijing isn't clear, with some saying China won't back down until it gets a major concession on the system's deployment and others saying China is also eager

for improved ties and will settle for less as long as it can save face on the missile-defense issue.

Moon's conversation with Xi came a day after he spoke with President Donald Trump, who in the phone call congratulated Moon on his election win and invited him to visit the White House. The two leaders also agreed to strengthen their alliance, the White House said.

While taking the oath of office this week, Moon said he's open to visiting North Korea under the right conditions. Conservative critics have worried Moon's rise to power might cause a friction with Trump, who wants to increase pressure on North Korea with the help of China, the North's largest trading partner and aid benefactor.

Moon also received similar congratulatory calls from Japanese and Indian leaders yesterday.

During his call with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the two leaders agreed that their countries must not let their difficult history hamper co-operation in dealing with North Korea's nuclear program, Moon's office said.

The call also touched on a controversial 2015 agreement over compensating South Korean women forced into sexual slavery by Japan's military in World War II, Moon's office said. It said Moon told Abe that it was emotionally difficult for South Koreans to accept the agreement.

It wasn't clear whether Moon used the conversation to call for a renegotiation of the deal. He had promised during his campaign to renegotiate it.

Japanese officials have described the call as "positive and meaningful," with the two agreeing to cooperate closely to deal with North Korea. **AP**

NORTH KOREA

Pyongyang says it will seek extradition of plot culprits

PYONGYANG will seek the extradition of anyone involved in what it says was a CIA-backed plot to kill leader Kim Jong Un last month with a biochemical poison, a top North Korean foreign ministry official said yesterday.

Han Song Ryol, the vice foreign minister, called a meeting of foreign diplomats in Pyongyang to outline the North's allegation that the CIA and South Korea's intelligence agency bribed and coerced a North Korean man into joining in the assassination plot, which the North's Ministry of State Security has suggested was thwarted last month.

The North's state media

have been running stories about the plot since last week. The security ministry has vowed to "ferret out" anyone involved in the alleged plot, which it called "state-sponsored terrorism."

Han took that a step further yesterday with the extradition statement.

"According to our law, the Central Public Prosecutor's Office of the DPRK will use all available methods to start to work to demand the handover of the criminals involved, so as to punish the organizers, conspirators and followers of this terrible state-sponsored terrorism," he said.

North Korea claims the primary suspect is a man it

has identified only by the ubiquitous surname "Kim." It says he is a North Korean resident of Pyongyang who worked for a time in the Russian Far East. State media said he was involved in the timber industry in Khabarovsk, which is one of the primary places North Koreans can go overseas to work.

The North further said that a South Korean agent named Jo Ki Chol and a "secret agent" named Xu Guanghai, director general of the Qingdao NAZCA Trade Co. Ltd., met Kim in Dandong, on North Korea's border with China, to give him communications equipment and cash. The North also said "a

guy surnamed Han" taught Kim how to enlist accomplices.

"These terrorists plotted and planned in detail for the use of biochemical substances including radioactive and poisonous substances as the means of assassination," Vice Minister Han said, reading from a prepared statement. "These biochemical substances were to be provided with the assistance of the CIA ... while the South Korean Intelligence Service was going to provide necessary support and funding for this attempt at assassination on our supreme leader."

In statements for foreign distribution, North Korea often refers to its leader Kim



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un

Jong Un without naming him, instead using the phrase "supreme leadership" or "supreme dignity."

The last time that Han appeared to brief foreign

diplomats in Pyongyang was last December, to present North Korea's response to the latest round of U.N. sanctions after the September 2016 nuclear test. **AP**

Esther Htusan, Yangon

MYANMAR

Uber chases GrabTaxi, expanding in Southeast Asia

THE private ride-hailing service Uber officially launched operations yesterday in Myanmar's main city Yangon, aiming to tap into one of the world's youngest and fastest-growing online markets.

The launch follows Singapore-based GrabTaxi's debut, which began a trial run in the Southeast Asian country about six weeks ago.

Uber is one of the world's largest on-demand transportation platforms. It is seeking an alliance with the government to smooth acceptance of the use of private vehicles for commercial transport.

A taxi ride in Myanmar usually involves negotiating prices, no use of meters and a lack of air conditioning or seat belts. Using a ride-hailing app is still a relatively new concept, though the practice has been gaining in popularity.

Local travel services start-up Oway and Hello Cabs, a rival service run by a construction and auto dealership tycoon, also provide ride-hailing services.

"I definitely want to try Uber," said Nyan Zay Htet, a company worker who was haggling with a driver over a fare on a downtown street in Yangon. "I welcome having international companies come in because it can

AP PHOTO



be more convenient for us if we don't have to bargain over prices and can just hop in and go."

Some taxi drivers, however, expressed alarm about other companies edging onto their turf. "My car is my livelihood," said Tun Mya, who said he was already earning less because people were hailing fewer traditional taxis.

