



A CRIMINAL OR A PHILANTHROPIST?
Ng Lap Seng was portrayed as a criminal and a hero during opening statements at his bribery trial

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WORLD BRIEFS

AP PHOTO



INDONESIA A helicopter carrying eight people crashed yesterday while on the way to help with evacuations near a volcano that erupted on the main Indonesian island of Java. Officials didn't know the fate of the people on board, but villagers said they found two bodies at the crash site. More on p13

AP PHOTO



CHINA-US Less than three months after U.S. President Donald Trump and China's leader met at Mar-a-Lago, the White House is suddenly engaged in a multipronged pressure campaign against Beijing. Delivering a one-two punch to China late last week, the Trump administration approved a USD1.4 billion arms sale to Taiwan and blacklisted a small Chinese bank over its business ties with North Korea.

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Ng Lap Seng portrayed as criminal and hero at trial

MACAU billionaire Ng Lap Seng was portrayed as a criminal and a hero during opening statements at his United Nations bribery trial on Thursday.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Douglas Zolkind told Manhattan federal court jurors that 69-year-old Ng Lap Seng corrupted two U.N. ambassadors so he could build a legacy by constructing a massive U.N. conference center in China.

"This case is about this man's effort to corrupt the United Nations to get what he wanted," prosecutor Douglas Zolkind said of the defendant, Macau tycoon Ng Lap Seng.

Defense attorney Tai Park countered that Ng was a philanthropist willing to spend billions of dollars to build the center in Macau to benefit the U.N. before being betrayed by one of the ambassadors who requested contributions from him.

Ng, a billionaire real estate developer, is accused of funneling hundreds of thousands of dollars in bribes to former UN General Assembly President John Ashe and other officials to win their backing for the multi-billion-dollar conference center for the UN in Macau that he wanted to build. Ng denies the bribery allegations.

The idea was to make the center the home to much of China's UN-related activity. Ng also sought to have an annual UN conference on developing nation issues permanently held there, replacing the previous practice of using a different host city every year.

Authorities allege the conference center - which Ng agreed to build at no cost - was intended to enhance the value of a surrounding complex of thousands of apartment units, office space, a casino and hotel that he planned to develop.

Park said Ng's actions were consistent with how the U.N. operates with public-private partnerships and he was being vilified after a heroic gesture of philanthropy. The defense lawyer also countered Zolkind's claims by saying it will be clear to jurors that Ng had embarked on a quest that had no realistic hope of profit.

"That's not bribery, whether



In this Oct. 26, 2015 file photo, Chinese billionaire Ng Lap Seng (left) is seen leaving federal court

it's the United Nations, this court, this country or Mars," Park said. "It is not a crime to support a cause other people want to advance. [...] That's philanthropy!"

Six defendants were originally charged in the case, including John Ashe, who in addition to serving as president of the ge-

neral assembly, was also the ambassador to the UN from the Caribbean nation of Antigua and Barbuda. Ashe died in a weightlifting accident last year as his lawyer was negotiating a plea agreement with the government.

The other remaining defendants have pleaded guilty, with

some agreeing to cooperate with the prosecution. One of them, Francis Lorenzo, is now expected to be a key government witness and testify against Ng during trial.

Lorenzo was a deputy ambassador to the UN from the Dominican Republic who was accused of funneling some of the bri-

be money to Ashe. In his guilty plea, he admitted in court that he helped get a USD200,000 payment into a foreign bank account belonging to Ashe, saying "the purpose was to influence John Ashe to the benefit of Ng Lap Seng and others."

The officials then used their positions at the UN to advance Ng's efforts to win formal support for the conference center development, including issuing a contract for the development and agreement letters naming Ng's company as the exclusive developer of the property.

Zolkind said the conference center was never built because Ng was arrested in September 2015 before he could capitalize on U.N. documents listing his company as the developer.

The defense lawyer said Ng was being vilified after a heroic gesture of philanthropy

Meanwhile, Park argued that the project was a costly undertaking, and that Ng stood to gain little from it.

"This was going to be an enormously costly undertaking. If this was a bribery scheme, ladies and gentlemen, it was the dumbest one ever conceived," Park said. "If he breaks even before he's dead, he's a lucky man."

Ng has been confined under 24-hour guard in a luxury Manhattan apartment on \$50 million bail while awaiting trial. The trial before Judge Vernon Broderick could last four to six weeks. **MDT/Agencies**

How the USD1.7m was spent

ASSISTANT U.S. Attorney Douglas Zolkind said last week that Ng paid at least USD1.7 million in bribes to ambassadors in exchange for United Nations support.

He said jurors will hear testimony about bribes from Francis Lorenzo, who was paid \$1.5 million over a five-year period to head a Manhattan-based media company for Ng when he served as a diplomat from the Dominican Republic to the United Nations.

Defense attorney Park argued that the \$240,000 paid annually to Lorenzo, who was the company's president was not an act of corruption: "It's called wages, ladies and gentlemen, not bribes."

Zolkind said Ng began sending Loren-

zo an extra \$30,000 a month in late 2012 "for the express purpose of obtaining U.N. approval for the conference center."

At the same time, Ng allegedly paid a \$200,000 bribe in 2014 to John Ashe while he was General Assembly president and U.N. ambassador from Antigua and Barbuda and paid \$2,500 monthly to Ashe's wife to perform a no-show job at the Manhattan media company, the prosecutor said.

Some of the money was used to fund the construction of a basketball court at Ashe's home in New York and pay for a family vacation, prosecutors have said. Ashe allegedly used some of the money he received to lease a BMW, buy Rolex watches and order custom-tailored suits, as well as sharing

some of it with Antigua's prime minister to advance Chinese interests in the country.

Park said Ashe, who died in an accident last year, had requested the \$200,000 to support his presidency. "It didn't go into his back pocket," Park said. "It was put to good use."

Park said payments to Ashe's wife, an expert on global climate change, came as she worked on a book about how developing nations contribute to climate change and are impacted by it.

Ng's defense lawyer also said the jury will not see any evidence of corrupt intent or guilty conscience on Ng's part, noting there was no effort made to conceal the payments.

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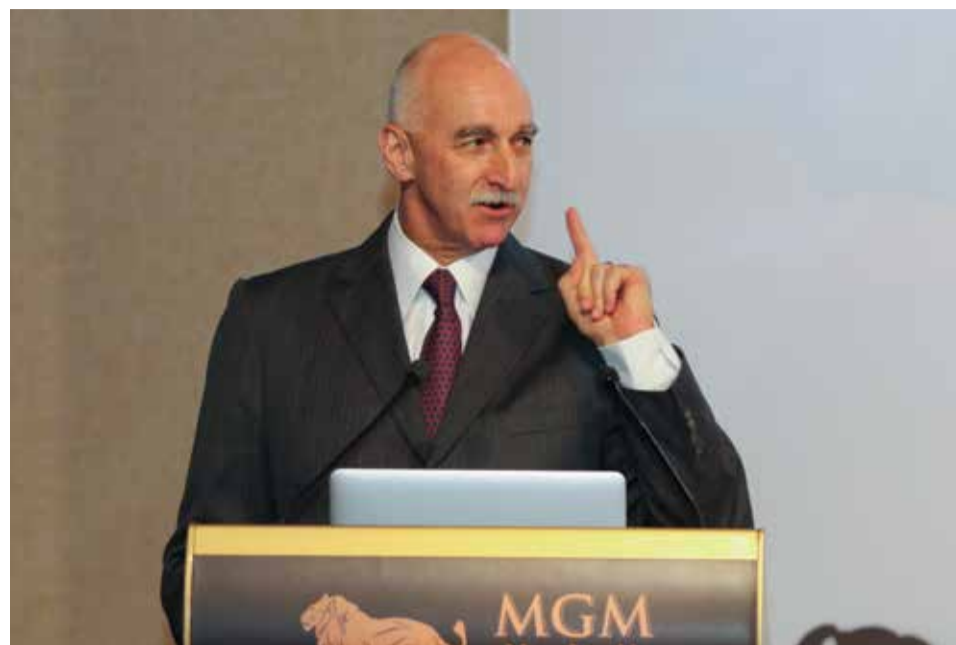
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Robert Kirby



Grant Bowie

TrailHiker rush, registration sold out in 90 minutes

Renato Marques

THE 2017 edition of Eco TrailHiker is living up to expectations for a record-breaking number of participants, with all 550 team slots being filled within 90 minutes of registration.

Director of Macau TrailHiker Ltd., Robert Kirby, told the Times that he was "overjoyed" with the response from the public.

"We opened the portal at 6 P.M. right after the press conference and by 7:30 P.M., my assistant... came to me and said, 'Robert we have to close it,'" Kirby said. "It was just an incredible response. We have seen, over the years, more and more people going to our website but this was just phenomenal."

According to Kirby, the high-demand shows that "the event has reach its tipping point", and "wellness is important in the community" and further, that "corporate responsibility is [becoming] increasingly important."

Remarking on the many peo-

ple who were unable to register on time, Kirby said, "Of course now we have to manage the people who were disappointed and I don't underestimate that, so we [are creating] a waiting list [...] because we know there will always be a few people who will [drop] out."

Next year we have got to add in a 20 km course.

ROBERT KIRBY

When questioned about how Eco TrailHiker plans to cope with the extremely high demand, Kirby responded that the event had to "grow." He added that for the 2018 edition, Eco TrailHiker will not only include its two current courses (10km and 30km), but would also include an additional 20km course – a decision that Kir-

by had made previously, but had been unable to implement in 2017 due to the "sponsors' switch and adjustments that had to be done from there."

