



RAISING AWARENESS ON ADOPTION

Sister Juliana Devoy has gathered a group of concerned citizens committed to raising awareness on adoption issues

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MAY GGR BEATS ANALYSTS' PREDICTIONS

May's gross gaming revenue reached MOP22.74 billion, up by 23.7 percent year-on-year

P5



CHINA'S NAVAL MIGHT CHALLENGES UNITED STATES

P10

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WORLD BRIEFS

AP PHOTO



PHILIPPINES A Philippine bomber plane accidentally killed 11 soldiers and injured seven others, security officials said yesterday, as troops struggled to end a bloody siege by 500 Islamic State group-aligned extremists in a southern city, one of the boldest militant attacks in Southeast Asia in years. **More on p14**

EAST TIMOR A court yesterday dismissed a criminal defamation case brought by the country's prime minister against two journalists due to a lack of evidence. Rights groups and press advocates had urged that the case be dropped, fearing it would further undermine press freedom in one of the world's youngest democracies. **More on p14**

AP PHOTO



JAPAN is building its own GPS in hopes of reducing location errors for drivers, drone operators and other users. A rocket launched yesterday from southern Japan is carrying a satellite that will form part of a Japanese GPS.

INDIA's finance minister said a massive currency overhaul that disrupted commerce across the country last year had little effect on the economy, a day after India reported a slowdown in the fourth quarter of the fiscal year.

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INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY

Good Shepherd Center aims to raise local awareness on adoption

Renato Marques

SISTER Juliana Devoy, director of the Good Shepherd Center in Macau, said during a press conference yesterday that she has gathered a group of concerned citizens committed to raising awareness on adoption and related topics.

"After the approval of the domestic violence law and in [an] interview to a Portuguese language media, I was asked about what would be my next project. At the time, I mentioned I wanted to work regarding adoption. To my joy, as soon as I started to look around for people that were interested in the topic, I was surprised that quite a few people consider this an issue that needs to be addressed in Macau now. I felt they were more open-minded than in the past," Devoy said.

"There is a lot to be done in the overall area of adoption but at the moment we want to raise awareness. That's our first goal to address this serious issue that needs attention from the community," she continued.

Devoy added that the Good Shepherd Center will host a major event on November



Juliana Devoy (left)

11, the weekend immediately after World Adoption Day on November 9.

The event will feature sharing sessions with specialists from the fields of psychology, social work and law, as well as couples from both Macau and Hong Kong who decided to adopt.

The group will hold a roundtable session with the topic "The Importance for Every

Child to Grow Up in a Family," which will take place at the Rui Cunha Foundation.

She explained that there is still much to do regarding adoption in Macau and that "although the efforts from the government to improve the quality of institutions, no institution, no matter how good it is, is better than a family."

The group said children

should be raised by biological parents "when possible" but that "we must admit that in some cases, that isn't the best solution for the child."

I was surprised that quite a few people consider this an issue that needs to be addressed in Macau.

JULIANA DEVOY

"For babies to grow up in a babies' home, no matter how good the home is, it is not good for their future development," said Devoy, explaining the aim of giving these children a family, "either a permanent one or at least a foster home."

They said it is a topic on which Macau has not made much progress.

"What we are addressing here is [what would be in] the

best interest of the children," Devoy said, explaining that the Good Shepherd Center has worked in this area since 1990. To date, the center has assisted 92 women who decided not to abort their unborn babies and sought help.

Devoy noted that 30 of those were underage mothers who, "even if they wanted and even with their own parents' consent, couldn't possibly deliver their babies for adoption until they are adults." The situation could lead to many complications, she said.

According to the center's director, there exists a problem of "culture and mindset" as many families are ashamed of these young unwed mothers, who consequently cannot bring these babies home to be raised by their own families.

"The process [of adoption] takes a long time and people calling to gather information get discouraged by the answers of people immediately saying there are no babies to adopt and they don't know when [there] will be any," said Devoy.

Instead, she advocates a more sensitive approach where people are invited to tell their story and why are they trying to adopt a child.

Another restriction under the current law states that those looking to adopt can only do so "from Macau or mainland China [...] you can't adopt from Hong Kong or from Taiwan nor is any other form of international adoption [allowed]."

TOURISM

Package tour visitors slightly increased

VISITORS on package tours totaled 677,000 in April 2017, up by 14.5 percent year-on-year and 4.3 percent month-to-month, according to the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC).

The DSEC report indicated that package tour visitors from mainland China (536,000), South Korea (41,000) and Taiwan (32,000) rose by 13.8 percent, 41.3 percent and 13.2 percent respectively year-on-year.

In the first four months of 2017, visitors on package tours totaled 2,409,000, an increase of 5.1 percent year-on-year.

Considering the effect of Easter moving from March last year to April this year, outbound residents using services of travel agencies rose by 20.5 percent year-on-year to 112,000.

Residents travelling on package tours in April (46,000) surged by 32.2 percent year-on-year, with those going to mainland

China (34,000) soaring by 44.6 percent, however those travelling to South Korea (3,500) dropped by 4.1 percent.

In the first four months of 2017, outbound residents using services of travel agencies totaled 446,000, up by 9.8 percent year-on-year.

There were 107 hotels & guesthouses operating at the end of April 2017.

The number of guest rooms within Macau increased by 13.4 percent

year-on-year to 37,000. Of this figure, 5-star hotel rooms totaled 22,000, accounting for 60.3 percent.

Meanwhile, the number of guests at hotels & guesthouses in April 2017 increased by 17.3 percent year-on-year to 1,083,000, with those from mainland China (678,000), Hong Kong (168,000) and Taiwan (41,000) rising by 10.4 percent, 44.6 percent and 6.2 percent respectively.

Guests from South Korea

soared by 94.1 percent to 37,000.

The average length of stay stood at 1.4 nights.

The average occupancy rate of hotels & guesthouses for April went up by 6.4 percentage points year-on-year to 86.1 percent, with that of 4-star hotels (89.8 percent) rising by 6.1 percentage points.

The rates of 3-star and 5-star hotels also grew by 2.4 percentage points and 6.5 percentage points respectively year-on-year.

In the first four months of 2017, the total number of guests of hotels & guesthouses was 4,129,000, up by 14.6 percent year-on-year.

During the first quarter, the average occupancy rate of hotels & guesthouses stood at 83.8 percent, up by 5.5 percentage points.

The average length of stay of guests during this period held steady at 1.4 nights when compared with the same period of last year.

Visitor-guests accounted for 72.4 percent of the total overnight visitors in the first quarter, up slightly by 0.7 percentage points year-on-year.

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CANIDROME

Legendary French actress appeals to CE over greyhounds

Daniel Beittler

IT has been revealed to the Times that a letter penned by a legendary French actress was delivered last week to the office of Chief Executive Chui Sai On, calling for his aid in coercing the Macau (Yat Yuen) Canidrome into turning over hundreds of greyhounds to local animal rights organization Anima (Macau).

Brigitte Bardot, a French actress, singer and fashion model who has dedicated decades of her life to animal rights activism, called for the Chief Executive to pressure the Canidrome into turning over the dogs, "so that their safety is ensured and adoptive families can be found for them."

The letter, dated May 15, 2017, comes after other celebrities and animal activists worldwide have shamed the Canidrome and the Macau government over the treatment of greyhounds



in the territory.

Last year, international observers described the facility as "the world's deadliest greyhound ra-

cetrack," due to the abnormally high number of euthanized dogs.

However, as the closure of the Canidrome became increasingly likely in recent months, activists changed their tone from condemnation to appeal.

"The Macau Canidrome is sadly known in the world as a place of death, where no greyhound gets out alive," reads the letter signed by the 82-year-old activist. "Please do not allow the world to identify Macau as a town of suffering where so many innocent animals die running for their life. Please help these animals and let the public image of Macau be the one of modernity and civilization."

Meanwhile, Anima (Macau)

president Albano Martins told the Times yesterday that collaborating with well-known celebrities was the next stage in the organization's plan to save the greyhounds.

"We have already won the first fight to close the Canidrome," he said.

"Now our fight is to try to get the animals [into Anima's care]. We are asking celebrities to convince the chief executive to convince the greyhounds to be delivered to us."

Martins is working on other aspects of the plan to get the animals out of Macau, including the

logistics behind their transportation. He explained that he is in talks with airlines and jetfoil operators regarding a method of transporting the greyhounds that will cause minimal discomfort.

Bardot's letter also appealed for the chief executive "not [to] allow greyhounds to be exported to any other Asian country, where no law can protect them."

Martins told the Times that this was intended to highlight the fact that most greyhounds at the Canidrome facility belong to private owners.

"The private owners can sell the animals to China or Vietnam after the Canidrome closes [...] In principle they can do that. We are saying: Please, chief executive, ask them [the owners] not to do that."

The leader of the animal rights group added that they will continue to pressure the Canidrome and the dog owners to voluntarily surrender their greyhounds to Anima.

FRENCH ANIMAL RIGHTS GROUP WANTS 100 GREYHOUNDS

ANIMA (MACAU) says that Catherine Madry, the president of French greyhound protection group, Lévriers en Détresse (Greyhounds in Distress), will visit the local group this and next week to discuss the issue of greyhounds housed at the Canidrome. According to Anima,

Madry has filed an application with the local group to adopt up to 100 of the greyhounds. Lévriers en Détresse rescues and rehabilitates greyhounds discarded at racing tracks. Madry has fought for the cause for more than 11 years, and has successfully imported greyhounds from the U.K. and Spain.

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TRIA 禪那



Ferry terminal opens, some visitors unhappy with lengthy walks

THE long-delayed Taipa Maritime Terminal opened its doors to the public yesterday, but some passengers were unhappy with the long walk from the pier to the casino shuttle buses.

After some 12 years under construction, the terminal offers passengers no restaurants or shops.

The Times visited the Taipa terminal yesterday and noted that several passengers, who chose to take shuttle buses to designated integrated resorts, found it tiring to walk from the pier to the terminals.

A few even said they would choose the Macau Ferry Terminal in future.

"We came here many times and yes, it's a very long way. We are also thinking that next time we will use the other [terminal] in Macau," said a couple who refused to be identified.

"From here [arrival hall] to the shuttle buses, it [seems] very far, and there was nothing to see," said the tourist.

"It was very tiring. I think the old one was better. There were

LYNZY VALLES



no shops but I think maybe because it is still the first day," said another.

Although several tourists find it easier to use the old Cotai terminal because of its access to bus stops and shuttle buses, some suggested that the new terminal is an improvement over the old one. Some also argued that walking from the pier to the arrival hall is not a problem.