"I am a bit worried ... I don't know what will happen yet, but we are watching," he said.

More than two-thirds of Southeast Asians are younger than 40 and the number going online to buy goods and services is soaring. A recent research report by Google and the Singaporean investment arm Temasek put the potential ride-sharing market

in six larger regional markets at \$13 billion by 2025, up from \$2.5 billion in 2015.

With more than 50 million people, Myanmar is growing fast and its public transport networks are not keeping up. Taxis are plentiful in Yangon, with local media reporting authorities estimate there are more than 50,000 on the city's

jammed roads. The industry is something of a free-for-all, with non-licensed drivers turning their cars into taxis as they please. But the government has said it intends to crack down on that.

Incomes for most people are still low, so price competition may be key.

An online Uber fare estimator put the base fare in Yangon at 1,500 kyats (USD1.09) with a minimum charge of 1,800 kyats (\$1.31).

Uber has faced trouble from regulators in various markets, including China, France, Spain and Mexico. But generally they target services transporting paying customers using private vehicles that are not registered for public transport, not ride-hailing that uses smartphone apps to call licensed taxis.

Phyo Min Thein, chief minister of Yangon Region, said the government was welcoming Uber and other ride-hailing companies into the market to improve transportation in the city. AP

AD

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USA

Flynn documents sought by Senate panel in Russia probe

Chad Day, Washington

THE Senate intelligence committee yesterday [Macau time] subpoenaed former Trump national security adviser Michael Flynn for documents related to the panel's investigation into Russia's election meddling.

Sen. Richard Burr, the Republican chairman, and Sen. Mark Warner, the committee's Democratic vice chairman, issued a joint statement saying the panel decided to issue the subpoena after Flynn, through his lawyer, declined to cooperate with an April 28 request to turn over the documents.

Flynn and other associates of President Donald Trump have received similar requests from the committee for information and documents over the past few weeks.

Copies of request letters sent to longtime Trump associate Roger Stone and former Trump foreign policy adviser Carter Page were shared with The Associated Press. Those letters, which were nearly identical, sought emails, text messages, letters, phone records or any other relevant information they have about meetings or contacts that they or any other individual affiliated with the Trump campaign had with Russian officials or representatives of Russian business interests. They also ask for information about any financial or real estate holdings related to Russia, inclu-

ding any since divested or sold.

Stone, Page, Flynn and former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort all received similar requests for information, a person familiar with the Senate investigation said. That person spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the details of the committee's investigation.

The requests sent to Stone and Page covered documents and information from June 2015 through Jan. 20 of this year. During that period, Flynn accepted tens of thousands of dollars from a Russian state-sponsored television network. He later worked as a foreign agent on behalf of a Turkish businessman, while serving as a top Trump campaign adviser. It also covers the post-election time period in which Trump and his transition team decided to appoint Flynn as national security adviser.

Stone said Thursday that he will "fully comply" with the Senate intelligence committee's request for information and documents relating to its Russia investigation. Stone told NBC's "Today" he wants to testify, since members of congressional panels involved in the Russia probe "have disparaged me publicly."

Flynn was fired by Trump after less than one month on the job. The White House said Flynn misled Vice President Mike Pence and other top officials about his communications during the presidential transition with Rus-

AP PHOTO



Michael Flynn

sia's ambassador to the United States.

The subpoena comes as both the Senate committee and its counterpart in the House are investigating Russia's interference in the 2016 election and whether Trump associates colluded with those attempts to sway the election. Flynn's Russia ties are also being scrutinized by the FBI as it conducts a similar investigation.

Flynn attorney Robert Kelner declined to comment on the newly issued subpoena or say why Flynn declined to provide the information earlier. Flynn

had previously been in talks with the committee about agreeing to be interviewed as long as he was granted immunity.

In March, Kelner said in a statement that Flynn had a "story to tell," but said no reasonable person would agree to be questioned by the committee without "assurances against unfair prosecution."

Other congressional committees and the Pentagon's inspector general are also separately examining whether Flynn was fully forthcoming about his foreign contacts and earnings from

organizations linked to the governments of Russia and Turkey.

The top Democrat and Republican on a House oversight committee have said Flynn likely broke federal law by failing to get approval from the U.S. government to accept foreign payments and not disclosing them after accepting them.

Among the payments they cited were more than \$33,000 from RT, a Russian state-sponsored television network that U.S. intelligence officials have branded as a propaganda front for Russia's government. The network paid Flynn for attending a December 2015 gala in Moscow during which Flynn was seated next to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The Turkish payments under scrutiny are part of USD530,000 worth of lobbying and investigative work that Flynn's company, Flynn Intel Group, performed for a Turkish businessman. In March, Flynn and his firm belatedly registered as a foreign agent with the Justice Department for the work, acknowledging it could have benefited the Turkish government.

The AP reported that Flynn is at odds with his former Turkish client over two unusual payments totaling \$80,000 that Flynn's firm sent back last year to the client.