The organizer added that with the new upcoming 20km race, Eco Trailhiker will accept an additional 150 teams, increasing the maximum from 550 to 700.

When questioned about the possibility of splitting the event over multiple days as team numbers grow, Kirby said, "I believe the new sponsor would not be upset if I say yes, there is an opportunity for a weekend event like a sports festival where... we can run the 10K and 30K on Saturday and then the 20K on Sunday," he said, adding that it nevertheless may take several years to occur, and that it was unlikely to occur in 2018.

According to Kirby, several factors attract the high number of participants, such as the lunch that we serve after the event and "the camaraderie of having an event that is not individuals participating but a team of four", which is "very unique."

On the other hand, Kirby remarked that there is still work to be done for the wellness promotion aspect of the event.

"I'm still disappointed that when I go out in the trails on the weekends, I don't see more people," he said. "But for sure, TrailHiker brings motivation to teams to go out and train before the event and there is no doubt that a small percentage of these people will continue to exercise after the event."

"I would like to see more people continuing [throughout the year] and not just around the events," Kirby said, adding that the event is now also being used as a team building activity for companies.

CEO and executive director of MGM China Holdings Limited Grant Bowie also commented on the strong response to the event, saying, "We are delighted to have received such a great response from not only the Macau community, but also from Hong Kong, mainland China, Malaysia, Taiwan and beyond."

"At MGM our goal is to bring

Macau to the world and the world to Macau and the TrailHiker presents one opportunity to do just that," Bowie continued. "The strong response serves as validation that creating opportunities to get out with friends and explore the natural side of Macau is in demand and something we should do more of."

MGM will be the event's title sponsor for this year. "MGM is truly honored to take an active role in contributing to this initiative, having a positive impact on increasing the awareness to protect our environment while adding to the well-being of the community," said Bowie. "With MGM Cotai as the start and finish point of this major sports event, it marks the beginning of many great moments for us, and we will continue to contribute to a sustainable future for Macau."

Bowie also expressed hopes that through the event, the community will have a "deeper understanding of the importance of creating healthy living style, preserve the natural environment and to showcase the natural beauty of Macau." Like Kirby, he commented positively on the opportunities that such a friendly competition creates in terms of teambuilding, opening the doors to the expansion of the event in the near future.

Macau Daily Times is Eco TrailHiker's official media partner

Handout distribution starts next month

THE Macau SAR government has announced that this year's "wealth partaking scheme," or "handout", will come into effect on Thursday, with its implementation commencing in early July.

Under the scheme, local permanent residents are entitled to receive a sum of MOP9,000, while non-permanent residents will receive MOP5,400.

Recipients must have been holders of valid or renewable Macau SAR Resident Identity Cards on December 31, 2016 to be entitled to receive the cash premium, according to a statement from the Financial Services Bureau (DSF).

Holders of a valid or renewable Macau SAR Resident Identity Card who are currently residing abroad

will be granted the cash premium, provided they can prove that they are unable to renew their Macau SAR Resident Identity Card due to either being bedridden, or completely or partly paralyzed.

For those who have submitted the relevant documentary proof and were granted the cash premium in the previous year, the Social Welfare

Bureau (IAS) is authorized to exempt them from document resubmission if it concludes that no new evidence is required.

A direct bank transfer will be arranged for those who are receiving financial assistance or senior citizen subsidies from the IAS, according to the statement. The same will apply to retired civil servants receiving a retire-

ment pension and other persons receiving aforesaid pension for the family of the deceased.

Most of the rest of the populace will be awarded the cash premium through a crossed check via mail. The crossed check can only be deposited into the payee's account. In this way, the DSF notes that even if one receives a check addressed to ano-

ther, it cannot be cashed.

A different procedure is applicable to beneficiaries under the age of 18. They will each receive a check made payable either to themselves or their parents, which may be deposited either into the beneficiary's account or the account of one of their parents.

Residents with enquiries concerning the handout scheme can contact the Service Center of the Civil and Municipal Affairs Bureau either in person or by telephone.



Plan to remove two-stroke motorcycles concludes

The government financial support plan to scrap two-stroke engine motorcycles, which began last February, concluded on the last day of June, the Environmental Protection Bureau (DSPA) said in a statement. The statement also informs that the plan generated a greater and more positive response from the public than originally expected. According to the final figures, the DSPA received a total of 5,736 application, all of which were or are currently being processed. The plan is part of a series of government initiatives aimed at improving air quality on the streets in the region. On July 1, a new administrative regulation became effective, setting the new limits for exhaust pollutant emissions.

José Dores exhibition opens at IFT Café

The Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT) has inaugurated an exhibition by local artist José Dores at IFT Café. Titled "Looking Through the Fog," the exhibition opened on Friday and showcases Dores' abstractionist paintings. According to a statement issued by IFT, the coffee shop located at the Anim'Arte Nam Van space "is one of the platforms to showcase local arts and provide citizens and tourists with a relaxing dining experience with cultural and art elements." The exhibition will remain at the venue until August 21.

GAMING

Casino revenue up nearly 26 percent in June

CASINO revenue in Macau missed analyst estimates in June amid concerns of tightening regulation in the world's biggest gaming hub.

Gross gaming receipts in June rose 25.9 percent to 19.99 billion patacas (USD2.49 billion), according to data released by Macau's Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau Saturday. That compares with the median estimate for a 30 percent increase in a Bloomberg survey of 11 analysts and follows a 24 percent jump in May.

The growth in gaming revenue is the highest since February 2014 and reflects the trough the industry was struggling to emerge from last June, when receipts were the lowest since 2010. Still, policy risks remain, as Macau's government and Chinese authorities put in new regulations to deter

The growth in gaming revenue is the highest since February 2014

capital outflows from the mainland, including facial recognition technology on automated teller machines to curb money laundering.

Casinos also face a setback in expansion attempts in China, after a Shanghai court in June convicted 19 Crown Resorts Ltd. current and former staff for illegally promoting gambling on the mainland. The convictions coincide with a planned new wave of Asian casinos, from Japan to Australia, that are poised to make a fresh



push to attract business from China.

New casinos opened by companies including Wynn Resorts Ltd. and Las Vegas Sands Corp., Adelson's company, are wagers that revenue will keep accelerating amid increasing competition. Casino operators, prodded by a government dependent on the revenue Macau pulls in, have begun to

offer more non-gambling attractions, from Broadway-style shows to a Ferris wheel, to diversify the tourism market.

Bloomberg Intelligence's index of Macau gaming stocks rallied 26 percent this year through Friday. Wynn Macau Ltd. surged 48 percent in the period, while Galaxy Entertainment Group Ltd. jumped 40 percent. **MDT/Bloomberg**

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08:00 for 30 km Corporate Challenge (Registration time: 06:45am)
30公里挑戰線 於早上八時正開始 (登記時間：早上六時四十五分)
10:00 for 10 km Family & Fun Course (Registration time: 09:15am)
10公里樂遊線 於早上十時正開始 (登記時間：早上九時十五分)

Cut off at 16:00pm
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30公里挑戰線
10 km Family & Fun Course
10公里樂遊線

Each entry is for a team of 4 people (Limited to 500 teams only)
賽事以團隊方式進行，四人為一組 (名額上限 500 隊)

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Corporate Challenge at MOP/HKD 1,800 per team
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Family & Fun Course at MOP/HKD 1,200 per team
10公里樂遊線參與費用為每隊澳幣/港幣1,200圓

Entry fee also include commemorative TrailHiker T-shirt,
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Coloane, 4 Storey Commercial Building

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



Soi Cheung, Taipa Village

(Ref: 15090530)
700sq. ft. HKD 13,800

Cute one bedroom apartment situated in the centre of Taipa village only 15 minute from Cotai. Wonderful private terrace furnished with modern outdoor furniture, built in store and outdoor washing machine. Lovely living area with a largebespoke TV cabinet and 2 metre sofa. Open plan kitchen with sleek white cabinets incorporating a built in cooktop and small oven, good size free standing fridge/freezer. Separate shower room with plenty of built in storage.



Macau, One Central Residences

(Ref: 16050589)
1,819sq. ft. HKD25,000

Fully furnished. 3 Bedroom apartment. Full club facilities. Fantastic views over Nam Van lake and back across Macau city. Central location next to Wynn & MGM Resorts in Macau. Available for tenancy with a 2 year agreement.

For Sale



Sakura Court, Hellene Gardens, Coloane

(Ref: 17065521)
2,063sq. ft. HKD 11.5M
Rate: HKD 5,574sq ft

This medium size apartment in the complex of Hellene Gardens, is spacious, bright, with every room enjoying a beautiful leafy green view of the surrounding mountains and countryside. Nicely renovated throughout the living rooms balcony is built in with floor to ceiling windows making the room feel even larger. Two of the three bedrooms are doubles with the third generally used as a single roomer home office.



Hellene Gardens, Buttercup Court, G Unit

(Ref: 17055520)
1,663sq. ft. HKD 7.98M
Rate: HKD 4,798sq ft

Stunning apartment with open view across towards the back of Hac Sa Beach. Renovated five years ago to a very high standard. The owner opened up the kitchen making a wonderful entertainment area for both living and dining, off the living room is a great size balcony for Al Fresco dining. Further renovations not required.