Several tourists were also surprised by the new Taipa Maritime Terminal.

"I was just really surprised because I was here last week. It feels a bit long but it was cool, so it was okay. This is better," said another visitor, who regularly comes to Macau.

The taxi stand is connected directly to the arrival hall, while visitors going to the integrated re-

sorts will have to take some three to five minutes to walk to the bus terminals.

The 200,000-square meter mega structure includes 16 bridge-quays for fast ferries and three multipurpose berths that can be used for several kinds of ships.

As previously reported, the secretary for Transport and Public Works has informed that it may

be another year before restaurants, shops and tourist services can commence operations.

The MOP3.8 billion terminal will later embark on a third phase of development, which involves the demolition of the old temporary ferry terminal (built during phase 1) as well as the construction of a new fuel park onsite to supply the vessels operating in the new terminal. **LV**

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GAMING

May beats analysts' predictions in 10th month of consecutive gains

Daniel Beitler

GROSS gaming revenue (GGR) for the month of May reached MOP22.74 billion (USD2.83 billion), up by 23.7 percent year-on-year and 12.8 percent compared with the previous month, according to data published by the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau.

The result was the second-strongest posting this year after February (MOP23 billion) when most of the Chinese Lunar New Year holiday occurred. It beat out the estimates of several analysts who had forecasted year-on-year growth of around 20 percent.

"Macau May GGR came in better than expectations," admitted brokerage Sanford C. Bernstein, as reported by GGR Asia.

Other analysts pointed to several factors that may have dampened May's results, despite the strong showing. Union Gaming Securities Asia said that the visit of Chinese politburo member Zhang Dejiang last month may have discouraged high-rollers from the city.

In an email to the Times,

Union Gaming analyst Grant Govertsen said that "the consensus was expecting a greater negative impact as a result of the visit to Macau by the high level PRC official from May 8-10."

"This impact was likely less than anticipated, hence the better than expected GGR," he added.

Moreover, the Dragon Boat Festival, which took place this week may have also had a role in attracting a higher number of tourists this year and consequently driving up gaming revenues.

According to the Public Security Police force, Macau hosted more than 404,000 visitors between May 27 and 30, some 9 percent more than in the same holiday period in 2016.

Marking the 10th consecutive month of growth, the performance of the gaming sector last month is a strong indication that the industry is stabilizing.

Union Gaming analysts expect "the growth rate to remain well north of 20 percent [...] suggesting the recovery is in full-tilt." In a note released yesterday, the organization also forecasted a 22 percent increase in GGR for the second quarter of this



year and a full-year increase of 14 percent.

The accumulated gross gaming revenue for the first five months of the year was MOP106.38 billion, compared with MOP91.9 billion between January and May 2016, representing an increase of 15.8 percent.

Due to the volatility of Macau's gaming market, substantial differences are often recorded when making year-on-year comparisons, particularly when major Chinese holidays are concerned. Accumulated gross gaming revenue accounts for this variance by averaging the year-on-year monthly values.

However, in terms of year-on-year growth, May 2017 represented the biggest annual increase in more than three years since February

2014 recorded a 40.3 percent rise.

February 2014 was the peak month for gaming revenues in the territory, when they exceeded MOP38 billion. Last

month's revenue accounts for just 60 percent of that figure, potentially highlighting that there is still significant 'catch up' left for Macau casino operators.

SINGAPORE CASINOS STRUGGLE TO GET GAMBLERS TO PAY UP

A REPORT from business news broadcaster CNBC said that Singapore casinos may have more difficulties forcing gamblers to pay up than Macau operators. Citing figures from Bloomberg, which showed that the number of lawsuits against gamblers had grown from two in 2013 to nearly 50 in 2014, the broadcaster put the respective difficulty down to the number of local junkets. While some 200 licensed junket operators can provide credit to high-rollers in Macau,

there are only three legal organizations in Singapore. When gamblers fail to repay their debts, junket operators can struggle financially to cover the losses. With overexposed risk due to the small number of junkets, Singapore casinos are forced to resort to lawsuits to recover the money. Recovering unpaid debts from mainland gamblers once they return to the People's Republic of China can be a daunting prospect for junket operators due to the lack of legal means of doing so.

CULTURE

CCM to launch ARTmusing Summer

THE Macau Cultural Center (CCM) will launch a new edition of ARTmusing Summer this month, which will host over 350 events designed to inspire and entertain children and adults alike, according to a statement from the entity.

The series, one of the most popular annual programs at CCM, has in previous years attracted over 15,000 attendees across all performances, screenings and workshops.



"Echoes Of Our Childhood"

This year, ARTmusing Summer will run from late June until the end of August, introducing "a

myriad of artistic categories through [...] an array of activities for all ages, from toddlers and youth

to parents and practitioners."

This year's keynote performances include "Rain" by Australia's Drop Bear Theatre, an immersive installation of movement and music that will satisfy the senses of both adults and children, and a dance theater adaptation of Hans Christian Andersen's classic, "The Little Match Girl".

Home-grown Macau production, "Echoes of our Childhood", will be

staged between August 10 and 13, offering young children the chance to "wander through a magical place full of touching memories [...] living through their parents' nostalgic yesteryears." This adventure-performance merges dance, sound effects and installation pieces, and highlights traditional toys and tools of former generations.

Among the other activities in this year's pro-

gram is a series of "Summer Workshops" to be held between July 1 and August 27, covering animation, puppetry, storytelling, a cappella singing and physical movement sessions.

More advanced workshops that offer a "more professional approach to the performing arts" will include sessions on theatrical photography, theater music design and acting.

The summer of activities comes to a close on August 27 with "ARTmusing Fun" - a party that gathers thousands of children and their parents at CCM.

China-Portuguese Speaking Countries fund comes to Macau

Julie Zhu

THE USD1 billion China and Portuguese-speaking Countries Cooperation and Development Fund temporary headquarters were inaugurated yesterday.

The fund's temporary office is located in the Business Support Center, a unit under the Macau Trade and Investment Promotion Institute. It will later move to a dedicated trade cooperation service platform complex for China and Portuguese-speaking countries, to be built close to the Nam Van lake.

Together with enterprises from mainland China and Macau, the fund signed two strategic agreements on investment and cooperation between Macau and the Portuguese-speaking countries.

On the sidelines of the ceremony, IPIM president Jackson Chang said that since November 2016, different representing offices in mainland China, along with IPIM, have already received 21 inquiries and one application regarding the fund.



The Chief Executive, Chui Sai On, unveils the plaque of the fund's headquarters

Following the fund's official establishment in Macau, IPIM will step up publicity efforts and organize more economic and trade activities, as well as promote the fund in Portuguese-speaking countries. IPIM hopes to enhance mainland enterprises' knowledge of the fund.

The director of the Macao Economic Services (DSE), Tai Kin Ip, said the fund will offer Macau new financial services, and will provide enterprises with information regarding investments in and from China and the Portuguese-speaking countries.

The new fund will provide consultation services and assist in securing project financing for enterprises in Macau, while helping

enterprises from mainland China and the Portuguese-speaking countries to get involved in China's Belt and Road initiative.

The fund is expected to strengthen Macau's role as the center of financial and commercial cooperation for China and the Portuguese-speaking countries.

The fund was one of six collaborative measures announced by the central government at the third Ministerial Conference of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries in 2010.

Since its official establishment in June 2013, the forum has sought to bring about financial, invest-

ment and trade cooperation between enterprises from China and the SARs, as well as the Portuguese-speaking countries.

The fund, which controls capital of USD1 billion, was co-financed and established by the National Development Bank and the Macau Industrial and Commercial Development Fund.

The China-Africa Development Fund has been entrusted with the administration of the fund, which had only approved two projects (one each in Mozambique and Angola) as of October 2016.

According to data released yesterday, the fund is assessing over 20 projects and aims to extend its coverage to all Portuguese-speaking countries.

During the keynote speeches at the ceremony, several people commented on the importance of infrastructure.

Tomas Kuta, Senior Vice President of Sales at Volvo Construction Equipment, stated that it is important to understand the trends shaping the world, such as "urbaniza-

tion and demographic changes."

He noted that by 2030, 60 percent of the world's population will live in cities, and that the major contributors to this urbanization will be Asia and emerging economies. He also touched on topics such as the importance of climate change and the growing global network of connected devices and computers.

"In the next three years, there will be 75 billion interconnected devices, [...] this is just the start," he said.

The launch of The Belt and Road Infrastructure Development Index (2017) and The Report on the Belt and Road Infrastructure Development Index (2017) took place after the speeches.

The latter index is the first of its kind regarding infrastructure construction and investment internationally. According to the report, east European countries, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations are offering strong advantages in terms of infrastructure development. Industries such as transportation and electric power will be key engines in the development of international infrastructure.

Fang Qiuchen, chairman of China International Contractors Association, noted that Indonesia, Iran and India are among the top 10 countries for infrastructure development in 2017.

Imports down in April

TOTAL merchandise import declined by 1.1 percent year-on-year to MOP5.42 billion in April 2017, according to data released on Wednesday by the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC). Imports of mobile phones and construction materials decreased by 32.8 percent and 11.1 percent respectively.

Total merchandise export for the same period amounted to MOP839 million, up by 11 percent year-on-year, with the value of re-exports standing at MOP692 million.

The value of imports in the first four months of the year grew

by 4.4 percent year-on-year to MOP23.36 billion, while the total value of exports was up by 9.3 percent to MOP3.19 billion. The trade deficit widened to MOP19.57 billion.

Analyzed by place of origin, merchandise import from mainland China (MOP7.72 billion) decreased by 6 percent year-on-year in the first four months of the year, whereas imports from the European Union (MOP6.05 billion) increased by 14 percent. Imports from Portuguese-speaking countries (MOP195 million) fell by 6.1 percent.

DSAT educates motorcyclists on new helmet regulations

THE Transport Bureau (DSAT), together with the Public Security Police Force (PSP), held an operation at Av Doutor Mario Soares to raise awareness of new helmet regulations that will come into force on June 13.

DSAT staff carried out a mock inspection and handed informational leaflets to a group of riders about the rules to follow.

According to the DSAT's

deputy Head of Vehicle Division Kam Chun Kit, more than 90 percent of the helmets that are currently in use across Macau already meet the new standards. This information somewhat contradicts the initial idea that most of the equipment in use would have to be replaced.

The new rules will be effective for a six-month probation period before being fully enforced. During this phase,

officers will issue verbal warnings instead of tickets.