Flynn's company, Flynn Intel Group, told the Justice Department in March that the two \$40,000 payments were consulting fees for unspecified work. But Turkish businessman Ekim Alptekin has told the AP that the payments from Flynn's firm were refunds for unperformed lobbying. The difference matters because Flynn's foreign business relationships and the veracity of his disclosures are under scrutiny by congressional, military and intelligence inquiries. **AP**

MIDDLE EAST

IS town fall 'victory' for Syria Kurdish partner

Sarah El Deeb, Beirut

THE capture of a key Syrian town and a nearby dam from Islamic State group militants by Syrian Kurdish-led forces undermines the IS's ability to defend its de facto capital, Raqqa and disrupts its ability to plan attacks in Western countries, the U.S.-led international coalition said yesterday.

Tabqa and the nearby dam, Syria's largest, were seized a day earlier in an offensive that lasted nearly seven weeks, with the backing of airstrikes from the international coalition. The Kurdish-led forces were clearing the town and the dam of land mines, the



Fighters from the Kurdish-led Syria Democratic Forces, patrolling on a street in Tabqa, northern Syria

militants' favorite weapon.

The fall of Tabqa also denies militants "a key coordination hub" that had been used by the group's foreign fighters since 2013

to plan attacks against the West, the coalition said in a statement. Tabqa had served as a base for the planning such operations after the militants lost other territories in northern Syria.

The capture of Tabqa sets the stage for an advance on Raqqa, some 25 miles to the east.

Coalition spokesman Col. John Dorrian said the capture of Tabqa is "yet another victory" for the Kurdish-led forces, the U.S.'s most effective partner on the ground in Syria fighting IS. He earlier said that after Tabqa is secured, the Syrian Kurdish-led forces will continue operations to "isolate and seize Raqqa."

The capture of Tabqa came a day after the Trump administration announced it will supply the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces with heavier weapons, a decision that infuriated Turkey, which views the main Kurdish militia in the group as an extension of an outlawed rebel movement fighting an insurgency in its southeast. The SDF, which also includes Arab fighters, has captured large swathes of land in northern Syria from IS with the help of U.S.-led airstrikes.

The spokesman for the Kurdish militia that forms the backbone of the fighting force known as the People's Protection Units,

or YPG, told The Associated Press yesterday that his group will seek "neighborly relations" with Turkey.

"From our side, we want to keep good neighborly relations with Turkey," Rehur Khalil said in a series of messages from Syria.

He called on Turkey to let go of its "unjustified" fears of the group.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan called on the U.S. to reverse its decision, saying weapons in the hands of the Kurdish-led forces are a "threat" to his country. Unnerved by the Kurdish advances along the border, Turkey sent troops into Syria last year to help allied Syrian forces battle IS and block the SDF.

The Trump administration says it will supply the Syrian Democratic Forces, of which the YPG is the main component, with heavier weapons ahead of a push on the northern Syrian city of Raqqa, the IS group's de facto capital. Talal Sillo, a commander with SDF, said no weapons have yet been delivered to the group but that the U.S.-led coalition had said that fast delivery was expected from weapons already in Syria with the international coalition.

Ankara views the YPG as an extension of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, which has been waging a decades-old insurgency in Turkey. The U.S. and other Western nations also view the PKK as a terrorist group.

Khalil dismissed the label, saying the U.S. would not supply arms to terrorists. **AP**

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FRIDAY

13:00	TDM News (Repeat)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	RTPi Live
16:00	Revenge S1
16:45	Revenge S1 (Final)
17:30	Castle S6 (Repeated)
18:10	Now Generation (Repeated)
19:00	TDM Talk Show (Repeated) (PT)
19:30	Soap Opera (PT)
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (PT)
22:10	Now Generation
23:00	TDM News
23:50	Europa League Highlights
01:45	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
02:35	RTPi Live

SATURDAY

10:40	Comedy
11:15	Blaze Riders
12:00	Miscellaneous
13:00	TDM News (Repeat)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast (PT)
15:00	Fatima
15:55	RTPi Live
20:00	Miscellaneous
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (PT)
21:10	Drama (PT)
22:00	Comedy
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:50	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:25	RTPi Live

SUNDAY

10:00	Young Adult
11:00	Sunday Mass (Live)
12:30	Miscellaneous
13:00	TDM News (Repeat)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	Zig Zag
16:25	Documentary Serie
17:00	Miscellaneous
19:30	Non-Daily Portuguese News (Repeated)
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Non-Daily Portuguese News
22:00	Turkey with Simon Reeve - Part 2
23:00	TDM News
00:15	Miscellaneous
00:45	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeat)
01:20	RTPi Live

Offbeat

AUSTRALIA WARNS TRAVELERS TO NOT BRING IN HITCHHIKING TOADS

Australian quarantine authorities yesterday urged travelers through Asia to avoid bringing in hitchhiking amphibians after a passenger arrived at an airport with a dead Indonesian toad in his shoe.