The Manhattan - Taipa

(Ref: 17035515)
2,305sq. ft. HKD 18.209M
Rate: HKD 7,900sq ft

4 bedrooms apartment in an excellent location, in the 5-star residence: The Manhattan. High quality finishes and furnishings. Club House facilities include gymnasium, outdoor swimming pool & sun deck, golf simulator, children door & outdoor play areas, bbq facilities, lounge/party room with private kitchen. Perfectly located, close to super markets, restaurants, cafes, shops and walking distance to the Cotai Strip. High floor with sea view, overlooking the Friendship Bridge.



Mandarin Residences Serviced Duplex

(Ref: 17065522)
3,487sq. ft. HKD 88M
Rate: HKD 25,236sq ft

The property comes tastefully designed with elegant, high-grade furnishing and floor-to-ceiling windows that provides a breath-taking panoramic view of the sea and Macau. The modern galley kitchen on the first floor comes fully-fitted with high-grade and stylish appliances from Miele and plenty of space, and the private study room offers the quiet that you need to complete your business affairs.



Kam Lai Kuok

(Ref: 17035512)
1,380sq. ft. HKD 8.88M
Rate: HKD 6,434sq ft

Central Macau, wonderful three bedroom apartment with two bathrooms and modern great size kitchen.

Spacious balcony although as been built in could easily be opened up again very easily. The living room is approximately 500 sq ft including the allocated dining area.

Carpark available separately at HKD1.8M.



Cattleya Court, Ocean Gardens, Taipa

(Ref: 16095497)
1,503sq. ft. HKD 10.78M
Rate: HKD7,172sq ft

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Roof Top Apartment, Macau

(Ref: 15055441)
799sq. ft. HKD3.98M
Rate: HKD4,981sq ft

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

To view call us now on 2835 2699.



Wan Yu Villa, D Unit, Macau

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

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

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HKSAR 20 YEARS

Chui pledges to accelerate Macau integration

CHIEF Executive Chui Sai On, speaking to an audience of 300 government officials in Hong Kong on Saturday, pledged to accelerate the “integrated development” of Macau with mainland China, under the Greater Bay Area strategy.

Chui was in the neighboring SAR late last week to attend celebrations for the 20th anniversary of the transfer of sovereignty over Hong Kong from the United Kingdom to mainland China, otherwise known as the “handover”.

During his visit, Chui was received by Chinese President Xi Jinping, according to a statement published by Macau’s Government Information Bureau (GCS) on Saturday. He was also invited, to sign an agreement alongside the new chief executive of Hong Kong, Carrie Lam, the director of the National Development and Reform Commission, He Lifeng, and the governor of Guangdong province, Ma Xingrui. President Xi witnessed the signing.

The agreement, known as the “Framework Agreement on Deepening Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Cooperation in the Development of the Bay Area,” concerns the adjoining of several cities in the Pearl River Delta estuary to create a mega-city cluster.

It was signed at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, and followed by a conference on the topic at the InterContinental Hong Kong, attended by some 300 government officials and guests, including members of the Political Bureau of the



CPC Central Committee.

The Macau chief executive delivered a speech at the conference pledging to “deepen the integrated development” of Macau with the mainland under the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Bay Area - or “Greater Bay Area” - plan.

Chui said that Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau are well equipped to construct a world-class metropolis, leveraging their unique advantages. This will coincide with a plan to gradually upgrade the Greater Bay Area plan “from a non-governmental initiative to a national strategy.”

He pledged that the MSAR would use all its available assets

to “promote better and faster development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Bay Area,” through the adherence to four key principles.

These principles are the enhancement of communication with the Central Government in Beijing, the implementation of Macau’s first five-year plan, the deepening of integrated development with Guangdong province and Hong Kong and the leveraging of Macau’s unique resources and strength.

As is usual for speeches made by high-level officials, the chief executive referred to various policies of the national government and their associated slogans.

According to the GCS state-

ment, Chui said that through Macau’s economic integration with mainland China, the city could fully “realize” the principles of One Country, Two Systems. He also said that Macau would participate in the Belt and Road Initiative as well as coordinate the construction of the One Center, One Platform scheme to use the MSAR as a link between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries.

According to GCS, Chui also made reference to a plan to construct “One Base.” Although it remains unclear as to what “One Base” entails, it may refer to the establishment of a “human resources training base for tourism education” in the MSAR. **DB**

203 enterprises registered in ‘Innovation Valley’

Hengqin Innovation Valley has registered 203 young entrepreneur-owned companies since the valley’s launch in 2015, over half of which are from Hong Kong and Macau. sixteen companies were granted venture capital, with their financing amounts exceeding MOP100 million. From launch to present, the companies in the valley have applied for a total of 600 patents, with more than 300 applications approved. By the end of May, the entire Hengqin area registered 4,903 companies with a recorded total capital of MOP6627.8 billion.

Majority deems pension system average

The latest survey conducted by the Macau Association of Social and Livelihood Enhancement and the Macau Jiangmen Communal Society indicates that 56.6 percent of the interviewees consider the current pension system in Macau to be average. Around 6 percent are unsatisfied with the local pension system, and only approximately 27 percent are satisfied with the system. The survey interviewed 1,708 people, of whom 1,299 were aged over 60 years old. Furthermore, the survey indicates that although the SAR government implemented many welfare policies for the public, there is still plenty of room for the authority to improve its pension system. The survey also suggested that quality of life for the elderly and other vulnerable groups have not yet been improved.

FM wants to avoid campaign fund spending

The Macau Foundation (FM) is attempting to make sure that the local associations it subsidizes do not spend those funds on electoral campaign activities. The subsidized associations will have to sign a “mandatory agreement.” “Public funds can’t be used for the upcoming legislative elections. The process would no longer be fair while some associations get funded whereas some others don’t. Therefore, apart from signing an agreement, we will have our colleagues, including our subsidy department and our Executive Committee to oversee their activities and see if there’s anything that crosses our bottom line,” Au Weng Chi, member of the Macau Foundation’s Administrative Committee, said, cited by Radio Macau.

Int’l meeting discusses measures to counter money laundering

THE Financial Intelligence Office (GIF) is hosting the 24th plenary meeting of the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units.

The meeting is being attended by over 350 delegates from more than 110 financial intelligence units (FIU) worldwide, and will be held from yesterday and until July 7 at the Conrad Macao Hotel. Attendees will share experiences and dis-

cuss matters regarding anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing, the GIF informed in a press statement.

The Egmont Group is a united body of Financial Intelligence Units around the world. It was established in 1995 from a group of FIUs specializing in analysis of financial intelligence and suspicious transactions, in order to support the investigation of finan-

cial and other crimes. The group aims to facilitate the exchange of intelligence and foster cooperation among its members, as well as to provide support and training to FIUs and other stakeholders to assist their establishment and operations.

Since its creation, the Egmont Group has served as a platform for members to exchange information and experience – especially in relation to countering

money laundering and terrorist financing crimes – and has developed into a body of 154 members.

Macau’s GIF, a member of the group since 2009, said, “The effective sharing of information through the Egmont platform has undoubtedly raised the competence of the GIF and law enforcement agencies in Macau over these years in their analysis and investigation of suspicious

money laundering and other predicate crimes.”

The GIF also noted that they have signed 19 cooperation agreements over the past few years with fellow FIUs, including those in Asia Pacific, Eurasia, Europe and North America. They expect to sign another agreement with an FIU during the current plenary meeting. The GIF also noted that a new Asset Freezing Regime will soon enter into force, equipping the region with a new tool against the increase in terrorist financing activity expected during this year. **RM**

GAMING

Crown's pain is investor gain as China trauma spawns new era

IN just eight traumatic months, Crown Resorts Ltd.'s entire overseas strategy has unraveled. Investors haven't had such a bad time.

Some staff of the Australian casino operator in China were detained in October and this week convicted of illegally promoting gambling. Crown quit Macau, halted a Las Vegas project, scrapped a listing of offshore assets and closed most of its Asian offices. But the crisis also led to changes that sparked a bond and share rally at the company controlled by billionaire James Packer.

Packer's reassessment of his assets - triggered by the crack-down in China - has created a slimmer, less-indebted business focused on profitable casinos in Melbourne and Perth rather than riskier developing markets in Asia. Investors have also been rewarded with a special dividend and a stock buyback.

"The company has basically transformed itself into almost a different investment vehicle, much more focused on income



The Crown Resorts Ltd. logo is displayed at the entrance to the Crown Towers hotel in Melbourne

and less on growth," said Theo Maas, who helps oversee about AUD3 billion in assets including Crown shares at Sydney-based Arnhem Investment Management. "All the volatility that used to be part of Crown is pretty much gone."

Melbourne-based Crown's shares slumped 14 percent on Oct. 17, the day the company announced the detention of employees in China. Since that date, the total return for Crown shareholders has been 26 percent, a gain

that incorporates the 83-cent special dividend announced in February. The total return from Australia's benchmark S&P/ASX 200 index has been 12 percent in the same period.

Crown's 4.5 percent bonds due November 2019 have risen to 103.1 Australian cents from 102.1 on Oct. 17, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. At the same time, the cost to insure Crown bonds against non-payment has fallen to 136 basis points from 198, CMA data

show. Crown has a higher credit rating than any global peer other than Malaysia's Genting Bhd.

Crown didn't immediately respond to requests for comment.

Two months after staff were rounded up in China, Packer started to rein in his empire. Crown abandoned its proposed spinoff of international assets, flagged the sale of an undeveloped plot in Las Vegas, and halved its stake in Macau casino operator Melco Crown Entertainment Ltd.