Speaking to the media on the sidelines of the operation, Kam said the DSAT and PSP would only target helmets that do not offer sufficient protection to the riders, such as bicycle helmets and construction hard hats.

Kam explained that if officers have doubts about helmet inspection, they can consult the supporting DSAT staff.

corporate bits

SANDS CHINA PARTICIPATES IN WORLD CHALLENGE DAY



Sands China team members participated in World Challenge Day on Wednesday. Over 150 team members from across all Sands China properties gathered at The Parisian Macao, as cited in a statement issued by the gaming operator.

Representatives from the

Sports Bureau (ID) led Sands China team members to complete a World Challenge Day exercise activity organized by the ID and the Macau Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau.

World Challenge Day is an annual event in Macau sanctioned by the Association For International Sport for All and the Asian Sport for All Association.

Its goal is to generate awareness of the importance of exercise in maintaining a healthy lifestyle by motivating people to be physically active for 15 minutes in a World Challenge Day activity.

MGM MACAU TO LAUNCH RIESLING WINE MONTH

Throughout the month of June, MGM Macau guests can sample a wide array of culinary delights and Riesling wine at Imperial Court Chinese Restaurant, Pastry Bar and ABA Bar.

The gaming operator said in a statement that the offer is part of a summertime "Deutsche Riesling Week".

Riesling is one of the noble grape varieties that can produce diverse styles of white wine, especially sweeter German wines. These comprise of alluring floral bouquets, as well as hints of honey and fruit aromas, such as peach and apricot.

MGM Macau is promoting various offers at the three



restaurants. The offers include pairing Riesling wine with a Dim Sum Tasting Lunch at Imperial Court, a Riesling-inspired cake and cocktail at Pastry Bar, and a Germany Riesling "Tasting Flight" with a sommelier's selection at ABA Bar.

COTAI WATER JET LAUNCHES PROMOTIONS



Cotai Water Jet is offering a range of promotions, including a MasterCard 'buy one get one free' special and complimentary access to Level 7 of The Parisian Macao's Eiffel Tower upon presenting same-day ferry tickets.

The ferry service company is also offering a 15 percent discount on tickets to holders of designated airline boarding

passes, and discounts on City Route tickets to those holding Kung Fu Panda Adventure Ice World tickets.

Passengers who purchase full-fare adult tickets for the City route or Airport route using World MasterCard or World Elite MasterCard are entitled to a complimentary Cotai First class ticket for the same route. The promotion ends July 14.

Here are the theories why China may be supercharging the yuan

CHINA'S yuan has emerged from hibernation surprise with an improbable surge that's left strategists asking - why?

After meandering in a stable range against the dollar for most of the year, the yuan's break-out move - which saw it jump to 2017 highs this week in both its on- and offshore markets - came after officials said they were using a new method to set the fixing, a reference rate set each day that's used to manage the currency versus its U.S. counterpart.

While most agree the hand of the state is probably at play when it comes to the yuan's best-in-Asia move higher, what's less clear is the motivation. In January, officials were said to be intervening to burn speculators who'd built up bearish positions, but that doesn't seem to be the case this time.

Analysts have their theories - here's a round-up:

MOODY'S SHOCK

China was none too pleased with Moody's Investors Service's unexpected credit downgrade, which elicited a stinging rebuke from the finance ministry and a heap of criticism from state media. The yuan has jumped almost 2 percent offshore since the May 24 rating cut, which likely spurred intervention from the authorities and even the changes to the fixing formula, said Jason Daw, head of emerging-market currency strategy at Societe Generale SA.



SOOTHING MARKETS

Sentiment toward mainland Chinese assets had deteriorated before the Moody's move, with stock and bond markets whipsawing traders amid Beijing's deleveraging drive. Bloomberg Intelligence's Chief Asia Economist Tom Orlik says bolstering the yuan could be part of a broader effort to calm markets amid that crackdown. Also, with a twice-a-decade leadership re-shuffle in the Communist Party due later this year, China's tolerance for market volatility is low, he said - the state is moving to "put a floor" under markets.

FED FACTOR

Orlik's other theory is that the People's Bank of China is bolstering the yuan pre-emptively, amid

prospects of another interest-rate hike from the Federal Reserve this month. With evidence Chinese growth may have peaked for 2107, the PBOC may not want to follow suit with its own tightening and is instead turning to other means to support the currency. Fiona Lim, senior currency analyst at Malayan Banking Bhd, subscribes to the Fed idea, saying policy makers may be wanting to build more guidance into the yuan to boost market confidence ahead of a prospective dollar rally. The PBOC didn't immediately respond to faxed questions about the yuan on Wednesday.

PRICE MISMATCH

This one's for the FX nerds and has gained a lot of traction with currency strategists. Concern

over the yuan being "consistently weaker" than the fixing rate at the end of the Chinese trading day triggered the changes to the reference rate, according to Gao Qi, a currency strategist at Scotiabank. What the PBOC viewed as irrational depreciation pressure on the yuan was preventing it from achieving a more "fundamentals-based" closing price, said Tim Condon of ING Groep NV. China tweaked the fixing formula - which also incorporates the closing level - to narrow the gap between this price and the reference rate. SocGen's Daw is also on board with this theory. "It shows that China may prefer a stronger currency when the dollar weakens," said Tommy Xie of Oversea-Chinese Banking Corp.

NO MORE WEAKNESS

Yuan weakness has been a hot topic since the election of Donald Trump, with the currency's three-year run of declines spurring claims that China is deliberately sending it lower to make its exports more competitive. While that pressure may have eased, the yuan's persistent weakness against currencies other than the dollar may be behind the recent bout of strength, said Khoon Goh, head of Asia research at Australia & New Zealand Banking Group Ltd.

"The authorities are not satisfied with the yuan merely remaining stable against the

dollar," they want losses versus a 24-currency basket to be arrested too, Goh said.

A "herd mentality" in markets meant there was a bias toward yuan weakness, said Peter Chia Chih Siong of United Overseas Bank Ltd.

LINGERING TRUMP CONCERNS

While the U.S. has backed off some of its more strident criticism of China's currency policy, Nomura Holdings Inc. analysts said in a May 26 note that they noticed a shift in the yuan's fixing regime from early April, just before Trump met with Chinese President Xi Jinping. The daily rate was coming in stronger than what the analysts who tracked it expected throughout April, fueling speculation of a tweak that was basically confirmed last Friday when the government said they were considering adding the "counter-cyclical adjustment factor" to the fixing formula. U.S. political pressure may be behind China's quest for a stable yuan, according to Nomura.

BELT AND ROAD

China rolled out the blue skies for its Belt and Road summit last month, which saw leaders from around the world descend on Beijing as the government showcased what's shaping up to be its cornerstone diplomatic initiative. China has been pushing companies to use yuan as part of the global infrastructure spending spree, and the currency is up more than 1 percent onshore since the meeting. Improving the yuan's prospects and damping market volatility could boost overseas investor appetite for yuan-denominated assets, said Ken Cheung, an Asian currency strategist at Mizuho Bank Ltd. in Hong Kong. **Bloomberg**

Macadamia nut craze transforms farmland in South Africa's east

Derek Alberts

BOOMING demand for macadamias is transforming farmland in eastern South Africa, as landowners switch focus from bananas and sugarcane to the creamy nuts used in sweet treats from ice cream to cookies.

First introduced in South Africa in the 1960s, evergreen macadamia nut trees are grown on farms across the Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal provinces, with about 2,000 hectares being added every year, according to the local industry group. Annual sales from the

country, which vies with Australia as the top producer and exporter, have surpassed 4 billion rand (USD309 million), from 32 million rand two decades ago.

"The macadamia story is a beautiful one," said Richard Mattison, one of the biggest private growers in South Africa, who has about 600 hectares of the trees on his farm near Port Edward, south of the coastal city of Durban. "In 2009, we got about 5 rand a kilogram of nuts. Now we're getting between 110 and 120 rand."

Estimated global consumption of macadamia

nut kernels surged 59 percent between 2010 and 2014, according to data from the International Nut and Dried Fruit Council. Yet the nuts, which are either sold in their shiny, brown shells or processed to extract a round, creamy kernel, only account for about 1 percent of global tree nut production, with almonds, cashews and walnuts leading the rankings.

South Africa's output is likely to more than double by 2020, according to Alex Whyte, head of Europe, Middle East and Africa sales at the Green Farms Nut Company, which proces-

ses about 25 percent of the domestic crop. The country may harvest as much as 45,000 metric tons of nuts this year, according to the association. About 95 percent of production is exported, with China, the U.S. and Canada among the biggest buyers.

Besides an expansion in planting - farmers added 7.5 million new trees last year - yields are also improving as growing techniques improve.

"From extracting between two to three tons a hectare, we're now getting between six and seven tons," said Mattison.

Production of top quali-



ty nuts in the sub-tropical coastal region of KwaZulu-Natal is expanding faster than any other place in the world, according to Andrew Sheard, technical manager for Mayo Macadamias, which processes and markets the nuts.

Macadamia nut trees inter-crop well with bananas, making their cultivation a "no-brainer," he said. "An established banana plantation provides the perfect micro-climate for a macadamia sapling."

William Davidson, who farms in Umfolozi, about 220 kilometers northeast of Durban, is among those cashing in on the macadamia boom. He has about 60 hectares of the trees under cultivation, in addition to crops of sugar cane, timber and bananas, and plans to plant another 140 hectares by October.

"It's all about splitting the risk and diversifying with a crop that the market can't get enough of," Davidson said. **Bloomberg**

REAL ESTATE MATTERS

Is now a good time to buy Macau property?

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.

www.JMLProperty.com
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JULIET RISDON

Are prices going to keep climbing?

This article runs at least once per year and should probably run more; Will prices keep rising, or should I wait for prices to drop before buying a Macau property?

As always, it's not a simple yes or no response. The answer varies according to your requirements and circumstances.

The first decision to make is whether you are looking for a home or an investment property. Just to be clear, it is fully understood that if you buy a home you also want it to be a good investment of course. The fundamental difference between a home and an investment property is simply 'are you going to live in it'?

If yes, it's a home. If no, it's an investment property (even if you think you might live in the property later).

If you are looking for a home, the equation is relatively straightforward. Whilst prices are high, so are rents. By renting, the entire cost of your rent is a liability. If you buy a property, only the cost of the interest is a liability, and the part of the loan payment that reduces the debt is an asset.

Although in reality it is a little more complex, the easiest comparison to make is between the amount you would pay in interest if you bought a home versus the amount you are paying in rent.