The Department of Agriculture of Water Resources warned travelers to check their luggage and other belongings for biohazards after toads from Thailand and Indonesia were found recently at three Australian airports.

The department's head of biosecurity Lyn O'Connor said a sniffer dog reacted to a shoe that an Australian was wearing as he arrived at Cairns Airport in northeast Australia.

The black-spined toad found by a biosecurity officer inside the shoe had only recently died and was probably alive when the passenger put the shoe on in Indonesia, O'Connor said in a statement.

A live banded bullfrog was found in a passenger's shoe at Perth Airport on Australia's west coast after a flight from Thailand, the department said. Officials could not immediately say on Thursday whether the passenger was wearing the shoe or had packed it in luggage.

A live black-spined toad arrived on a flight from Thailand at Melbourne Airport in southeast Australia where it was found in a woman's luggage, the department said.

The black-spined toad could significantly damage the Australian environment and could carry exotic parasites or disease, O'Connor said.

Authorities are confident that all the passengers were unaware they were carrying toads.

Australia has some of the world's toughest quarantine regulations in a bid to keep pests and diseases from infiltrating its isolated borders and destroying the country's unique wildlife.

cinema



CINETEATRO

11 - 17 MAY

ALIEN: COVENANT

ROOM 1

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

Director: Ridley Scott

Starring: Michael Fassbender, Katherine Waterston

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 122min



KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD

ROOM 2

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

Director: Guy Ritchie

Starring: Charlie Hunnam, Jude Law, Berges-Frisbey

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 126min



29 + 1

ROOM 3

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

Director: Kearen Pang

Starring: Chrissie Chau, Joyce Cheng, Ben Yeung

Language: Cantonese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 100min



GIFTED

ROOM 3

7:30pm

Director: Marc Webb

Starring: Chris Evans, Octavia Spencer, Mckenna Grace

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 101min

MACAU TOWER

11 MAY - 29 MAY



ALIEN: COVENANT

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

Director: Ridley Scott

Starring: Michael Fassbender, Katherine Waterston

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 122min

this day in history



1967 STANSTED TO BECOME LONDON'S THIRD AIRPORT

The British Government has given the green light to plans to convert Stansted into London's third airport.

President of the Board of Trade Douglas Jay told the House Of Commons that the small airfield in Essex would become the site for a £47m international airport by 1974.

Announcing the decision following the conclusions of a White Paper, Mr Jay said the verdict had been reached "after very careful consideration".

There had been considerable support for an alternative site on the Isle of Sheppey in Kent but Stansted was eventually selected by an inter-departmental committee.

The cost of developing Stansted, where there was already an airport with a 10,000ft runway, would be far cheaper than building a new airfield from scratch.

But Mr Jay said that the government had carried out a thorough re-examination and was satisfied that Stansted, though by no means ideal, was the best area for the airport.

Under proposals in the White Paper, the current airfield will be extended from 800 acres to 2,500 acres and once operational will include two parallel runways for supersonic and jumbo jets.

On top of the £41m development, another £6m will be allocated for road and rail access.

When the new travel facilities are completed it will take 70 minutes by road using the M11 and 45 minutes by rail to reach the airport from central London.

The development will also create jobs for over 20,000 people.

But 20 schools and a hospital will have to close and around 7,000 houses will be exposed to high levels of noise.

Peter Kirk, MP for Saffron Walden, objected to the development and said the decision would be received with "deep resentment and bitterness in his constituency".

But Mr Jay said: "We realise there will be regret in the neighbourhood but this is inescapable wherever the airport is placed.

"No matter where the airport is sited, there will be a disturbance to some people who live and work in the area."

Farmers also objected to the development on the grounds that it would lead to the loss of good agricultural land.

The National Farmers Union said: "From an agricultural point of view, few if any sites could be more disastrous.

"The government has opted for the easy and unimaginative course in preference to the realistic and bold planning for which we had hoped."

Mr Jay defended the proposals and said that compensation would be "arranged in the normal course of compulsory land purchase."

He said that Stansted would begin operating scheduled services from next year.

Improvements to all three of London's international airports including Gatwick and Heathrow, would cost £100m.

Courtesy of BBC

IN CONTEXT

The decision to build Britain's third airport at Stansted came against a background of 10 years of discussion.

More than 3,000 people from towns and villages in north Essex and east Hertfordshire took part in a rally in the weeks following the announcement.

The airport's first terminal building opened in 1969 and was expanded a year later to handle a growing number of holidaymakers.

In 1979 it was, once again, designated as London's third airport.

In 1984, the government approved a plan to develop Stansted in two phases, involving both airfield and terminal improvements that would increase the airport's capacity to 15 million passengers per year.

Construction of the current terminal building began in 1986 and was completed in 1991.

In February 2005, the High Court gave the go-ahead for further expansion at either Stansted or Luton airports.

The "Stop Stansted Expansion" group is campaigning against a second runway.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Let go of the details today - you have to face the fact that not every single one of them is going to line up nicely and neatly for you.