Crown said in May it would use the USD987 million generated from selling the last of its shares in Melco to further reduce debt. Net debt had already fallen to AUD1.77 billion as of Dec. 31, 2016, from AUD2.95 billion a year earlier as Crown trimmed its Melco holding.

"When Crown sold some assets, they had a bunch of money and they've used that basically to pay down debt," said Raymond Lee, a fixed income manager in Sydney at Kapstream Capital, which doesn't own Crown bonds. Macau was a "very volatile" market

and the extra cash "is always a credit positive."

The group of 19 current and former staff convicted last week were handed jail terms of as long as 10 months. The clampdown was China's broadest enforcement of a law that bars gambling promotion in the mainland. Authorities are seeking to halt currency outflows while warning foreign operators against targeting the nation's richest citizens as their most lucrative market.

It's not clear what Crown plans to do with its cash pile, said Anthony Ip, a Sydney-based credit sector specialist at Citigroup Inc.

"The cash proceeds that are sitting on the balance sheet haven't really been earmarked for anything specific," he said. "They could always go and do something that's unexpected."

And Crown's shift away from a focus on high rollers in Asia raises questions about a planned AUD2 billion (\$1.5 billion) luxury resort in Sydney. The facility will focus solely on high-stakes gamblers.

Crown could still tap Asian markets by using local junket operators to contact high rollers and bring them to Melbourne and Perth, said Maas at Arnhem. That would be a lower-risk strategy than running operations in those countries, he said.

"It's probably one of the most defensive stocks out there now," Maas said. **Bloomberg**

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Yingying Zhang's father Ronggao Zhang (left) and her friend Xiaolin Hou carry the banner as community members join together to walk for Yingying

Man held in Chinese scholar's kidnapping was grad student

THE 28-year-old Illinois man charged with kidnapping a Chinese scholar now believed to be dead was among a select few admitted to the University of Illinois' highly competitive physics graduate program in 2013.

Brendt Allen Christensen originally planned to earn a doctorate degree, but told his graduate adviser in 2016 he had changed his mind, Professor Lance Cooper recalled on Saturday. He didn't say why, and Christensen continued taking classes and teaching as a graduate assistant. He earned his master's degree in mid-May.

Christensen is in federal custody awaiting a court appearance Monday in the June 9 kidnapping of Yingying Zhang, the 26-year-old daughter of a working-class factory driver from China. Weeks ago, Zhang arrived at the university to conduct research in agricultural sciences and planned to begin work on her doctorate in the fall. Her body hasn't been found.

Hong Lei, China's general consul in Chicago, visited Zhang's family on Saturday when he expressed condolences. Hong condemned the cruelty by the suspect and urged the U.S. judicial system to hold a fair trial and mete out harsh punishment to the man charged in the case.

A criminal complaint accuses Christensen, of Champaign, Illinois, of abducting Zhang shortly after she stepped off a bus near the university campus. Video from nearby cameras showed Zhang, on her way to sign a lease for an apartment, trying unsuccessfully to flag down another bus. Minutes later, she's seen getting into a black Saturn Astra.

According to an affidavit filed in federal court, Christensen was under surveillance Thursday when agents overheard him explaining he had kidnapped Zhang. Authorities say agents believe Zhang is no longer alive based on that and other facts the investigation uncovered.

The charging document says his smartphone was used to visit an online forum in April called "Abduction 101." One of the threads on the forum, which was visited months before Zhang went missing, was entitled, "Perfect abduction fantasy." Another was about "planning a kidnapping."

Some 5,600 Chinese students are enrolled at the university — more than at any other college in the nation — and Zhang's disappearance fed anxieties of families of Chinese students studying in the U.S.

Meanwhile, the charges came as a shock to some who knew Christensen at the university. Former classmate Souvik Dutta said he was "dumbfounded" by the news, recalling Christensen as a normal guy and "very calm."

According to the criminal complaint, investigators determined 18 vehicles registered in Champaign County were similar to the one Zhang got in. One belonging to Christensen was first seen in an apartment complex parking lot June 12 — days after Zhang went missing — and investigators questioned him. The affidavit stated that investigators noted Christensen couldn't recall what he was doing the day Zhang disappeared. They searched the vehicle but didn't remove anything.

Investigators later determined the car in the video had a sunroof and cracked hubcap, like Christensen's car, the affidavit states. When investigators interviewed Christensen again, he acknowledged driving around the campus and giving a ride to an Asian woman who said she was late for an appointment. Christensen said the woman panicked after he apparently made a wrong turn and he let her out in a residential area. Christensen was placed under continuous surveillance June 16 and his apartment was searched. On Thursday he was captured on an audio recording explaining how he took Zhang to his apartment and held her against her will, according to the affidavit.

Zhang's father, Ronggao Zhang, traveled to Illinois from Nanping, China, to be closer to the search. On Thursday, he took part in a walk with students and university staff to the corner where his daughter was last seen.

Zhang graduated last year with a master's degree in environmental engineering from one of China's elite schools, Peking University Shenzhen Graduate School. Friends and family said she dreamed of one day landing a professorship and helping her parents financially. **AP**

ADVERTORIAL

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Energy supports our daily lives in so many ways; without it, modern life as we know it would not be possible. Why should we strive to conserve it? If you answered "to save on your bills", you wouldn't be wrong, but in fact the benefits to the environment through reduced pollution and emissions, which contribute to climate change, are infinitely more.

In support of the Office for the Development of the Energy Sector's (GDSE) Energy Saving Week 2017, from June 11-17, MGM held a host of energy saving activities during the period to support in raising awareness for environmental protection through energy conservation.



On June 12, the Campaign officially launched at MGM with back-of-house educational promotions on environmental protection through reduced energy consumption. MGM's employee dining room celebrated with "Green Monday", offering team members a low energy, low carbon menu. MGM's Director of Sustainability also delivered a talk at the Business Environment Council's "Energy Efficiency Technologies Mini-Expo and Seminar" for Hotels and the Food & Beverage Sector in Hong Kong. That evening MGM joined in collaboration

with other Macau properties for a "lights-off" event to spotlight the need to conserve energy, where non-essential exterior lighting was turned off from 830pm-930pm.

On June 13, MGM held several back-of-house Energy Saving Tours at MGM, with the purpose of giving employees a first-hand insight to how MGM has managed to reduce energy consumption by 30% since 2008, as well as experience the large-scale technical projects underway to ensure continued year-on-year reduction. This tour was also provided to the University of Macau's Department of Electromechanical Engineering on June 15, as a way to share how MGM has integrated energy efficiency into MGM's engineering ethos and systems.



On June 14, MGM welcomed Macau's electricity supplier, CEM, for an Energy Saving Talk focusing on how we can save energy at home through mindful consumption, better understanding of energy bills, as well as using energy labelling to identify and purchase energy-efficient home appliances. Lastly MGM ended the Campaign with an employee sale showcasing a range of bicycles from locally-based 21 Century, to support low carbon transport, as well as a casual wear day encouraging team members to wear cooler clothing, particularly in summer, and in doing so keep air-conditioning at acceptable levels to help save energy.

Throughout the Campaign, MGM held an Energy Saving Ideas Competition for employees to submit ideas on how MGM can further reduce energy and how energy can be better saved by individuals at home. The top ideas will be used as valuable inputs to MGM's energy management program, with the winners being recognized at MGM's monthly employee recognition award ceremony.

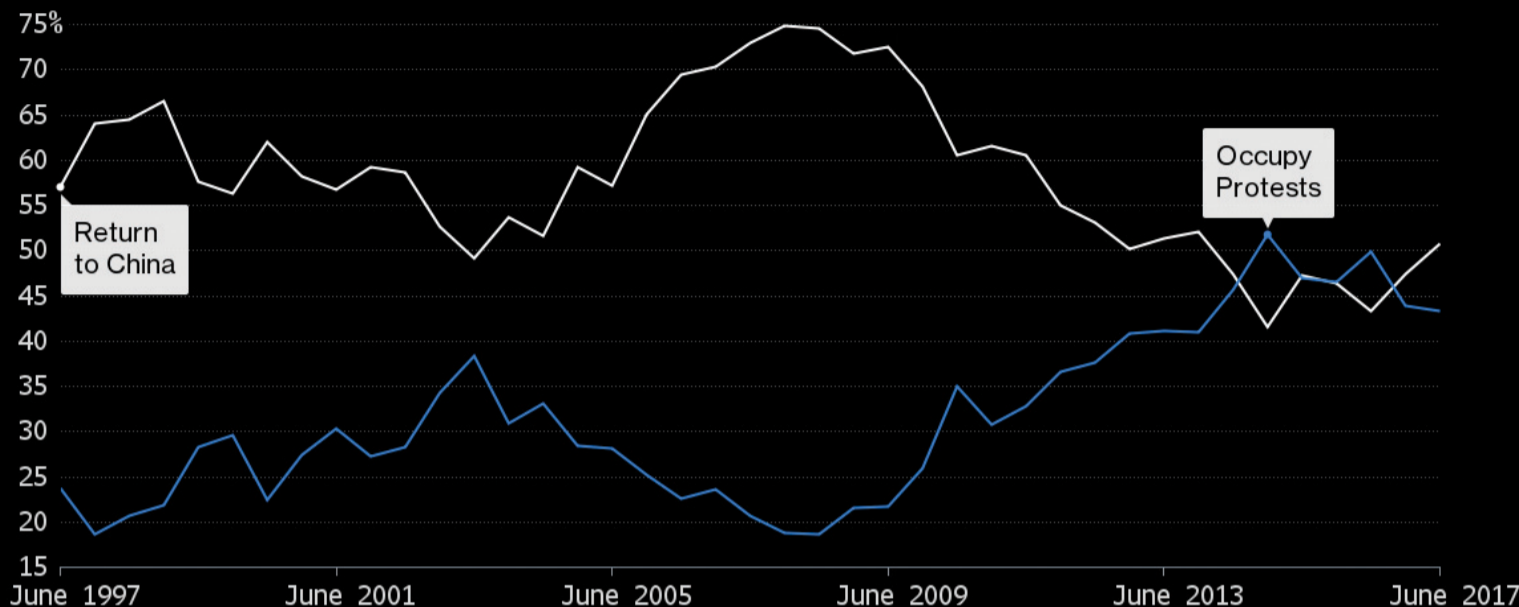
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Second Thoughts?