If you would pay less interest than rent, it makes sense to buy a home, especially when you consider the other factors such as the likelihood of rents increasing, and the instability of renting a property instead of controlling your destiny by owning it.

This brings to the fore the question of interest rates. We can say with as much certainty as it's possible to muster in this unstable world that interest rates must rise at some point. They have remained at almost 'zero' for such a long time there is nowhere else for them to go, and as such it would be prudent to factor in a rise in interest rates.

As an investor, you are well aware that although prices have dropped from their record high two years ago. No-one knows whether prices will go up or down in the short term, but if we look ahead five years the question to ask is 'do I project that prices will be higher or lower than today'? The demand for rental proper-

ty remains strong in this highly transient city, and it is likely that this situation will remain as the status quo for the foreseeable future.

Other points to consider include the possible 24/7 opening of the border with China, the influence that Hengqin may have if Macau is ever granted free access, and what effect the Hong Kong / China bridge may have on Macau.

If you believe that Macau still has room for growth, investing with 'responsible' leverage is the way to maximize your returns. By 'responsible' leverage we mean borrowing an amount of money that can be covered by the rent on the property under normal circumstances, and can be covered from your own pocket if necessary.

On the other hand, if you are lucky enough to be able to purchase a property using only your cash, the investment and return may not be so attractive now.

In summary the decision on whether or not to buy a property depends primarily on your circumstances and requirements. Our suggestion is not to get carried away with the idea of getting rich, and only do things that allow you to sleep peacefully at night.

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Senior official gets life in prison for USD22m in bribes

Matthew Brown, Beijing

THE former head of China's statistics bureau was sentenced to life in prison after being convicted of taking massive bribes over more than two decades — one of a spate of newly-resolved public corruption cases involving almost USD100 million in money and illicit gifts.

National Bureau of Statistics head Wang Baoan was accused of trading political favors for money, sex, gifts, property and business concessions, according to a court in Hebei province and the official Xinhua News Agency. The bribes reportedly worth 153 million yuan (\$22.4 million) were channeled to Wang either directly or through relatives.

Control over information such as bank lending and local economic growth is enormously valuable in China, where the government often operates in secret and officials are mainly evaluated for promotion based on their ability to meet economic development targets.

Wang's sentencing was one of seven in corruption trials involving senior public officials reported Wednesday and yesterday by Xinhua. The cases in-

XINHUA



Wang Baoan (center) the former head of China's National Bureau of Statistics, stands trial at the Intermediate People's Court of Zhangjiakou in Hebei Province, this week

involved a combined 650 million yuan (\$95.7 million) in bribes, an enormous sum compared to the relatively modest salaries paid to public officials in China.

Four of the officials including Wang received life in prison.

President Xi Jinping has made attacking corruption a central issue since taking leadership of the ruling Communist Party in late 2012. Although the pace of investigations has slowed so-

mewhat, prosecutions were reportedly launched against 48 senior officials last year alone.

A former top general and a past member of the party's all-powerful Politburo Standing Committee have also been imprisoned under the campaign. On Friday, Chinese authorities executed former Inner Mongolia police chief Zhao Liping after he was convicted of murder, taking bribes and other charges.

Zhao's family said he was tortured to force a confession.

Wang, the National Bureau of Statistics head, was accused of taking bribes beginning in 1994 and continuing until 2016, when he was expelled from the Communist Party and the investigation into his activities began. During that period, he also served in the State Administration of Taxation and the Ministry of Finance.

In August, Xinhua described Wang as "morally bankrupt," and accused him of frequenting high-end hotels and luxurious entertainment venues, as well as trading power and money for sex "insatiably."

Under his sentence his personal property was to be confiscated.

Three other former officials also received life sentences Wednesday and Thursday: Lu Ziyue, former mayor of Ningbo in Zhejiang province, for taking bribes worth 148 million yuan (\$21.6 million) between 1999 and 2016; Chen Xuefeng, former member of the standing committee of the Communist Party in Henan province, for taking bribes worth 125 million yuan (\$18.4 million) between 2000 and 2015 and embezzling 5.5 million yuan (\$809,000) of public funds; and Liu Zhigeng, former vice governor of Guangdong province, for taking money and gifts worth 98 million yuan (\$4.4 million), Xinhua reported.

Shorter prison sentences were given to three others, the news agency said.

The former chairman of the Wuhan Iron and Steel Corp., Deng Qilin, received 15 years for taking 55 million yuan (\$8.2 million) in bribes. Former Sichuan province Vice Governor Li Chengyun received 10 years for taking 6.36 million yuan (\$976,000) in bribes. And former Guangdong province senior legislator Wang Yang received 16-1/2 years for taking 63 million yuan (\$9.3 million) in bribes and vote buying. **AP**

AD

JUNHO, MÊS DE PORTUGAL

CELEBRAÇÕES DO 10 DE JUNHO
DIA DE PORTUGAL, DE CAMÕES E DAS COMUNIDADES PORTUGUESAS

Exposição de pintura portuguesa
ALFREDO LUZ, CRUZEIRO SEIXAS E JOÃO PAULO
Clube Militar de Macau
8 a 24 de junho | 18:30

Festival de Gastronomia e Vinhos de Portugal
PRIMAVERA 2017
com os chefes
JOSÉ JÚLIO VINTÉM E CATARINA P. ÁLVARES
Clube Militar de Macau
de 9 a 19 de junho

Encontro com o escritor
JOAQUIM FURTADO
Café Oriente - IPOR
13 de junho | 18:30

Espectáculo
"NO PRECÍPIO ERA O VERBO"
Teatro D. Pedro V | 4 de junho | 20:00

Inauguração da exposição do cartoonista
RODRIGO DE MATOS
Espaço expositivo do Consulado-Geral de Portugal
5 de junho | 18:30

Inauguração da exposição de aquarelas "NOTURNO" de
FILIPPE MIGUEL DAS DORES
Albergue SCM | 6 de junho | 18:30

Inauguração da exposição "DEBRIS" de
VHLS
Oficinas Navais nº 1
Centro de Arte Contemporânea
31 de maio | 18:30

Lançamento do CD de música infantil
"CASTELOS NO AR"
Pequeno Auditório do CCM
9 de junho | 20:00

Inauguração da exposição
"O MAR" de
ANA PESSANHA
Galeria da Casa Garden
7 de junho | 18:30

Inauguração da exposição coletiva dos alunos dos
CURSOS DE GRAVURA
da Casa de Portugal em Macau
Espaço expositivo da Residência Oficial do Consol-Geral de Portugal
10 de junho | 18:30

Concerto com
JOÃO CAETANO
Grande Auditório do CCM
2 de junho | 20:00

Cerimónia do
HASTEAR DA BANDEIRA
Consulado-Geral de Portugal
10 de junho | 9:30

MOSTRA DE CINEMA PORTUGUÊS
Cinemateca Paixão
30 de junho, 1 e 2 de julho

MÊS DO LIVRO PORTUGUÊS
Livreria Portuguesa
de 5 a 22 de junho

TAÇA DAS CONFEDERAÇÕES
Café Oriente - IPOR
17 de junho a 2 de julho

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China's growing naval might confronts US supremacy in Asia

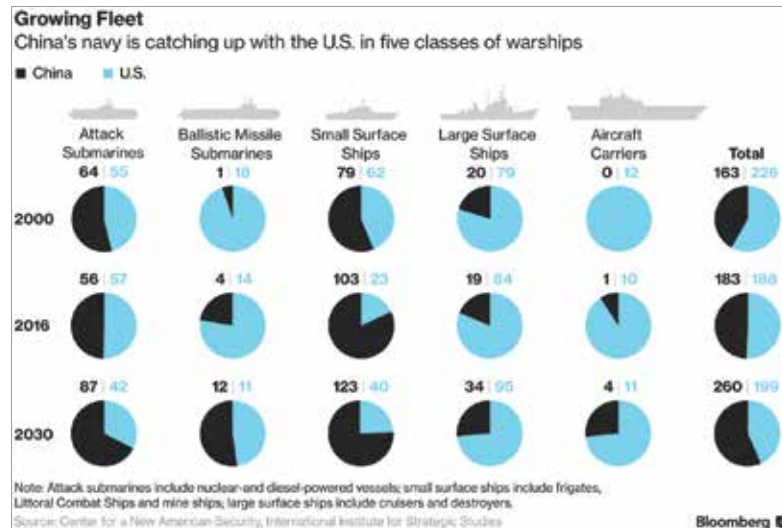
David Tweed & Adrian Leung

SHIP by ship, port by port, China has over the past two decades been assembling one of the essential engines of global power: a modern navy capable of projecting force far from home.

China's "blue water" navy - and how to respond to it - will be on the minds of Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis and others gathering in Singapore this weekend for Asia's most high-profile security conference, the Shangri-La Dialogue. From the East China Sea to the Horn of Africa, the growing presence of Chinese warships is already shaping world affairs, a trend that will only accelerate.

"By 2030, the existence of a global Chinese navy will be an important, influential and fundamental fact of international politics," said Patrick Cronin, director of the Center for a New American Security's Asia-Pacific security program. The U.S. and its allies "need to begin preparing for a 'risen China,' rather than a rising China."

By one measure, the People's Liberation Army has already caught up with the U.S. - Asia's preeminent sea power since World War II. China had 183 cruisers, destroyers, small surface ships and submarines last year, compared with 188 for the U.S. That's according



It is vitally important that China respects the rule of law and respects the principal that might is not right.

MALCOLM TURNBULL
AUSTRALIAN PM

to a CNAS analysis of data supplied by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, which organizes the Shangri-La meeting.

CNAS projected in a March report that the PLA Navy will deploy 260 such ships by the

end of the next decade, surpassing an estimated 199 for the U.S. That growth has helped fuel calls for a U.S. shipbuilding surge, with the Navy's operations chief, Admiral John Richardson, saying earlier this month in Singapore that America needed to build more warships - and fast.

While President Donald Trump has called for increasing the U.S. fleet by more than 25 percent, his first budget proposal released last week included funds for only two small Littoral Combat Ships.

To be sure, projecting naval power across oceans often means aircraft carriers. And deploying carrier strike groups around the world - like the 10 the U.S. now operates - requires a network of overseas bases. China lacks both. Frigates and other small ves-

sels are expected to comprise the bulk of the country's future fleet.

Chinese President Xi Jinping is nonetheless making preparations to be able to project force into the Indian and Pacific oceans, which surround the country's growing economic interests in Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia. China launched its first domestically built aircraft carrier in April, the second of as many as six such vessels.