Taurus April 20-May 20
What you might think sounds boring could actually turn out to be totally enthralling, if you open your mind to it.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21
Take care of yourself first, and you'll be better able to help others. Someone's been paying a lot of flattering attention to you lately, but today their focus could start to overwhelm you.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22
It's natural to compare yourself to other people, but there really is no comparison. You have your own, unique personality.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Is a parent or coach just not giving you the tough love you're looking for? Wish your boss would give you more positive rather than negative reinforcement?

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22
Pulling out your credit card for every trinket you see might make you feel all warm and fuzzy in the moment, but once you get home and take a look at your booty, you're sure to feel buyer's remorse.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22
A ton of romantic energy is flying around today, but will you really have enough time to take advantage of all of it? As much as you'd like to, you can't spend all day flirting with people.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
You just learned some critical information - you are standing on a firm foundation of accurate awareness. You know the real deal and nothing will change your mind.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Your peeps are on the same wavelength as you, and that wave involves a big surge of fun, fun, fun! This is a wonderful time in your life for group projects, group travel and group socializing.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19
There are many ways to journey through life, but you will only know the path you choose to travel. This is a wonderful day to expose yourself to new art, especially if it's from a different culture.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Stand up for yourself and watch how quickly people back down. Today, you will be able to talk to absolutely anyone - even the folks who usually intimidate you. It's a great day to ask for a raise.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20
Finding a balance between what you want and what is best for everyone involved is important today. Before making any decisions, you have to factor in other people's feelings and goals.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

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

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Shoelace end; 6- Accompanied by; 10- ___ boy!; 14- Ice cream substitute; 15- 1998 Sarah McLachlan hit; 16- Warner ___; 17- Energize; 18- Moolah; 19- Broadcasts; 20- Simians; 21- Property; 23- Tiresome; 25- Parenthetical comments; 26- Chatter; 27- Sums owing; 29- The dark; 32- Dirties; 33- ___ Angeles; 36- "___ She Lovely?"; 37- Intervening, in law; 38- Chinese dynasty; 39- Non-pro sports org.; 40- Anouk of "La Dolce Vita"; 41- Seeped; 42- Seine spot; 43- ___-cone; 44- Categorize; 47- Eternal; 51- Having the same sound; 54- Clotted blood; 55- Like a line, briefly; 56- Gift tag word; 57- Alma ___; 58- Iranian coin; 59- River to the Ubangi; 60- Rise to one's feet; 61- Bern's river; 62- Mutual fund fee; 63- Trials; DOWN: 1- G sharp's equivalent; 2- Beef; 3- Adored; 4- Power of vision; 5- Unit of weight; 6- Earnings; 7- Thought; 8- Work the soil; 9- Meriting loathing; 10- Barbed-wire barricade; 11- Threesome; 12- Rich cake; 13- Donkeys; 21- Massage; 22- Grounded jets; 24- Feedbag bit; 27- Prescribed amounts; 28- Mozart's "___ kleine Nachtmusik"; 29- Actress Vardalos; 30- This ___ test...; 31- Bearded grazer; 32- Big rig; 33- Designer Claiborne; 34- Undivided; 35- J. Hancock?; 37- Jovial; 38- Circular gateway; 40- Over-50 org.; 41- Lennon's lady; 42- Breed of dog; 43- Jiff; 44- Now, in Nogales; 45- Actress Braga; 46- Campaign tactic; 47- Prepared to fire; 48- Little bits; 49- ___ we all?; 50- Geeky guys; 52- Twistable cookie; 53- Vincent Lopez's theme song; 57- Colo. clock setting;

Yesterday's solution crossword grid with filled-in words.

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

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222
Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993
Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333
Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944
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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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FOOTBALL | CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Benzema's great escape puts Madrid in final vs Juventus

IT was an inspired piece of skill by Karim Benzema that shattered Atletico Madrid's hopes of a comeback in the semifinals of the Champions League.

The French striker's spectacular move to evade three Atletico defenders led to the crucial away goal that helped put Real Madrid in the final against Juventus on June 3 in Cardiff.

The goal by Francisco "Isco" Alarcon just before halftime halted Atletico's onslaught and allowed Madrid to advance to its third final in four seasons with a 4-2 aggregate score following a 2-1 loss yesterday [Macau time].

"Benzema's move changed the game," Madrid midfielder Casemiro said.

With Atletico winning 2-0 and close to overturning the 3-0 loss from the first leg at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium, Benzema showed why he remains one of the best strikers in the world.

He picked up the ball near the left corner and quickly found himself surrounded by Jose Gimenez, Stefan Savic and Diego Godin, three of Atletico's best defenders.

Benzema apparently wanted to go back toward the midfield but suddenly changed direction and took the ball toward the end line, where he stopped and used a couple of quick touches to fool the defenders and get past them into the open space.

"After the game, I asked Benzema how he got out of there, and he said he didn't know either," Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane said. "But it gave us a goal."