Support for Hong Kong's 'one country, two systems' framework

■ Confident ■ Not Confident



Source: University of Hong Kong Public Opinion Programme

Bloomberg

ANALYSIS

China dismissal of U.K. treaty renews doubts about its word

David Tweed, Ting Shi

CHINA'S dismissive critique of the U.K. treaty governing the return of Hong Kong raised new doubts about its commitment to the city's autonomy and other international agreements.

On the eve of the handover's 20th anniversary, the Chinese Foreign Ministry declared the Sino-British Joint Declaration a "historical document" that "no longer has any practical significance." The ministry's remarks came Friday in response to U.K. Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson's pledge to defend the rights and freedoms guaranteed Hong Kong until 2047 under the treaty.

"It is not at all binding for the central government's management over Hong Kong," ministry spokesman Lu Kang said. "The U.K. has no sovereignty, no power to rule and no power to supervise Hong Kong after the handover."

Beijing's control was a theme stressed repeatedly this week during Chinese President Xi Jinping's three-day visit to commemorate Hong Kong's 1997 return. But the critique of the 33-year-old Joint Declaration - one of China's most prominent agreements since opening up to the world - resonated as nations struggle to assess the rising power's impact on established global norms.

"This is one of those occasions when the rest of the world should pay attention and respond - this is much bigger than Hong Kong," said Steve Tsang, director of the

SOAS China Institute in London and author of "A Modern History of Hong Kong." If Beijing can "relegate an international agreement with the U.K. to the dustbin of history when it no longer suits China, can any other government which has signed an international agreement have confidence?" he said.

The U.K. has no sovereignty, no power to rule and no power to supervise Hong Kong after the handover.

LU KANG
FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN

The episode recalled a former top Chinese diplomat's dismissal of an international tribunal's ruling on the South China Sea last year as no more than "waste paper." China continues to draw international criticism for disregarding the July 2016 decision, which was brought by the Philippines and found the country's claims to more than 80 percent of the key shipping lane have no basis in law.

In recent months, Xi has also come to the defense of international agreements, vowing to uphold

the Paris climate change accord after President Donald Trump announced the U.S.'s withdrawal. China has sought a larger role in multinational bodies such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization.

The Joint Declaration, which was signed by then-premiers Margaret Thatcher and Zhao Ziyang after two years of intense negotiations, provided a road map for maintaining the autonomy of Hong Kong's political and legal structure from 1997 until at least 2047. The treaty was lodged with the UN and guided the drafting of Hong Kong's Basic Law.

The handover was viewed by many in China as a historic mile-

stone after more than a century in which its territory was carved up in a series of "unequal treaties" with the U.K. and other colonial powers. In a speech to commemorate the city's return Saturday, Xi lamented the period of "humiliation and sorrow" when "China was repeatedly defeated by countries which were far smaller in size and population."

Now boasting the world's second-largest economy and one of its most powerful militaries, China has shown less patience for meddling in Hong Kong's internal affairs. Zou Pingxue, director of Shenzhen University's Hong Kong and Macau Basic Law Research Center, said the foreign mi-

nistry's comment appeared to be a targeted effort to push back.

"I don't see it as a categorical rejection of the Joint Declaration, or being disrespectful about it," Zou said. "It's a message sent out to U.K. politicians and lawmakers that the Joint Declaration cannot be used as a talking point all the time to justify what they'd like to think, that Britain still has a legal obligation over Hong Kong."

At the same time, the U.K. has been accused by Hong Kong democracy advocates of failing to defend the treaty to avoid angering the world's largest trading nation. The city's last colonial governor, Chris Patten, told Bloomberg Television on Thursday that, "the international community - and Britain in particular - hasn't made the sort of fuss it should have done" to protect Hong Kong's freedoms.

The same day, Johnson issued a statement saying that "Hong Kong's future success will depend on the rights and freedoms protected by that treaty." "Britain's commitment to Hong Kong - enshrined in the Joint Declaration with China - is just as strong today as it was 20 years ago," he said. The Foreign Office issued another statement Friday, asserting that the joint declaration remains in force and is "a legally binding treaty."

"Britain and the rest of the world should not allow China go walk away from these obligations at will," said Anson Chan, a former pro-democracy lawmaker who served as Hong Kong's No. 2 official under both the U.K. and Chinese.

China has previously sought to play down the treaty's scope, saying on the 30th anniversary of the document's signing that "after 1997, Hong Kong affairs are the Chinese people's own business."

"Beijing is either disavowing its treaty obligations or declaring its intention to breach the treaty," Michael Davis, a former professor of constitutional law at Hong Kong University, said Saturday. "Either way, this will not bode well for those who claim China is a reliable partner who meets its international obligations." **Bloomberg**



Xi Jinping (center) accompanied by Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam (third right) watches a presentation during their visit to a section of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge



Xi Jinping (right) shakes hands with Hong Kong's new Chief Executive Carrie Lam after Xi administered the oath for a five-year term in office at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center



A protestor carries a poster with an illustration of former Hong Kong Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying and Chinese words reading: "Defend one country two systems, Fight corruption. Catch CY"

HKSAR 20 YEARS

Xi Jinping: No tolerance for subversion in Hong Kong

Kelvin Chan, Hong Kong

CHINESE President Xi Jinping warned Saturday that any activities in Hong Kong seen as threatening China's sovereignty and stability would be "absolutely impermissible," employing some of his harshest language yet against burgeoning separatist sentiment in the territory.

In a speech marking 20 years since the city became a semi-autonomous Chinese region after its handover from Britain, Xi pledged Beijing's support for the "one country, two systems" blueprint, under which Hong Kong controls many of its own affairs and retains civil liberties including free speech.

However, he said Hong Kong had to do more to shore up security and boost patriotic education, in a veiled reference to legislation long-delayed by popular opposition.

And he appeared to put on notice a new wave of activists pushing for more autonomy or even independence, saying challenges to the power of China's central government and Hong Kong's leaders wouldn't be tolerated.

Any attempt to challenge China's sovereignty, security and government authority or use Hong Kong to "carry out infiltration and sabotage activities against the mainland is an act that crosses the red line, and is absolutely impermissible," Xi said, moments after presiding over the inauguration of Hong Kong's new leader, Carrie Lam.

Hong Kong has been roiled by political turmoil that brought tens of thousands of protesters onto the streets in 2014 demanding democratic reforms. Those calls were ignored by Beijing and Xi in-

dicated there would be no giving ground in the future, frustrating many young people and deepening divisions.

"Making everything political or deliberately creating differences and provoking confrontations will not resolve the problems," Xi said, adding that Hong Kong "cannot afford to be torn apart by reckless moves or internal rifts."

Making everything political or deliberately creating differences and provoking confrontations will not resolve the problems.

XI JINPING

Hours after Xi flew home to Beijing, thousands of pro-democracy supporters gathered for a march through the city's shopping and financial districts to demand greater political openness and oppose China's creeping influence in their city.

Young activists have formed new groups promoting independence or a local Hong Kong identity separate from the mainland, alarming Beijing.

Meanwhile, incidents such as the secret detentions of five Hong Kong booksellers on the mainland have stirred fears that Beijing is undermining the "one country, two systems" blueprint.

Xi's speech "was a mixture of reassurance and warning," as he signaled that the system in place since 1997 won't change, said Jean-Pierre Cabestan, an expert on Chinese politics at Hong Kong Baptist University. "At the same time, there was a strong warning to the localists and the pro-independence people."

Cabestan said it was clear that Xi's priority is for Lam, to revive efforts to bring in long-delayed national security legislation, which pro-democracy activists fear will be used to suppress dissent, and patriotic national education in schools, which parents fear is a cover for pro-Communist "brainwashing."

They're two polarizing issues that have the potential to mobilize big crowds to take to the streets.

"We are heading towards troubled times," said Cabestan. "I don't think he's going to give up. If he doesn't give up it means there will be more problems."

While former colonial master Britain and other Western democracies have expressed concerns about Beijing's actions in Hong Kong, China has increasingly made clear that it brooks no outside criticism or attempts at intervention.

Xi said China had made it "categorically clear" in talks with Britain in the 1980s that "sovereignty is not for negotiation."

"Now that Hong Kong has returned to China, it is all the more important for us to firmly uphold China's sovereignty, security and development interests," he said.

Activists scoffed at Xi's remarks.

The idea that there's a force in Hong Kong sabotaging China or challenging its sovereignty is "ludicrous," said Avery Ng of the League of Social Democrats, a small pro-democracy party. He

said Xi used nationalist pride "to alienate any opposition voices that call for democracy and universal suffrage both inside China and in Hong Kong."