The country is also developing its first overseas base - Chinese officials call it a "support facility" - in the East African country of Djibouti, where the French and U.S. also have military installations. Such opportunities are expected to grow as China helps develop ports around the world under Xi's 21st Century Maritime Silk Road trade-and-infrastructure program.

How to respond to China's

growing naval power has preoccupied many of the admirals, ministers and defense contractors who are expected to begin assembling Friday at the Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore.

"It is vitally important that China respects the rule of law and respects the principal that might is not right," Turnbull told Bloomberg Television yesterday in an interview ahead of his address to the conference.

Chinese defense spending is on track to exceed the rest of East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and Oceania combined this year, according to estimates from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. China's neighbors are now expanding their own fleets.

This year alone, India, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand have announced plans to build or acquire submarines. India aims to add 60 warships over the next decade to amassing a 200-vessel fleet. The proliferation of submarines prompted Singapore's naval chief, Rear Admiral Lai Chung Han, to call for a code of conduct earlier this month to reduce the risk of accidents. **Bloomberg**

BEIJING MUST REIN IN RECKLESS NORTH KOREA, TURNBULL SAYS

AUSTRALIAN PRIME Minister Malcolm Turnbull joined the U.S. in imploring China to rein in North Korea, saying the regime was becoming increasingly reckless and must be curtailed. "China has the greatest leverage over North Korea and with the greatest leverage comes the greatest responsibility," Turnbull, 62, said in an interview with Bloomberg Television yesterday. "We look

to Beijing to bring the pressure to bear on the regime in Pyongyang, to bring it to its senses so that it ceases threatening the peace of the region with its reckless conduct."

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, on a visit to Berlin, told reporters the parties must get "back to the negotiating table" and that China opposed all types of nuclear and missile tests by North Korea.

Beijing will continue with climate pact even if US pulls out

CHINESE Premier Li Keqiang said yesterday fighting climate change is a "global consensus" and an "international responsibility."

Speaking in Berlin about the Paris climate change accord, he said that "China in recent years has stayed true to its commitment."

Without mentioning the U.S. specifically, he said China has been "actively promoting the Paris agreement and we were one of the first countries to ratify the Paris agreement."

He added: "Fighting climate change is a glo-

bal consensus, it's not invented by China... and we realize that this is a global consensus agreement and that as a big developing nation we should shoulder our international responsibility."

Earlier, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said that it will work with the European Union to uphold the international agreement on climate change even if the U.S. pulls out.

President Donald Trump is expected to announce his decision on whether to abandon the Paris climate accord ear-

ly today [Macau time].

While not mentioning the U.S. by name, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told reporters that climate change is a "global challenge" that no country can ignore.

"No matter whether other countries' positions may change, we will continue to uphold" a model of sustainable development, Hua said at a regularly scheduled news conference.

China is the top emitter of man-made carbon dioxide emissions, and the United States is second. Both were key to

reaching an agreement at Paris in 2015, which came into force in November and aims to keep global warming below 2 degrees Celsius compared with pre-industrial times.

Trump claimed before taking office that climate change was a "hoax" created by China to hurt the U.S. economy, an assertion that stands in defiance of broad scientific consensus.

In March, he signed an executive order to roll back Obama-era policies regulating carbon emissions. Trump said he wanted to create more



coal mining jobs, though industry analysts say demand is likely to decline as the price of solar, wind and other alternatives falls.

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang will discuss the Paris agreement in talks with EU leaders in Brussels today.

"We wish to work with the EU to strengthen our communication and

practical cooperation in climate change," Hua said.

Asked what kind of exchanges Beijing's leaders have had with Trump regarding his decision, Hua said China and the United States "have maintained close communications at various levels" on subjects including climate change. **AP**

Maker of Ivanka shoes denies labor violations

Erika Kinetz, Shanghai

A Chinese company that makes shoes for Ivanka Trump and other brands denied allegations yesterday of excessive overtime and low wages made by three activists who have been arrested or disappeared.

The Associated Press reported Tuesday that Hua Haifeng, an investigator for China Labor Watch, a New York-based nonprofit, had been arrested on a charge of illegal surveillance while his two colleagues — Li Zhao and Su Heng — are missing and rights groups fear they have been detained. They were investigating Huajian Group factories in the southern Chinese cities of Ganzhou and Dongguan.

"We are shocked," Long Shan, a spokeswoman for the Huajian Group, said in an email to The Associated Press. "As a renowned global media outlet, you have put out many untrue repor-

ts not based on facts and without our consent."

China Labor Watch executive director Li Qiang said he still had not been able to confirm the status of the two men. Huajian was contacted before AP's initial reports were published but issued no statement until Thursday.

Long said the company had stopped producing Ivanka Trump shoes months ago. She said that Hua Haifeng joined the group's factory in Dongguan on May 20, but left after less than a week, and Su Heng began working at their Ganzhou factory on April 28, but also left after a short time. She said she did not know their current whereabouts.

"By coming to Huajian to work, they are Huajian employees. Huajian staff must comply with China's laws and regulations and Huajian's rules," she said, adding that at least one of the men "used methods like taking photographs and video

to obtain the company's trade secrets, which is not in line with the company's regulations. Our company has the right to hold him accountable."

She said reports of managers verbally abusing workers, including insults and a crude reference in Chinese to female genitalia, were based on misunderstanding. "It is the local dialect being used as management language," she said.

She said Huajian was looking into allegations of improper use of student interns.

Ivanka Trump's brand declined to comment on the allegations or the arrest and disappearances. Marc Fisher, which produces shoes for Ivanka Trump and other brands, said it was looking into the allegations.

China Labor Watch has been exposing poor working conditions at suppliers to some of the world's best-known companies for nearly two decades, but Li said his work has never before

AP PHOTO



attracted this level of scrutiny from China's state security apparatus.

The arrest and disappearances come amid a crackdown on perceived threats to the stability of China's ruling Communist Party, particularly from sources with foreign ties such as China Labor Watch. Faced with ri-

sing labor unrest and a slowing economy, Beijing has taken a stern approach to activism in southern China's manufacturing belt and to human rights advocates generally, sparking a wave of critical reports about disappearances, public confessions, forced repatriation and torture in custody. AP

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FLIGHT 128

Malaysia Airlines jet diverted in Australia over bomb scare

Rod McGuirk, Canberra

A Malaysia Airlines plane returned to Australia after a mentally ill passenger threatened to detonate a bomb and attempted to enter the cockpit before he was tackled and tied up by passengers, police said yesterday.

The 25-year-old Sri Lankan man Manodh Marks had been discharged from a Melbourne psychiatric hospital on Wednesday before buying a ticket on the late-night flight to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Victorian Police Chief Commissioner Graham Ashton said.

Police have determined he had no "terrorist" links or associates, Ashton said.

About 10 minutes after Flight 128 took off from Melbourne, Marks walked from his economy seat to the cockpit door clutching an electronic device and threatening to blow up the plane, creating panic among passengers. Passengers subdued him and tied him up with belts.

"At that point, he was essentially

AP PHOTO



Police take statements for passengers evacuated from a Malaysia Airlines plane after a man tried to enter its cockpit in Melbourne yesterday

trussed up," Ashton told reporters.

Marks, who is in Australia on a student visa while studying to be a chef, appeared in the Melbourne Magistrates Court yesterday charged with endangering the safety of an aircraft and making false threats. He faces a potential 10-year prison sentence on each charge.

His lawyer Tess Dunsford told the magistrate Marks suffered from a psychiatric illness and would

not apply for bail. He did not enter pleas to the charges. He will appear in court next on Aug. 24.

Scott Lodge said he was one of four passengers who "pounced" on Marks.

"All of a sudden, someone has him in a chokehold and got his arm behind his back and the other guy eventually choked him and he passed out," Lodge said.

Ashton described the device

Marks carried on the plane as an "amplifier-type instrument." Passenger Andrew Leoncelli described it as a Boombox portable music player.

"He was saying: 'I'm going to the blow the f-ing plane up, I'm going to blow the plane up,'" Leoncelli told Australian Broadcasting Corp. "He was agitated, is the best description — 100 percent, he was agitated."

The Airbus A330-300 carrying 337 passengers returned to the airport about 30 minutes after takeoff.

Passengers were kept on the plane for 90 minutes after landing and the plane was searched for potential bombs at a remote part of the airport, Ashton said. Police wearing body armor took Marks off the plane.

The airline said the incident would be investigated.

Malaysia's state-owned airline has had two recent high-profile disasters. Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 was shot down over the Ukraine in 2014 with the loss of all 283 passengers and 15 crew. And Flight 370 with 238 people aboard disappeared four months earlier. It is believed to have crashed in the southern Indian Ocean but has not been found.

Victoria State Premier Daniel Andrews offered government support for the passengers stranded by the ordeal. "I don't think any of us have a true understanding of the trauma, just how frightening this experience would have been," Andrews said.

Andrews cautioned against governments responding to the drama by banning mentally ill passengers from flying.

"We want to be very careful not to be driving people away from getting the care they need," he said. "We don't want to be stigmatizing any more than mental illness is already stigmatized." AP

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PHILIPPINES

Friendly fire: Airstrike kills 11 soldiers in besieged city

Jim Gomez, Marawi

A Philippine bomber plane accidentally killed 11 soldiers and injured seven others, security officials said yesterday, as troops struggled to end a bloody siege by 500 Islamic State group-aligned extremists in a southern city, one of the boldest militant attacks in Southeast Asia in years.

The plane was making a bombing run over militant positions in Marawi city on Wednesday when one bomb accidentally hit army troops locked in close battle with extremists who had taken cover in buildings and houses, military spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said. The plane had made three successful bombing runs before making the error, he said.

"It's painful, it's very sad to be hitting our own troops," Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana told a news conference in Manila. "Sometimes, in the fog of war, a lot of things could happen."

Precision-guided bombs were used earlier in airstrikes in Marawi's urban areas, but the military ran out of the high-tech munitions and used conventional ones in Wednesday's bombing run, he said.

Military chief of staff Gen. Eduardo Ano ordered an investigation.

Lorenzana said about 500 militants, including foreign fighters, joined the siege of Marawi, a mosque-studded city that is the heartland of the Islamic faith in the southern Philippines.

About 50 to 100 militants were putting up the strongest stand in buildings across a bridge from Marawi's city hall, where hun-



President Rodrigo Duterte

dreds of reinforcement troops were deployed. Snipers and buildings that obstructed cannon fire were making it difficult for troops to end the siege, said Lorenzana, who had wanted to end the crisis by today.