Benzema sped into the area after clearing the defenders and sent a backward pass to Toni Kroos, whose shot was initially



saved by goalkeeper Jan Oblak. Isco was nearby and picked up the rebound to easily score from close range.

"Karim is an incredibly great player and today he helped us with his magic," Madrid left back Marcelo said.

Isco's goal at the Vicente Calderon Stadium left Atletico in need of scoring three more goals to advance to the final and avoid another Champions League elimination against the city rival. Madrid defeated Atletico in the final last year and in 2014, and also eliminated the crosstown opponent in the quarterfinals in 2015.

"A moment of genius from Benzema ended our dream," Atletico captain Gabi Fernandez said.

The goal allowed Madrid to match Bayern Munich's record of 61 consecutive games scoring at least one goal in all competitions, a feat the German club achieved from 2013-14. Madrid has scored 167 goals since a 0-0 draw at Manchester City in the first leg of the Champions League semifinals last year.

Madrid, an 11-time European champion, will try to become the first team to win back-to-back titles since the competition's new format was created in 1992. It will be the first club to have a chance to defend its title since Manchester United made consecutive finals in 2008-09.

After the game, I asked Benzema how he got out of there, and he said he didn't know either.

ZINEDINE ZIDANE

Now, another great of European soccer stands in their way.

Italian champions Juventus, who progressed with a 4-1 aggregate win over Monaco, are attempting to win their first Champions League title in 21 years.

The final will be a replay of the 1998 showpiece, when Real were crowned European champions for the seventh time - after a 32-year wait - thanks to Predrag Mijatovic's goal.

And it means a reunion for Madrid French manager, who played in that final for the Italian side, with his former club.

"It has been a very important club for me in my career and I keep it as a club that has given me everything. It is going to be something special," said 'Zizou', who played for Juve between 1996 and 2001. **MDT/Agencies**

Football weekend: What to watch in Europe's main leagues

ENGLAND

Three games left, three points needed.

That's the task facing **Chelsea** in a Premier League title race it has dominated since November.

Chelsea's first opportunity to clinch the trophy comes at West Bromwich Albion on Friday. If Chelsea fails to win, Tottenham - seven points behind in second place - must beat Manchester United on Sunday to keep the race alive.

Chelsea's other two matches are at home to Watford and Sunderland.

The relegation battle could also be settled this weekend, with third-to-last Hull in danger of going down along with already-demoted Middlesbrough and Sunderland.

Hull is one point behind Swansea. If Swansea beats Sunderland on Saturday, Hull must beat Crystal Palace away on Sunday to take the relegation fight to the final weekend.

SPAIN

Real Madrid has its toughest remaining challenge in the title race on Sunday when it hosts fourth-placed Sevilla for its final league game at home this season.

Madrid needs a victory to keep its fate in its own hands as the side bids for its first title since 2012.

Madrid and Barcelona are level on points atop the standings, with Barcelona ahead on the head-to-head tiebreaker. But Madrid still has three games to play, while Barcelona has two.

Barcelona visits Las Palmas at the same time on Sunday.

Barcelona's last game is at home against mid-table Eibar, while Madrid has games at Celta Vigo and Malaga.

Sevilla needs at least a draw in its final two matches to secure fourth place and a qualification spot for the Champions League.

ITALY

Juventus can take the first step toward a treble when it visits Roma on Sunday.

A draw at the capital side would be enough to hand Juventus an unprecedented sixth successive Serie A crown, with two matches to spare. Defeat would leave it four points ahead of second-placed Roma and five ahead of Napoli if the latter wins at Torino.

Since Serie A was founded in 1929, no club has won more than five straight titles. Juventus won five straight from 1931-35, Torino did it from 1943-49 (including a season that was canceled because of World War II), and Inter Milan did it from 2006-10.

If Juventus fails in the capital, it is likely to secure the title next weekend, at home to relegation-threatened Crotona.

Between those two matches, it faces Lazio in the Italian Cup final on Wednesday. Juventus then plays Real Madrid in the Champions League final on June 3.

Elsewhere, AC Milan is still looking for its first win under its new owners and it travels to Atalanta, while Inter Milan hosts Sassuolo in its first match since sacking coach Stefano Pioli. Youth team coach Stefano Vecchi will be in charge.

PORTUGAL

Benfica can win a fourth straight Portuguese league for the first time.

A win on Saturday against Vitoria Guimaraes, a team it has beaten the last seven times at home, will be enough to give Benfica an unsurmountable lead ahead of the last round.

Benfica is five points ahead of rival FC Porto with two matches to go. Porto hosts Pacos Ferreira on Sunday.

Porto was the last team to win four consecutive titles, from 2006-09. It also won five in a row, from 1995-99.

FRANCE

Although **Monaco**'s European dream is over after losing to Juventus in the Champions League semifinals, winning the French league seems an inevitable reality.