Members of Ng's group attempted to march to the speech venue with a mock coffin symbolizing the death of the city's civil liberties, but were met by police and pro-China flag-waving counter-protesters in a brief standoff.

Lam became Hong Kong's fifth chief executive since 1997 and the first female to hold the post. The career civil servant and her Cabinet swore to serve China and Hong Kong and to uphold the Basic Law, the territory's mini-constitution.

Hours after Xi flew home to Beijing, thousands of pro-democracy supporters gathered for a march through the city

In a speech that ran a fraction of Xi's 32-minute address, Lam reviewed the dynamic financial center's achievements and challenges, pledged to support central government initiatives and declared that "the future is bright."

There was other symbolism hinting at the balance of power.

Lam took her oath of office and delivered her address in Mandarin, China's official language, save for a few lines at the end in Hong Kong's Cantonese dialect. The official transcript of Xi's

speech was printed in the mainland's simplified characters instead of Hong Kong's traditional complex characters.

Even the Chinese flag displayed behind Xi as he spoke was noticeably larger than Hong Kong's beside it.

"It speaks volumes to me who is the boss, who is calling the shots," said Cabestan.

Lam prevailed over a much more popular rival in a selection process decried by many as "fake democracy," with only 777 votes from a 1,200-seat panel of mostly pro-Beijing elites. Hong Kong has more than 3 million registered voters.

Participants in the pro-democracy march largely dismissed Lam as a loyal bureaucrat, but said the change in leadership introduced a new measure of uncertainty.

That, combined with Xi's visit, had sharpened the mood for this year's march, said one veteran participant, retiree David Tse. "Things are much more tense. It's much more uncertain," he said.

Organizers estimated the number of participants at 60,000, about half of last year's figure. The pro-democracy movement lost considerable momentum after Beijing turned a cold shoulder to the 2014 protests. Police estimated that 14,500 took part, down about 5,000 from their estimate last year.

Many participants said they were marching in support of imprisoned Chinese Nobel Peace Prize laureate Liu Xiaobo, who has been diagnosed with late-stage liver cancer. Liu's face featured on countless signs held aloft by marchers who called on China to release him to seek treatment abroad.

University student Sean Law said Liu's fate showed what the party was capable of in suppressing its foes.

Commenting on Xi's speech, Law said it showed the president's "ignorance" about Hong Kong.

"He wants to spread China's ideas, but he doesn't understand Hong Kong and has little contact with the people of Hong Kong. His visit is meaningless," Law said. AP

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JAPAN

Tokyo governor's party heads for big win in city election

Mari Yamaguchi

THE new party of the Japanese capital's populist governor appeared headed for a thumping victory yesterday over Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's scandal-laden ruling party in a closely watched Tokyo assembly election that could alter national politics.

Gov. Yuriko Koike's Tomin First no Kai, or Tokyoites First party, was projected to win up to 50 of the 127 assembly seats, or all of the candidates it fielded, Japanese television stations reported last night after the voting ended.

Abe's Liberal Democratic Party, meanwhile, took a beating for recent scandals and an increasingly criticized high-handed approach. It was projected to win only up to 30 seats — down from its current 57, and less than its record low of 38 seats set in 1995 and 2009, according to national broadcaster NHK. The LDP fielded 60 candidates.

Koike's Tomin First party and the Komei party, its new ally and the LDP's longtime coalition partner in parliament, are certain to



Yuriko Koike, governor of Tokyo



Shinzo Abe, Japanese Prime Minister

secure a majority of the assembly seats together, making it easier for Koike to push through her political agenda.

Although official results were not expected until later today, Koike declared victory as she decorated the names of her party's projected winners on a white board with flower-shaped ribbons in the shade of green — her signature color. "We are certain to become the

leading party" in the assembly, she said, adding that the results had exceeded her expectations. "I believe our policies from the perspective of the Tokyo residents won a mandate from voters."

Opinion polls ahead of the election predicted a big win for Koike's party, with Abe's Liberal Democrats taking a hit after being buffeted by scandals and gaffes. "The results are very severe,"

LDP Secretary General Toshihiro Nikai, one of Abe's top aides, told reporters. "It's the voters' judgment and we must take it seriously."

Television footage showed Abe coming out of a restaurant after meeting with top officials from his party last night, but the prime minister briskly walked away, refusing to comment.

The result of the Tokyo assem-

bly election has in the past set the tone for national elections. Koike is rumored to be eyeing a return to parliament to run for prime minister.

A former TV newscaster, Koike became Tokyo's first female leader last summer and earned a reformist image after repeatedly clashing with the male-dominated city government. She portrayed the LDP-dominated assembly as a place of murky politics run by an anti-reform old boys' club that is interfering with her agenda, including cost-cutting of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. She has approval ratings of about 60 percent.

Koike, 64, had shifted parties until settling with the LDP in 2002 and since held key party and Cabinet posts, including defense minister. She angered party seniors when she abruptly ran for Tokyo governor last year, but did not officially leave the party until last month to head her own. She keeps friendly relations with Abe, prompting speculation that she may eventually run for his job.

Abe had long enjoyed stable approval ratings since taking office in 2012, but he and his party have been hit by a series of scandals in recent months.

Throughout the Tokyo assembly election campaign, Abe stayed behind the scenes, reportedly out of concern that his presence would not help his party's image. On Saturday, when he made his first appearance during a street rally, he faced a big crowd that yelled "Step down Abe!" AP

INDIA

New nationwide tax launched amid confusion

SHOPS and businesses reopened in India amid confusion Saturday, hours after the government introduced a new nationwide tax that will change the cost of nearly everything people buy, replacing a complicated mix of state and federal taxes.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi heralded the major overhaul of the taxation system — known as the Goods and Services Tax — at a midnight ceremony Friday in Parliament.

The main opposition Congress party and some other parties boycotted the ceremony, arguing that nearly 7 million traders needed more time to prepare for the new system, which requires them to file tax returns every month. The opposition, however, supported the new tax system.

Traders shut shops

and businesses as a protest in the Indian portion of Kashmir, where insurgent groups have been fighting for independence from India or the region's merger with neighboring Pakistan since 1989.

"This law aims at crushing the economic activities of Kashmir," said Mohammed Yasin Khan, a trade union leader. "We will not allow implementation of the GST in the region. Kashmir is a disturbed area. So, legally and logically there can't be implementation of the new system."

Modi said in his speech Friday that the new system would eliminate 500 types of taxes in favor of one tax across the country, a catalyst that would remove trade imbalance and promote exports.

"GST is a simple, transparent system that prevents generation of black money and curbs corruption," the prime minister said. "The system gives opportunity to honesty and people who do honest business."

India's chief economic adviser, Arvind Subramanian, was confident

that the teething problems would be worked out soon. "There will be some hurdles initially, but we will be able to remove them in one or two months," he told reporters.

Most of India's 29 states have passed local laws to implement the new tax regime, but some have pleaded for more time. The government has dismissed that idea.

First proposed in 2003, the idea was bogged down for years in bipartisan debate, with various governments trying to push it forward while opposition politicians dragged it back. Before Modi and his Bharatya Janata Party came to power three years ago, they were staunchly against the move.

While economists mostly agree that a single, nationwide tax will streamline business, there are concerns about how an economy as unwieldy as India's will transition to a system that involves filing monthly tax returns online. MDT/AP



Mount Sinabung spews volcanic ash into the air

INDONESIA

10 injured in volcanic eruption

A volcano popular with tourists erupted yesterday on Indonesia's main island of Java, injuring 10 people, an official said.

Sileri Crater at Dieng Plateau spewed cold lava, mud and ash as high as 50 meters into the sky when it erupted, said National Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho.

He said the sudden eruption occurred at around 11:30 a.m., when there were about 17 visitors around the crater. Ten people were injured and were being treated at a hospital.

Soldiers and police officers were dispatched to the scene, while local residents

and visitors were asked to evacuate the area in case of further eruptions, Nugroho said.

Sileri is the most active and dangerous among some 10 craters at Dieng Plateau. Its most recent eruption was in 2009, when it unleashed volcanic materials up to 200 meters high and triggered the creation of three new craters.

Dieng Plateau, located in the Central Java province district of Banjarnegara, is a popular tourist attraction because of its cool climate and ninth-century Hindu temples. It sits about 2,000 meters above sea level. AP



Venezuela's chief prosecutor Luisa Ortega

VENEZUELA

Defiant chief prosecutor requests protection

VENEZUELA'S chief prosecutor asked the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights for protection Friday, days after the Supreme Court barred her from leaving the country and ordered her bank accounts frozen.

Tensions between Luisa Ortega Diaz and President Nicolas Maduro's socialist administra-

tion have been steadily escalating since she contested a Supreme Court decision in late March that dissolved the opposition-controlled National Assembly and sparked a deadly wave of unrest.

Since then, she has become one of the few critical voices within the government — other than the sidelined congress —

challenging Maduro's push to rewrite the constitution and pressing charges against officers responsible for deaths during anti-government protests.

On Friday, Ortega Diaz's office announced it was summoning the chief of Venezuela's feared Sebin intelligence agency, Gustavo Gonzalez, to appear on suspicion of "committing grave and systemic violations of human rights."

Prosecutors said they are investigating incidents of illegitimate detentions, arbitrary raids and cases in which people have remained imprisoned despite court orders that they be freed.