A total of 120 militants have been killed in the fighting since May 23, when a failed government raid to capture one of Asia's most-wanted militants, Isnilon Hapilon, triggered the siege of the city by the rebels. Twenty-five of the dead militants have been identified as Filipinos, according to military officials. Eight others were foreign fighters, including

a Chechen, a Yemeni and several Malaysians and Indonesians, Lorenzana said.

President Rodrigo Duterte said he ordered troops to "wipe them out, everyone."

It's painful, it's very sad to be hitting our own troops.

DELFIN LORENZANA
DEFENSE SECRETARY

"If you shoot him in the head, shoot him again in the heart to be sure," the tough-talking Duterte said in a speech.

At least 25 soldiers, five policemen and more than 24 civilians have been killed in the clashes, Lorenzana said.

Duterte declared martial law in the Mindanao region, the southern third of the Philippines, to crush the insurrection, and poured in troops backed by airstrikes, artillery fire and armored vehicles. More than 3,000 soldiers, marines and air force personnel are involved in the fighting, backed by more than 30 assault air-

craft, military officials said.

The unrest has boosted fears that the Islamic State group's violent ideology is gaining a foothold in the country's restive southern islands, where Muslim separatist rebellions have raged for nearly half a century.

"This thing that we see today is the first time that any terror organization in Southeast Asia has taken the bold step to actually overtake an entire territory," said Jasmininder Singh, a senior terrorism analyst at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore.

He said the siege "will actually become more of a template and motivation for other terrorist organizations who believe they can actually take on government forces."

Officials said troops have cleared about 90 percent of Marawi, a scenic lakeshore city with a population of more than 200,000, many of whom have fled to crowded evacuation camps in outlying towns. About 2,000 people are believed to still be trapped in houses near the fighting, while about 1,000 others have been rescued by police and soldiers from villages that have been cleared of armed extremists, the officials said.

The squalor in the shelters, lack of privacy and shock of the violence moved some displaced residents to tears.

Okie Rasul, a fruit vendor and mother of eight, blamed the militants for the uncertainties her family now faces. They fled their home last week amid the horrifying staccato of gunfire and explosions, leaving behind 10,000 pesos (USD200) worth of fruit for their business that she bought with a loan.

"We lost everything, our home and my business," Rasul told the AP as she waited to receive a pack of food and water in an overcrowded emergency shelter in Balo-i town near Marawi. "The only things we saved are the clothes we're wearing, but at least we're all alive." AP

EAST TIMOR

Court drops premier's libel case against media

An East Timor court yesterday dismissed a criminal defamation case brought by the country's prime minister against two journalists due to lack of evidence.

Rights groups and press advocates had urged that the case be dropped, fearing it would further undermine press freedom in one of the world's youngest democracies.

Accused journalist Raimundo Oki said there was "big applause" when Dili District Court judge Patrocino Antonino Goncalves issued his ru-

ling. The trial was observed by the International Federation of Journalists, USAID and other groups.

"I am happy with the final decision because since the beginning I have always believed that the judge will do his job freely and independently," Oki said.

Oki and his former editor at the Timor Post, Lourenco Vicente Martins, would have faced up to three years in prison if found guilty of slanderous denunciation.

The defamation accusation stemmed from an

error in a story published two years ago about Prime Minister Rui Aia de Araujo's involvement in a state contract for information technology services when he was an adviser to East Timor's finance minister in 2014.

The story, which said Araujo had recommended a particular company for the contract before bids opened, misidentified that company as the eventual winner of the contract.

The newspaper apologized for that error, published a front-page story on Araujo's denial

and Martins resigned. But Araujo has insisted on prosecuting. East Timor's fragile press freedom has come under attack with the passing of a restrictive media law in 2014 that can be used to stifle investigative journalism.

A former colony of Portugal, it was occupied by Indonesia for a quarter century until a U.N.-sponsored independence referendum in 1999 sparked violent reprisals by the Indonesian military that killed many and destroyed its economy. AP



East Timorese journalists Lourenco Martins (center front) and Raimundo Oki (center rear) sit on the dock during their trial at a court in Dili

RUSSIA

Putin says Moscow has never been involved in hacking

Ian Phillips & Vladimir Isachenkov,
St. Petersburg

PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin insisted yesterday that the Russian state has never engaged in hacking and scoffed at allegations that hackers could influence the outcome of elections in the United States or Europe.

But the Russian leader admitted the possibility that some individual “patriotic” hackers could have mounted some attacks amid the current cold spell in Russia’s relations with the West.

Speaking at a meeting with senior editors of leading international news agencies, Putin also alleged that some evidence pointing at Russian hackers’ participation in attacks — he didn’t specify which — could have been falsified in an attempt to smear Russia.

“I can imagine that some do it deliberately, staging a chain of attacks in such a way as to cast Russia as the origin of such an attack,” Putin said. “Modern technologies allow that to be done quite easily.”

U.S. intelligence agencies have accused Russia of hacking into Democratic Party emails, helping President Donald Trump’s election victory, and the Congressional and FBI investigations into the Trump campaign’s ties with Russia have



shattered Moscow’s hopes for a detente with Washington.

Putin said the “Russo-phobic hysteria” makes it “somewhat inconvenient to work with one another or even to talk.”

“It’s having an impact, and I’m afraid this is one of the goals of those who organize it are pursuing and they can fine-tune the public sentiments to their liking trying to establish an atmosphere that is going to prevent us from addressing common issues, say with regard to terrorism,” the Russian leader said.

Putin predicted “this will end, sooner or later,” adding that

“we are patient, we know how to wait and we will wait.”

Asked if Russian hackers could try to shape the outcome of German parliamentary elections later this year, Putin said: “We never engaged in that on a state level, and have no intention of doing so.”

He noted that Russia can work constructively with any German leader, adding that he had good ties with German Chancellor Angela Merkel despite some differences.

Russian meddling was also a concern in France, with Putin publicly expressing his sympathy

for President Emmanuel Macron’s rivals in the campaign. Macron’s aides claimed in February that Russian groups were interfering with his campaign, and a document leak hit Macron’s campaign in the final hours of the French race. Moscow has strongly denied all allegations of election meddling.

“The Russo-phobic hysteria [makes it] somewhat inconvenient to work with one another or even to talk.”

VLADIMIR PUTIN

Putin argued that hackers, wherever they come from, can’t sway election outcomes because the public mood cannot be manipulated that easily.

“I’m deeply convinced that no hackers can radically influence another country’s election campaign,” he said. “No hackers can influence election campaigns in any country of Europe, Asia or America.”

Putin added that while the

Russian state has never been involved in hacking, Russia-West tensions could have prompted some individuals to launch cyberattacks.

“If they have patriotic leanings, they may try to add their contribution to the fight against those who speak badly about Russia,” he said. “Theoretically it’s possible.”

Russia’s relations with the West have been at post-Cold War lows over the Ukrainian crisis. The U.S. and the EU have slapped Moscow with sanctions over its annexation of Ukraine’s Crimean Peninsula and support for pro-Russian insurgency in eastern Ukraine.

Putin said yesterday that economic restrictions against Russia have had “zero effect.”

He predicted that the current strain in relations will ease, because “it’s counterproductive and harmful.”

Touching on tensions in the Pacific, Putin said Russia’s military deployments on a group of Pacific islands also claimed by Japan have been caused by concerns about the U.S. military buildup in the region.

The four islands, called the Northern Territories in Japan and the southern Kurils in Russia, were seized by the former Soviet Union at the end of the World War II, preventing the two countries from signing a peace treaty.

Putin said the U.S. will likely continue to build up its missile shield in the region even if North Korea agrees to curb its nuclear and missile programs, in the same way it has continued to develop missile defenses in Europe despite a deal with Iran that curbed its nuclear program in exchange for lifting international sanctions. **AP**

CLIMATE CHANGE

World leaders reaffirm commitment to fighting global warming

Kirsten Grieshaber, Berlin

WORLD leaders affirmed their commitment to combating climate change yesterday ahead of U.S. President Donald Trump’s announcement on whether he would pull out of the Paris climate accord.

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, speaking to reporters during a visit to Berlin, said fighting global warming is a “global consensus” and an “international responsibility.” (See p10)

German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who has in the past even been dubbed the “climate chancellor”

for her efforts to fight global warming, welcomed Li’s remarks at their joint press conference.

Other European leaders were more explicit in expressing their fears that the U.S. government may abandon international measures against climate change.

“Please don’t change the [political] climate for the worse,” European Council President Donald Tusk tweeted.

British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said Britain would continue to press the U.S. to reduce dangerous emissions even if Trump pulls out.

Johnson told Sky News that Britain still wants the U.S. to take the lead in fighting climate change and called on individual U.S. states to keep making progress on that front.

“We will continue to lobby the Americans and the White House to show the leadership they have shown in the past on reducing CO₂,” he said.

Abandoning the pact would isolate the U.S. from a raft of international allies who spent years negotiating the 2015 agreement to fight global warming and pollution by reducing carbon emissions.

While traveling abroad



German Chancellor Angela Merkel (right) and China's Premier, Li Keqiang

last week, Trump was repeatedly pressed to stay in the deal by European leaders and Pope Francis. Withdrawing would leave the United States as one of just three countries outside the agreement. The

other two are Syria and Nicaragua.

Russia joined the chorus speaking out in favor of the climate accord. Speaking to reporters yesterday, a spokesman for President Vladimir Putin

said Russia “thinks highly” of the accords and sees no alternative to it. Spokesman Dmitry Peskov added that its implementation will not be as effective “without the key signatories.”

During a trip to Europe this week, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed India’s commitment to fighting climate change and said it would be a “crime” to spoil the environment for future generations.