Monaco can seal the title on Sunday if it beats Lille at home and defending champion Paris Saint-Germain fails to win at Saint-Etienne.

Monaco has thrilled Europe with its attacking football, scoring 150 goals in all competitions and needing just two more to reach 100 in the league.

Saint-Etienne, an industrial city with a loyal fan base of fervent supporters, is one of the toughest away trips in Ligue 1. The atmosphere at Stade Geoffroy-Guichard will be even more emotionally charged due to it being hugely popular coach Christophe Galtier's last home game in charge.

NETHERLANDS

Feyenoord has one final chance to grab its first Eredivisie title since 1999 when it plays Heracles Almelo in Rotterdam on Sunday.

Archrival **Ajax** could win its 34th title if Feyenoord slips up for a second weekend straight.

Going into the last round, Feyenoord has a one-point lead over Ajax, which takes on Willem II in Tilburg on Sunday.

Feyenoord missed the chance to secure its 15th Dutch title last Sunday in a nervy 3-0 defeat at Excelsior, disappointing tens of thousands of fans who gathered in downtown Rotterdam and at Feyenoord's home stadium, De Kuip, ready to celebrate.

CHAMPIONS OF CHAMPIONS

- **REAL MADRID** have reached the European Cup/Champions League final for a record 15th time, ahead of AC Milan (11)
- Real have reached two successive finals for the first time since they won the trophy five times in a row between 1956 and 1960
- The Spanish club need just one more goal to become the first team to score 500 in the Champions League
- Real have won 11 of their 14 European Cup finals
- Juventus have won the trophy twice, losing a record six finals
- Both Real and Juventus join AC Milan on a record six final appearances in the Champions League
- Atletico became the first team to be eliminated by the same opponents four times in a row

opinion

Kapok
 Eric Sautedé



THE WARNING BEHIND THE PRAISE

In the morning of May 9, while addressing a large audience supposedly representative of the Macao population, Chairman of the National People's Congress Zhang Dejiang insisted on a task the government of the Macao SAR had to carry out: "Contradictions within the society never cease to exist; among poor people contradictions exist; among rich people contradictions exist; among majorities contradictions exist; among minorities contradictions exist; contradictions are to be found everywhere, regardless of time and place; what is crucial is how we correctly identify, get hold of and properly handle the issues, the difficulties and the contradictions." In a sentence of only a few lines, "contradictions" — it has to be plural as there are many of them — appeared seven times!

For anybody slightly familiar with the history of Communism in China, the use of the word (maodun) rings a particular bell.

First because it is markedly associated with Mao Zedong himself, who expanded on an original text from 1937 ("On Contradictions") to develop his thinking in one of his most famous speeches entitled "On the correct handling of contradictions among the people," delivered in February 1957. Given the comparisons that now exist between Mao and Xi Jinping, and that Zhang's southern tour is perceived as a preparation for that President Xi will embark on at the end of June, it is no overstretch to consider that Mr Zhang was actually uttering Mr Xi's words.

Second because in the 1957 harangue, Mao famously explained that "letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend [was] the policy for promoting progress in the arts and sciences and a flourishing socialist culture." It was a confirmation that criticisms were welcome, thus echoing the call for intellectual renaissance and freedom expressed by Guo Moruo, the intellectual from whom Mao had taken inspiration.

Third because by drawing a line between what was termed "antagonistic contradictions" and "non-antagonistic contradictions", Mao was indeed enriching the Leninist approach to class struggle, indicating that some contradictions — the ones that exist "within" — were acceptable, and even welcome as unavoidable, as long as they did not transform into contradictions "between" the people and what Mao called "the enemy". As a first example of enemies, Mao mentioned "Japanese imperialists, their Chinese collaborators and the pro-Japanese elements", which is rather ironic considering how some families in Macao started to build their fortune during World War II.

Of course, when it comes to the Hundred Flowers Campaign, one has to be extra careful: when Mao realised there were more than a few people expressing their discontent with the direction the Party was taking and that he was himself being targeted, contesters were rapidly hushed and soon persecuted. The tactic thus backfired, and the ones who suffered the most were those who had believed, reluctantly at first, the openness to be genuine. Yet, if Mao's former physician Li Zhisui is to be trusted, it is only because the criticism became massive that the campaign turned tragically sour. Ultimately lingers the idea that some "contradictions" — political, economic and social — can become unacceptably unsettling if they are not handled properly.

Bearing in mind the context has changed, I cannot help thinking that the very fact only six "representatives" were able to openly express their opinions after Zhang Dejiang's address serves as confirmation that behind the overall praise might lie a warning: if the contradictions were to become more antagonistic in nature, wouldn't the Macao Chinese Chamber of Commerce (Kou Hoi In), the Federation of Trade Unions (Lei Cheng I), the Kaifong (Leong Heng Kao), the Women's General Association (Wong Kit Cheng), the rising Fujian faction (Si Ka Lon) or Chui's henchmen (Eva Lou) be held responsible?