Maduro responded hours later by promoting Gonzalez to head the nation's army. He called Gonzalez and Antonio Benavides Torres, another high-ranking official under investigation by the state prose-

cutor, "brave patriots."

"They have defended the peace of the republic and have all my support," Maduro said.

The developments capped perhaps the most turbulent week yet in Ortega Diaz's struggle to assert her office's authority in a country where nearly every branch of the federal government is filled with Maduro allies.

Earlier this week, the government-stacked Supreme Court ruled that a number of responsibilities long the exclusive jurisdiction of the state prosecutor's office would also be assigned to the pro-government public ombudsman's office. The decision was drafted as a rogue police pilot flew a stolen helicopter over the Supreme Court, dropping several grenades and fleeing.

Ortega Diaz announced on Twitter she was seeking the protection of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights for all workers at the state prosecutor's office, but provided no further details.

The Washington-based body, which is an agency of the Organization of American States, is responsible for protecting human rights throughout the hemisphere. It did not respond to a request for comment.

In recent weeks, Maduro and his allies have stepped up their criticism of the prosecutor.

Vice President Tareck El Aissami told state broadcaster VTV on Friday that Ortega Diaz "acts like a militant for the opposition." He said the Supreme

Court's restrictions on her movements were warranted. "They are necessary measures of justice," he said.

Ortega Diaz is a longtime supporter of the socialist government installed by the late President Hugo Chavez, whom she frequently quotes in defending positions that run counter to Maduro's own assertions. More recently, however, she has become a thorn in the president's side as he attempts to proceed with a constitution rewrite that she has roundly dismissed.

"I don't recognize these decisions," she said this week in denouncing the Supreme Court's move to allow the ombudsman to carry out criminal investigations. "I will defend Venezuela's constitution and democracy even if it costs me my life."

Three months of political upheaval in Venezuela triggered by the March Supreme Court decision have left at least 77 people dead, hundreds injured and thousands detained. On Friday, opposition leaders denounced the detention of more than a dozen student protesters who were loaded into the back of a truck as tear gas launched nearby drifted into the vehicle and the doors were closed.

Demonstrators are demanding new elections, but Maduro has vowed instead to resolve the crisis by convoking a special assembly to rewrite the constitution. The election is slated to take place in late July though polls indicate it has little public support. **MDT/AP**

POPE URGES END TO VIOLENCE

POPE FRANCIS is calling for an end to the violence at Venezuela's anti-government protests and is expressing solidarity with families of those killed. Francis led thousands in prayer yesterday for Venezuela as he noted the country is to mark its independence on Wednesday. He said: "I assure this dear nation of my prayers and express my closeness to the families

who have lost their children in the street protests. I appeal for an end to the violence and for a peaceful and democratic solution to the crisis." The Vatican sponsored a dialogue last year that failed. Recently, Venezuelan bishops have travelled to the Vatican and briefed Francis on their criticism of President Nicolas Maduro's authoritarian bent.



Demonstrators look back during protests in Caracas

BREXIT

UK to pull out of fishing deal that let others in its waters

Danica Kirka, London

BRITAIN is pulling out of an agreement that permits fishermen from five other countries to operate in U.K. waters, the first step in reasserting control over its fishing industry as it prepares to leave the European Union.

The government announced yesterday it will trigger the two-year process of leav-

ing the London Fisheries Convention, which allows vessels from France, Belgium, Germany, Ireland and the Netherlands to fish between six and 12 nautical miles off the U.K. coastline.

Britain signed the convention before it joined the EU and would be bound by its terms after leaving the bloc unless it starts to withdraw from the treaty now. EU regulations govern

fishing in the zone between 12 nautical miles and 200 nautical miles from shore, giving other member states the right to fish in U.K. territorial waters as long as they comply with the bloc's rules.

"This is an historic first step towards building a new domestic fishing policy as we leave the European Union - one which leads to a more competi-

ve, profitable and sustainable industry for the whole of the U.K.," Environment Secretary Michael Gove said.

Britain had about 6,000 fishing boats in 2015, which landed 708,000 tons of fish worth about 775 million pounds (USD1 billion), according to the government. Vessels from other convention members caught 10,000 tons of

fish worth an estimated 17 million pounds.

Irish fishermen called the decision to pull out of the London Convention an aggressive move, although they expected it.

"The access for us is huge, but the access between six and 12 is not our greatest priority," said Sean O'Donoghue, chief executive of the Killybegs Fishermen's Organization, a large producers' group based on Ireland's west coast. "Our access is between the 12-mile limit and 200-mile UK-wide limit. That is the important one."

Ben Stafford, head of campaigns at WWF, said after leaving the EU and

the London Convention, Britain must continue to focus on protecting its fisheries because fishing policy is "about a lot more than which country fishes where."

"It is about ensuring that fishermen use the right fishing gear, that fishing takes place at levels that maintain sustainable stocks and that we pioneer ways to monitor what is happening at sea in order to understand the impacts of fishing," Stafford said. "Leaving the EU means we could get these things right. But we will still need to cooperate with our neighbors, as fish do not recognize lines on a map." **AP**

MIDDLE EAST

Qatar stands firm, rejecting Arab demands as deadline looms

QATAR said Saturday it doesn't fear any military retaliation for refusing to meet a Monday deadline to comply with a list of demands from four Arab states that have imposed a de-facto blockade on the Gulf nation.

During a visit to Rome, Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani again rejected the demands as an infringement on Qatar's sovereignty. He said any country is free to raise grievances with Qatar, provided they have proof, but said any such conflicts should be worked out through negotiation, not by imposing ultimatums.

"We believe that the world is governed by international laws, that don't allow big countries to bully small countries," he told a press conference. "No one has the right to issue to a sovereign country an ultimatum."

Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates

AP PHOTO



cut diplomatic ties with Qatar earlier this month and shut down land, sea and air links. They issued a 13-point list of demands, including curbing diplomatic ties to Iran, severing ties with the Muslim Brotherhood and shuttering the Al-Jazeera news network. They accuse Qatar of supporting regional terror groups, a charge Qatar denies.

Al Thani rejected the de-

mands and said they were never meant to be accepted.

"There is no fear from whatever action would be taken; Qatar is prepared to face whatever consequences," he said. "But as I have mentioned... there is an international law that should not be violated and there is a border that should not be crossed."

While in Rome, Al Thani met with Foreign Minister Ange-

No one has the right to issue to a sovereign country an ultimatum.

AL THANI
FOREIGN MINISTER OF QATAR

lino Alfano, who backed the Kuwait-led mediation effort and urged the countries invol-

ved in the standoff to "abstain from further actions that could aggravate the situation."

He added that he hoped Italian companies could further consolidate their presence in Qatar.

Meanwhile, Qatar's stock exchange dropped following an extended holiday closure as the deadline looms.

The benchmark QE Index lost more than 3 percent yesterday before recovering some of its losses later in the trading session to close 2.3 percent down.

The market was last open before the Eid al-Fitr holiday on June 22. That was the day that Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Bahrain issued their ultimatum with just 10 days to comply. The countries involved have not detailed what immediate penalties, if any, Qatar will face. **MDT/AP**

TURKEY ADAMANT TO KEEP MILITARY BASE

QATAR'S DEFENSE minister held talks with his Turkish counterpart on Friday as the Gulf nation's feud with four other major Arab states deepens amid a sweeping list of demands to Doha, including the closure of a Turkish military base there. Turkey is adamant to keep its base in the small Gulf Arab state and has sid-

ed with Qatar in the dispute. In a sign of support, Turkey shipped supplies to Doha to help ease its isolation and swiftly ratified military agreements with Qatar, allowing the deployment of soldiers to its base. A contingent of 23 troops departed for Doha last week, joining some 90 soldiers already there.



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what's ON



A GLIMPSE OF MACAU - BLACK AND WHITE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JASON LEI

TIME: 2pm - 7pm

UNTIL: July 22, 2017

VENUE: Creative Macau (G/F Macau Cultural Centre Building)

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2875 3282

CONSTELLATION - WORKS BY NICOLAS
DELAROCHE

TIME: 10am-9pm

UNTIL: October 8, 2017

VENUE: Tap Seac Gallery

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6866

DEBRIS - WORKS BY ALEXANDRE FARTO AKA
VHILS

TIME: 10am-7pm

UNTIL: November 5, 2017

VENUE: Navy Yard No. 1

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8399 6699

LOVE OF MACAU - PHOTOGRAPHS BY LEE KUNG
KIM

TIME: 10am-7pm (Last admission at 6:30pm, closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: July 9, 2017

VENUE: Macau Art Museum

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

NOCTURNE - SOLO EXHIBITION BY FILIPE DORES

TIME: 12pm-8pm, 3pm-8pm on Mondays

UNTIL: July 9, 2017

VENUE: Albergue SCM

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 1601

Offbeat

AP PHOTO



ESCAPED ELEPHANT STROLLS THROUGH TOWN'S NEIGHBORHOOD

The pachyderm was a startling sight for residents of one small Wisconsin neighborhood.

A full-grown elephant sauntered through Baraboo early Friday morning on a brief walk of freedom. The mammoth creature more suited for the 'big top' clashed with the quiet residential neighborhood.

Law enforcement officers quickly got in touch with the nearby Circus World Museum, home to the wandering pachyderm. A trainer arrived and led the elephant back to the circus complex.

Circus World spokesman Dave Saloutos says the elephant, named Kelly, was freed by her pachyderm partner, Isla, who used her trunk to disengage a restraint.