Scientists say Earth is likely to reach more dangerous levels of warming sooner if the U.S. retreats from its pledge because America contributes so much to rising temperatures. Calculations suggest withdrawal could release up to 3 billion additional tons of carbon dioxide a year — enough to melt ice sheets faster, raise seas higher and trigger more extreme weather. **AP**

TV canal macau



FRIDAY

13:00	TDM News (Repeat)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	RTPi Live
17:00	Revenge Sr 2
17:40	Castle S6 - Final (Repeated)
18:20	Now Generation (Repeated)
19:10	TDM Talk Show (Repeated) (PT)
19:40	Soap Opera (PT)
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (PT)
21:15	Miscellaneous
22:10	Now Generation
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Pó di sangui
01:05	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:55	RTPi Live

SATURDAY

10:40	Comedy
11:15	Blaze Riders
12:00	Miscellaneous
12:30	Miscellaneous
13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast (PT)
14:50	Soap Opera
18:35	Miscellaneous
18:55	Miscellaneous
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (PT)
21:00	Non-Daily Portuguese News
21:10	Drama (PT)
22:00	Comedy
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:05	RTPi Live

SUNDAY

10:35	Young Adult
11:00	Sunday Mass (Live)
12:00	Miscellaneous
12:30	Miscellaneous
13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	Zig Zag
18:15	Miscellaneous
19:30	Documentary Serie
19:45	Miscellaneous
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (PT)
21:00	Non-Daily Portuguese News
22:00	Documentary Serie
23:00	TDM News
23:50	Champions League Highlights
00:10	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:45	RTPi Live

Offbeat

US: PENNSYLVANIA MAN ARRESTED
AFTER CALLING 911 FOR CONVERSATION

Police say a Pennsylvania man repeatedly called 911 while intoxicated because he was seeking conversation. Pennsylvania State Police say 51-year-old Larry Keiser first called around 10:30 p.m. last Friday because he wanted to speak with a police officer. He said there was no emergency.

Keiser called five more times, leading police to show up at his home in North Whitehall Township after midnight.

The man told officers he drank several beers because he was upset about a family situation. Troopers told Keiser not to call 911 again unless there was an emergency, and he said he wouldn't call again.

Troopers say he called 911 the minute after officers left.

Keiser has been arrested and is facing charges that include intentionally calling 911 for other than emergency purposes.

cinema



CINETEATRO

02 JUNE - 07 JUNE

WONDER WOMAN

ROOM 1

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

Director: Patty Jenkins

Starring: Chris Pine, Connie Nielsen, Robin Wright

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 141min



GET OUT

ROOM 2

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

Director: Jordan Peele

Starring: Daniel Kaluuya, Allison Williams, Bradley Whitford

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 104min



BAYWATCH

ROOM 3

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

Director: Seth Gordon

Starring: Dwayne Johnson, Zac Efron, Alexandra Daddario

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 116min

MACAU TOWER

30 MAY - 11 JUNE



WONDER WOMAN

(3D) 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30pm

Director: Patty Jenkins

Starring: Chris Pine, Connie Nielsen, Robin Wright

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 141min

this day in history

1953 QUEEN ELIZABETH TAKES
CORONATION OATH

Queen Elizabeth II has been crowned at a coronation ceremony in Westminster Abbey in London.

In front of more than 8,000 guests, including prime ministers and heads of state from around the Commonwealth, she took the Coronation Oath and is now bound to serve her people and to maintain the laws of God.

After being handed the four symbols of authority - the orb, the sceptre, the rod of mercy and the royal ring of sapphire and rubies - the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Geoffrey Fisher, placed St Edward's Crown on her head to complete the ceremony.

A shout of "God Save the Queen" was heard and gun salutes were fired as crowds cheered.

The Archbishop and fellow bishops then paid homage to Queen Elizabeth II.

In a radio broadcast the Queen said: "Throughout all my life and with all my heart I shall strive to be worthy of your trust".

An estimated three million people lined the streets of London to catch a glimpse of the new monarch as she made her way to and from Buckingham Palace in the golden state coach.

The ceremony was watched by millions more around the world as the BBC set up their biggest ever outside broadcast to provide live coverage of the event on radio and television. Street parties were held throughout the UK as people crowded round television sets to watch the ceremony.

The crowds, some of whom had camped out overnight to ensure a prime position, were rewarded when the Queen and other members of her family, including the Queen Mother, appeared on the balcony at Buckingham Palace.

Despite the overcast weather conditions the RAF marked the occasion with a fly past down the Mall.

A fireworks display then lit up the skies above Victoria Embankment.

The Queen replaced her father, King George VI, as monarch following his death on 6 February 1952. After 16 years on the throne he passed away in his sleep and his 25-year-old daughter Elizabeth immediately became Queen.

The princess formally proclaimed herself Queen and Head of the Commonwealth and Defender of the Faith in February 1952 but the amount of planning and a wish for a sunny day for the occasion led to the long but excited wait for this day.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Over 20 million people watched the BBC coverage of the coronation. Many people crowded round neighbours' sets to watch television for the first time. The broadcast was made in 44 languages. There was a shortage of professional coachmen to help transport dignitaries to Westminster Abbey in horse drawn carriages. Millionaire businessmen and country squires offered their services and on the day they dressed up as Buckingham Palace servants and helped take people to the ceremony.

Many commemorative souvenirs were produced to mark the occasion including a special set of four postage stamps.

In 2002 the Queen celebrated her Golden Jubilee. She marked her 50 years on the throne with a mammoth tour of the Commonwealth and UK where millions turned out to celebrate during the Jubilee weekend.

The highlight of the weekend was the 'Party at the Palace' where stars from Ozzy Osbourne and Sir Paul McCartney to S Club 7 and Blue joined forces to entertain the crowds at Buckingham Palace.

YOUR STARS

Aries

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

You didn't choose your family like you did your friends, but you still have a certain amount of responsibility when it comes to their well-being. Try to be as helpful as possible. Accept responsibility for your mistakes.

Gemini

May 21-Jun. 21

You have a firm grip on all of your things and you don't want to let any of them go. What is causing you to be so possessive? Chances are there is plenty of everything to go around.

Leo

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

You might be feeling surprisingly sensitive right now, which means an offhand remark could hurt your feelings pretty easily. Try to take other people's comments with a grain of salt.

Libra

Sep.23-Oct. 22

Things may not be progressing at the rate you'd like them to, but at least you're making significant headway. It might be tempting to give up on projects that have been a long time in the making.

Sagittarius

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

This is a great time to brainstorm, collaborate and form new partnerships with people who really have something interesting to say. You aren't in the same mood as all of your friends.

Aquarius

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Half of life is just showing up, so don't sit this one out. The events that are about to take place are too important miss. Find a way to deal with whatever is bothering you and move on.

Taurus

April 20-May 20

What do you see when you look around your home? If you don't like the paint color that's on the walls, the accessories or the major pieces of furniture, this is the time to make some changes.

Cancer

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

The stars are on your side, which should provide you with the assertiveness you need to go after the things you find important. Use your intuition if you get stuck about which way to go next.

Virgo

Aug. 23-Sept. 22

Rely on your best friends for support if you need it. You have strong shoulders and can handle most situations, but it's nice to know you have allies just in case. Spending time with other people

Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

You're the intellectual of the group, the person who asks the meaningful questions and digs for the answers. The big issues are important to you right now, but you're also enjoying the attention you're attracting.

Capricorn

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Changes are on the way for you, so be open to any and all possibilities that enter your life. You may have to deal with some old issues to make room for new opportunities.

Pisces

Feb.19-Mar. 20

If you have a real talent for the dramatic arts, this is a great time to pursue a career in the theater, movies or TV, or to explore other artistic arenas. You'll be guaranteed a standing ovation.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
--	-----	-----	-----------

CHINA

Beijing	17	25	overcast/shower
Harbin	9	17	thundershower
Tianjin	18	27	cloudy/shower
Urumqi	15	20	cloudy/shower
Xi'an	20	35	cloudy
Lhasa	10	22	clear/cloudy
Chengdu	20	32	drizzle
Chongqing	21	31	cloudy
Kunming	17	27	cloudy/clear
Nanjing	22	33	clear
Shanghai	22	29	cloudy
Wuhan	20	32	cloudy
Hangzhou	21	29	overcast/cloudy
Taipei	26	31	drizzle/rainstorm
Guangzhou	26	29	heavy rain
Hong Kong	26	30	drizzle/heavy rain

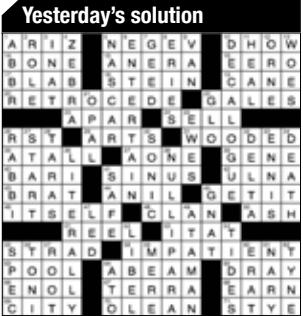
WORLD

Moscow	6	12	drizzle
Frankfurt	16	25	cloudy
Paris	16	27	cloudy/drizzle
London	12	20	overcast
New York	15	25	cloudy/drizzle

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Word that can precede war, biotic and climax; 5- At that point; 9- Okinawa port; 13- Suckle; 15- Patriot Nathan; 16- Pressing need?; 17- Go gaga over; 18- Diva's solo; 19- Become exhausted; 20- A Kennedy; 21- Freeway access; 23- "Hotel ____"; 25- Assistant, particularly to heads of state; 26- Hemoglobin deficiency; 27- Own; 30- Pasture used for grazing; 31- Mary of "The Maltese Falcon"; 32- Basketwork; 37- Extended family; 38- Sensitive spots; 40- 1975 Wimbledon winner; 41- Simultaneously; 43- Madame de ____; 44- ____ polloi; 45- Situated on the side; 47- Straighten out; 50- ____ all-time high; 51- Most cunning; 52- Up and ____; 53- Hearst kidnap grp.; 56- ____'acte (intermission); 57- Writer Wiesel; 59- Final notices; 61- River in central Switzerland; 62- Juniors, perhaps; 63- Like beaches; 64- Modernists; 65- Hardware fastener; 66- Medicinal amount;

DOWN: 1- Med. school class; 2- Au naturel; 3- Walked on; 4- Syr. neighbor; 5- English river; 6- Heavenly strings; 7- Yale student; 8- Proximity; 9- Ruler of Hyderabad; 10- Rice____; 11- Accord maker; 12- "Puppy Love" singer; 14- More strange; 22- Show stoppers?; 24- Not strong; 25- Unified; 26- Caesar's wings; 27- Agreement; 28- Scandinavian capital; 29- Adult male deer; 32- It's cold; 33- Devoured; 34- Nicholas II, for one; 35- Perlman of "Cheers"; 36- Scream; 38- Least lengthy; 39- Trompe l'____; 42- As a result; 43- John of "Full House"; 45- Up-to-the-minute; 46- Devoured; 47- Radii neighbors; 48- Dynamite stuff; 49- Harvest goddess; 51- Actor Connery; 52- Hokkaido native; 53- Prefix with Tibetan; 54- Old Fords; 55- ____ sow, so shall...; 58- Actor Chaney; 60- Foul;



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Emergency calls 999	Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222	Water Supply – Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993	Telephone – Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775	Electricity – Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333	Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944	
S. J. Hospital 28 313 731	
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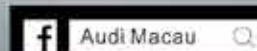
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FOOTBALL

Ronaldo at his best ahead of Champions League final

Tales Azzoni, Madrid

Sunday, 2:45 a.m.
Juventus v Real Madrid
H 3, D 3.25, A 2.75

CRISTIANO Ronaldo has saved his best for last.