Let's hope that these self-proclaimed "representatives" will not interpret the message as an invitation to tighten the screws: after all, the recent by-census indicates that about a quarter of Macao holds a tertiary degree... No more is ignorance bliss!

THE BUZZ INDIA TOP COURT REVIEWS ISLAMIC INSTANT DIVORCE

India's Supreme Court has formally opened hearings into a number of petitions challenging the controversial practice of instant divorce in Islam, BBC reported.

The court said it would examine whether the practice known as "triple talaq" was fundamental to the religion.

India is one of a handful of countries in the

world where a Muslim man can divorce his wife in minutes by saying the word talaq (divorce) three times.

But activists say the practice is "discriminatory". The sensitive issue is being heard by a multi-faith bench made up of five judges - a Hindu, a Sikh, a Christian, a Zoroastrian and one Muslim.

EUROVISION

Pop, politics and a dancing ape - but no Russia

SPRINKLE the sequins, spark up the disco lights and get ready for battle — it's time for the Eurovision Song Contest, a celebration of kitsch and cheesy pop with an undercurrent of politics and patriotism. More than a singing contest, it's diplomacy in dancing shoes.

This week musical acts from more than 40 countries are taking the stage in Kiev to vie for the Eurovision crown, watched by some 200 million television viewers. The 62nd annual contest has clean-cut crooners, electro beats, yodeling Romanians and even a dancing gorilla. But there is also a big absence: Russia, whose participation has been scuttled by the country's diplomatic and military conflict with neighbor Ukraine.

Russia is one of Eurovision's heavy hitters, tied with Sweden for the most top-five finishes this century. But this year's Russian entrant, Yuliya Samoylova, was blocked by host Ukraine because she had toured in Crimea after Russia's 2014 annexation of the peninsula.

In response, Russia's state-owned Channel 1 television is refusing to broadcast the contest, replacing tomorrow's final [Sunday, Macau time] with a screening of the film "Alien."

As the 2016 winner, Ukraine is this year's Eurovision host.

John Kennedy O'Connor, author of Eurovision's official



NaviBand from Belarus

history, said Ukraine has long used Eurovision as a way to annoy Russia.

"Last time the contest was in Kiev it was a song about the Orange Revolution and it was allowed to compete," he said. "Ukraine has been needling away for a long time and now the contest is going to be in a real crisis."

The acrimony is ironic, since Eurovision was founded in 1956 to bring the recently warring countries of Europe together. It launched a year before the foundation of the European Economic Community, forerunner of the European Union.

"Eurovision, like the EEC, was born out of this passionate belief that we mustn't have another war in Europe," said Chris West, author of "Eurovision!" — a history of the contest and the continent. "Both institutions were driven by this sense of 'never again.'"

From its launch with seven countries, Eurovision has grown to include more than 40, including non-European

nations such as Israel and — somewhat controversially — far-off Australia.

The contest helped launch the careers of Sweden's ABBA — victors in 1974 with "Waterloo" — Canada's Celine Dion, who won for Switzerland in 1988, and Irish high-steppers Riverdance, the half-time entertainment in 1994.

Eurovision has a huge gay following and has become a symbol of optimistic liberalism — this year's motto is "celebrate diversity." Victories by transgender Israeli singer Dana International in 1998 and bearded Austrian drag queen Conchita Wurst in 2014 were hailed by liberals and condemned by conservatives.

Onstage, many Eurovision-watchers expect this year to bring resurgence for western Europe after years of eastern and Nordic dominance. The bookies' favorites are Portuguese balladeer Salvador Sobral with the syrupy "Amar Pelos Dois" ("Love For Both of Us") and Italy's Francesco Gabbani. AP

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	35-55 Good	
High Density Residential Area	50-70 Moderate	
Ambient	65-95 Moderate	

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS



GUAM Troops from the U.S., Japan and two European nations are gathering on remote U.S. islands in the Pacific for drills they say will show support for the free passage of vessels in international waters amid fears China could restrict movement in the South China Sea. The drills around Guam and Tinian may also send a message to North Korea.



INDIA A building wall collapsed onto guests at a wedding in western India, killing at 24 and injuring 28. Hundreds of guests were assembling on the outdoor lawn when a strong dust storm blew into the area, forcing people to go indoors. When the 80-foot-long wall fell, it trapped people inside the wedding hall and a covered shed built along the wall outside.



USA While the firing of FBI Director James Comey emerges as a potential distraction from the GOP's legislative agenda, the Senate intelligence committee subpoenaed former Trump national security adviser Michael Flynn for documents related to the panel's investigation into Russia's election meddling. More on p15

PORTUGAL The parents of a Brazilian boy whose recovery from a severe brain injury is being cited by the Vatican as the "miracle" needed to canonize two Portuguese children are breaking their silence to share the story. The boy's father says his then-5-year-old son, Lucas, fell 6.5 meters from a window in 2013 and sustained head injuries that doctors predicted he had little chance of surviving.

times square by rodrigo