Ronaldo enters the Champions League final playing his best soccer of the season, peaking at the right time as Real Madrid gets ready to take on Juventus tomorrow [Sunday, 2:45am] in Cardiff, Wales.

"I feel good," Ronaldo said before traveling to Britain, "in great form."

The Portugal forward paced himself like never before this season, skipping several games so he could stay fresh and thrive in the final stretch. And all the rest paid off, with him scoring 14 goals in his last nine matches for his best run of the season.



He scored two consecutive hat tricks in the Champions League, one in the quarterfinals against Bayern Munich and another in the semifinals against Atletico

Madrid. In Madrid's final three Spanish league games, he scored five goals to lead the team to its first title in five years.

Ronaldo is not hiding is confi-

dence going into the game.

"We must go into the match with humility, but showing attitude and character, showing that we are the better team," Ronaldo said. "Juventus is a great team, but I think we are better. I have the feeling that we are going to play a great match and win. We are thinking positive."

It had been a lackluster season for Ronaldo's standards, and his slow start kept him from having a chance to reach 50 goals for the first time since 2009-10, which was his debut season with Madrid. He arrives in the final in Cardiff with 40 goals.

He also struggled early in the Champions League, scoring only twice in his first eight games, but ended with eight goals in his last four matches, becoming the first player to break the 100-goal mark in the European competition.

"We are in a great moment and

we have to take advantage of it," Ronaldo said.

He credited his great run to coach Zinedine Zidane's ability to keep the team competitive despite constantly rotating the squad.

"I'm in better shape physically than in other seasons," the 32-year-old Ronaldo said. "Zidane intelligently managed the squad."

Ronaldo has done well when facing Juventus, having scored five goals in the four matches he played against the Italian champions while with Madrid. Two of the goals came in the semifinals of the Champions League in 2015, when Juventus advanced 3-2 before eventually losing the title to Barcelona.

Madrid is trying to become the first team to win back-to-back European Cup titles since the competition's new format was created in 1992.

Ronaldo will be trying to win his fourth Champions League trophy. His first came with Manchester United in 2008, and the other two with Madrid in 2014 and 2016. He scored in extra time in the final against Atletico Madrid three years ago, and converted the deciding penalty kick in last year's shootout, also against Atletico.

AP / Oddschecker.com

Benfica sells goalkeeper Ederson to Man City for USD45m

BENFICA sold goalkeeper Ederson Moraes to Manchester City for 40 million euros (USD45 million) yesterday, making the Brazilian the second most expensive goalkeeper of all time.

The fee has only been eclipsed by the 53 million euros that Juventus paid Parma for Italian goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon in 2001.

Benfica said in a state-

ment that half of the fee for Moraes will go to third parties, including the 23-year-old keeper's former Portuguese team, Rio Ave.

City has not confirmed the transfer.

The goalkeeper position has been a problem for City manager Pep Guardiola since he arrived at the English club during the last offseason. Guardiola signed Claudio Bravo from

Barcelona after deciding long-time City keeper Joe Hart wasn't technically good enough to carry out his preferred approach of playing the ball out from the back. Hart was sent on loan to Italian club Torino.

Bravo struggled with his shot-stopping and handling, and ended up being dropped for Willy Caballero, only to be restored to the team for the final few games of the season.

Caballero will be one of four players to be released this month at the end of his contract, so Bravo will fight for a starting spot with the Moraes, who has played for Brazil's under-23 side but not the country's senior team.

It is City's second big signing of the offseason. The club bought attacking midfielder Bernardo Silva from Monaco for a reported 43 million pounds



(\$55 million).

Guardiola is also in the market for full backs in

what is set to be another offseason of big spending by City. AP

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TOILET PAPER DAY

I received an email to remind me that it was National Toilet Paper Day yesterday, in Australia. Apparently it comes to pass on 26 August in America. There is a day for everything: Yesterday was also Children's Day in most of the countries that celebrate it (although everyday seems to be Children's Day in my house); Malaysia has a National Rambutan Day (August 22); and based on algorithms used to calculate the various days celebrated and mentioned on the internet, whatnationaldayisit.com suggests that May 31 looks to become National Covfefe Day.

The National Toilet Paper Day information in my inbox, although not officially sanctioned and somewhat motivated by commercial considerations (albeit from a business with a heart), came from a company that I have been tailgating for a while.

After embarking on the Plastic Free July Challenge in 2016, I looked for innovative ways to stop dropping single-use plastic into landfill via that devil of the household rubbish bin. The next six months' journey to source toilet paper without plastic wrapping lead me to this company and resulted in Christmas gifts to older Australian-based members of my family being boxes of 48 rolls of specially designed Christmas loo paper. It also had the effect of consolidating my looney reputation on the #PlasticFreeAnything front.

Who Gives a Crap – a great company name and one which does just that - donates 50% of their profits to help build toilets in developing countries. 2.4 billion people globally do not have access to basic sanitation - a toilet. Since being launched with crowd-funding in 2012, the company has donated the equivalent of MOP2.8 million to help fund hygiene and sanitation projects. They make their paper from 100% post-consumer recycled paper, bamboo and sugarcane.

This magnanimous little company is one of a growing global community of "B Corporations" who use business as a force for good. B Corps measure business performance by taking social and environmental impact into account thus fundamentally redefining business success. This is not just Corporate Social Responsibility or Eco-Friendly add-ons to existing business models, but a true integration of activities covering environmental and social governance, care for workers, support of the community and guardianship of the environment and resources. B Corps compete not to be the best IN the world but to be the best FOR the world.

Together, these companies are an interdependent group of certified businesses that are part of the move to build a road to a new economy of positive impact on all stakeholders, including our environment and our future, but they are acting today. Many operate locally but some reach further afield using "the power of markets to solve social and environmental problems".

These are the companies that will move us from our existing linear economy of consumption and waste production, leapfrogging the recycling phenomenon that simply leads to the same place via a longer route, to a truly circular economy of no waste of any resource.

It is precisely the old production and consumption patterns that created Macau's smelliest street in Lao Hon (MDT's Briefs June 1). Macau's EPA states their principle to be "Living for today and planning for future". We are certainly living for today, but as if there is no future. Preferably we could be living as if the future is today – turning planning into action now.

The profligate waste in our community is not just a government or community problem, and not independent of other jurisdictions or entities. Businesses, government and consumers all benefit from production and consumption and so we all have responsibility for the mess left behind.

The problem does not go away when the stuff is dumped. B Corps understand this and are leading us towards a better economic model.

THE BUZZ CNN SACKS KATHY GRIFFIN OVER TRUMP VIDEO AS BACKLASH BUILDS

Kathy Griffin has lost a decade-long gig ringing in the new year for CNN as a backlash builds over her video displaying a likeness of President Donald Trump's severed head.

CNN, which had called the images "disgusting and offensive" after Griffin posted the video earlier this week, announced yesterday it would not invite her back this year for the Times Square live New Year's Eve special she had co-hosted annually since 2007 with CNN's Anderson Cooper.

A New Mexico casino has also canceled a performance by Griffin, who was scheduled to perform at Route 66 Casino, operated by Laguna Pueblo, on July 22.

And a commercial endorsement deal was canceled just weeks after she landed it. Squatty Potty, a Utah-based company whose products include toilets and bathroom accessories, said it was suspending an ad campaign that featured Griffin.

In China, some signs of greater acceptance of LGBT people

CHINA'S government has ruled out any move to legalize same-sex marriage, and many Chinese gays and lesbians remain in the closet, yet there are multiple signs of greater awareness and acceptance of LGBT people in the world's most populous nation.

Homosexuality was formally removed from the list of mental health conditions in 2001 and LGBT activists have become steadily more outspoken in recent years, even though authorities remain wary of any human rights organizing outside the direct control of the ruling Communist Party.

Among the modest signs of change: A recent video advertisement for car-hailing app operator Didi Chuxing included a gay couple holding hands in the back of a taxi. The live-action version of "Beauty and the Beast" was shown in Chinese theaters without any particular concern for the implicitly gay character that had drawn criticism from conservative religious groups in the U.S. and other countries.

In January, a court ruled that a health center had illegally fired a transgender employee who had worked for them for just a few days, though it cleared the center of discrimination. It was believed to be China's first trans-



Supporters line up to attend a court session in Changsha in Hunan province, where a gay couple had a hearing in China's first gay marriage case (April 2016)

gender employment discrimination case, and followed a string of cases involving LGBT people that were accepted by courts last year.

In Shanghai, there was an apparent first recently in a long-established tradition, the city's weekend marriage market at which parents try to find partners for their sons and daughters: This year, some parents of LGBT adults attended. However, after receiving a cold reception from parents of heterosexual offspring, they were eventually told by police to leave.

In April 2016, scores of gay rights activists rallied outside a courthouse in the central city of Changsha to support a male couple who brought the first legal challenge to Chinese law limiting marria-

ge rights to opposite sex couples. Although the case was dismissed, the sizable public turnout for the hearing and coverage by usually conservative Chinese media appeared to reflect the shifting social attitudes in China on the topic of sexual orientation.

While openly gay celebrities are rare, Jin Xing, a transgender woman, has found success as a television talk show host and talent show judge.

Taiwan become last month the first country in Asia to legalize same-sex marriage, following a May 24 court ruling. Worldwide, gay and lesbian couples can marry in only 22 of the world's nearly 200 countries. No nation in Eastern Europe is among them, and there is only one in Africa: South Africa. MDT/AP

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	25-45 Good	
High Density Residential Area	25-45 Good	
Ambient	45-65 Moderate	

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS



RUSSIA President Vladimir Putin insisted yesterday that the Russian state has never engaged in hacking and said Moscow will wait out the current political storm in the U.S. to forge constructive relations with President Donald Trump, whom he praised as a straightforward person with a "fresh set of eyes." More on p15

TURKEY's foreign minister says his country and the Turkish Cypriots are ready to take part in a summit in Geneva to work out a peace accord reunifying ethnically divided Cyprus.



BRITAIN The Ministry of Defense has announced an end to its week-long deployment to help police cope with an increased threat of an extremist attack after the Manchester concert bombing. The official threat level has been lowered but the government still believes an attack is highly likely.

NATO Thousands of troops from NATO and its partner nations are training on land and sea in central and eastern Europe yesterday, in two major exercises that aim to demonstrate their cooperation and rapid response capabilities at a time when the region feels threatened by Russia.

BRAZIL's economy grew 1 percent in the first three months of 2017, officials have announced, putting to an end the South American country's longest recession in history.

times square by rodrigo