Saloutos says Kelly lumbered across the shallow Baraboo River and wandered into a neighboring backyard where she unlatched a gate and munched on some marigolds during her couple hours of freedom.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	RTPi Live
17:10	Revenge Sr 2
17:50	Now Generation (Repeated)
18:20	Non-Daily Portuguese News (Repeated)
19:40	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Sports
22:10	Now Generation
23:00	TDM News
23:50	Miscellaneous
00:25	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:05	RTPi Live

cinema



CINETEATRO

29 JUN - 5 JUL



DESPICABLE ME 3

ROOM 1

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

Director: Eric Guillon, Kyle Balda, Pierre Coffin

Starring: Steve Carell, Kristen Wiig, Trey Parker

Language: Cantonese

Duration: 90min

TRANSFORMERS: THE LAST KNIGHT

ROOM 1

2:00, 4:45, 9:30pm

Director: Michael Bay

Starring: Mark Wahlberg, Anthony Hopkins, Josh Duhamel

Language: English

Duration: 148min



THE MUMMY

ROOM 1

2:30, 9:30pm

Director: Alex Kurtzman

Starring: Tom Cruise, Sofia Boutella, Annabelle Walls

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 141min

MACAU TOWER

22 JUN - 5 JUL



TRANSFORMERS: THE LAST KNIGHT

ROOM 1

2:00, 4:45, 9:30pm

Director: Michael Bay

Starring: Mark Wahlberg, Anthony Hopkins, Josh Duhamel

Language: English

Duration: 148min

this day in history



Morrison and his girlfriend spent time at a commune in Northern France five days before Morrison was found dead

1971 DOORS' SINGER JIM MORRISON FOUND DEAD

Jim Morrison, the lead singer of American rock group The Doors has died in Paris aged 27.

He was found in a bathtub at his apartment at 17 Rue Beautille by his girlfriend, Pamela Courson.

A doctor's report stated the cause of death was heart failure aggravated by heavy drinking.

The rest of the band - keyboardist Ray Manzarek, guitarist Robbie Krieger and drummer John Densmore - are currently in the United States.

Morrison, also known as the Lizard King, was born in Florida in 1943, his father Stephen was in the US Navy and rose to the rank of admiral.

He formed The Doors with Ray Manzarek in 1965 in Los Angeles. Morrison had come up with the name after reading Aldous Huxley's account of drug experiences, The Doors of Perception.

The group became the first popular "new wave" band. Their first album, The Doors, released by Elektra Records in 1967, was a number one hit in the US, though only just scraped into the British charts.

Their following albums, Strange Days and Waiting For The Sun, provided further American hits and, in Hello I love You, a British number 15.

But with its ever growing fame, the band lost some of its credibility in the rock underground.

Morrison's behavior, fuelled by drink and drugs, became more outrageous and in 1969 he was arrested for "indecent exposure, lewd conduct and public intoxication" after a concert in Miami's Dinner Key auditorium.

Though some of the charges were later dropped, the scandal made it hard for the band to perform live for some time.

Morrison used the crisis as a spur to creativity and produced one of the group's most critically acclaimed albums, Morrison Hotel, in 1970. Over the past year he has made clear he wanted to drop music altogether to become a writer.

He has already published two volumes of poetry, The Lords and The New Creatures, and planned to begin a literary career once his contractual obligations to Elektra were fulfilled.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Jim Morrison is buried at Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris, where his grave has become a shrine for successive generations of fans. In 1991, the 20th anniversary of his death, the cemetery had to hire extra security after police used tear gas to disperse rowdy fans.

Since Morrison's death his records have never been out of print and Hollywood, too, has found The Doors music attractive.

The End was used in Francis Ford Coppola's Apocalypse Now, and in 1991 Oliver Stone helped cement the Morrison legend with his film biography The Doors, starring Val Kilmer. The film created a whole new generation of fans.

The three surviving members of the group released a new album, Doors Box Set, in 1997. It included three CDs of previously unreleased songs.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Since you've probably been off playing for the past few days, this diligent influence will be just what the doctor ordered -- if you want to keep your job, that is. Just look at all those credit card receipts!

Taurus April 20-May 20 Okay, so you've been working hard, but you've still got time to make this a day to remember. The stars are traveling through your house of love affairs with a mission: To get you up close and personally involved.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 No matter what type of enticing offer comes your way -- and it's easy to see you might easily have your pick -- you're still feeling more like a homebody than a party animal.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 You're tired, you've had just about all the fun you can stand and the stars, those heavenly purveyors of emotions, are in your house of communication, you'll be able to drive your point home easily

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 The stars are asking only one thing of you: That after you're done with your chores, balancing the checkbook and shopping, you'll fully commit yourself to the concept of sensual pleasures and recreation.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 The stars are emphasizing your own meticulous, practical qualities. They're bumping up the volume on your personality with a mission: To convince you to let your feelings show.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Okay, so today could be a bit tricky, especially if you've got a secret you've been trying to hold onto -- and whether it's yours or someone else's doesn't matter at all.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 You were probably quite irritated with someone yesterday, which means you could still be feeling that now. If it's a friend who's responsible you can make peace, but not until later tonight.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 It may be the day after a big party night, but you're not quite ready to quit. The stars are urging you to get out in public and have some more fun. If your partner or companion doesn't quite see it that way, don't worry.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 The stars are all about long-distance friends and lovers right now, urging you to get out there and mingle with folks who are totally unlike anyone you currently associate with. Hey, why not.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Just last week, you probably ran into someone who's fiery, independent and lots of fun. Since those are exactly the qualities you insist upon when you're looking for companionship, you may not have left their side yet.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 The stars are all about one-to-one relationships. They're urging you to connect with someone on a very deep level. Just be sure you reach out to the right person.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzles categorized as Easy, Easy+, Medium, and Hard. Each category includes a 9x9 grid with some numbers pre-filled.

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a 'Friday's solution' section with the filled-in grid.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



Real estate advertisement for JML Property, featuring 'FOR SALE' and 'FOR RENT' sections with contact information.

Real estate advertisement for JML Property listing various properties for sale and rent, including Mandarin Residences, Nam Hong Studio Apartment, St Pauls Ruins, and Cattleya Court.

JML Property logo and branding, including the text '卓雅物業' and 'jml property since 1994'.



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BOXING

Pacquiao loses contentious WBO title fight to Jeff Horn

John Pye, Brisbane

IT went all the way and ended in a contentiously bitter loss, the opposite of what Manny Pacquiao's handlers predicted for his WBO welterweight world title fight against Jeff Horn.

Pacquiao's long-time trainer Freddie Roach tipped a "short and sweet" knockout win for the 11-time world champion in yesterday's so-called 'Battle of Brisbane,' but Horn got a unanimous points decision in his first world title fight — delighting the 51,052-strong crowd.

The 38-year-old Philippines senator arrived in Brisbane a week ahead of the fight with a chartered plane carrying more than a hundred supporters and as the hot favorite to beat Horn. He leaves without the WBO belt.

All three judges awarded it to Horn, with Waleska Roldan scoring it 117-111 and both Chris Flores and Ramon Cerdan scoring it 115-113.

Some critics slammed it as a hometown decision, saying the statistics had Pacquiao landing twice the number of power punches as Horn.

"That's the decision of the judges. I respect that," Pacquiao was quoted as saying by broadcaster ESPN. "We have a rematch clause, so no problem."

But Pacquiao's conditioning trainer, the Los Angeles-based former Australian heavyweight Justin Fortune, was critical of the referee and the judging.

"Manny lost the fight, but Jeff Horn looks like a pumpkin. Those scores, that card?" he said, "It should be the other way."

Fortune said Pacquiao should have taken any risk out of the equation.

"When you come into someone's backyard, you need to really do a number on them or knock



Manny Pacquiao of the Philippines (right), and Jeff Horn of Australia fight during their WBO World welterweight title bout in Brisbane

them out," he said. "That's boxing. You get given a gift sometimes, you get [swindled] sometimes. But when you come to someone's house, you're supposed to mess them up, make a statement. Never leave it in the judge's hands."

Horn started strongly and won at least three of the first five rounds on all three of the judge's cards. But Pacquiao, after twice needing treatment for a cut on top of his head in the 6th and 7th rounds, appeared to dominate most of the rounds from the eighth.

He was close to finishing it in the 9th when he relentlessly pounded Horn and had him wobbling — to the point where referee Mark Nelson asked the 29-year-old former schoolteacher if he could continue — and could also have come out with

the win.

Pacquiao didn't attend the formal post-fight news conference, sending a spokesman to say he was getting treated for the cuts. He also declined to do any interviews in the dressing room.

Horn was confident he was always ahead on points, and was startled after the 9th when the referee asked if he was OK to continue.

"I felt buzzed for sure, but I'm the Hornet — I've got to come back," Horn said. "I'm not a quitter. Australians aren't quitters to start with. We've showed we're winners."

"It was the battle of Brisbane, that's for sure. Absolutely unbelievable."

Co-promotor Bob Arum said it was a "close fight. It could have gone either way."

"A couple of close rounds, but

you can't argue with the result," he said. "I scored a lot of the early rounds for Jeff. Then I had Manny coming back in the middle. The 12th round, Jeff really won. If you give Manny the 11th, you have it a draw. You give Jeff the 11th, it's 7-5."

Roach had said earlier in the week that he'd think about advising Pacquiao to retire if he lost the fight, but they're already considering a rematch.

Horn can't see Pacquiao retiring any time soon.

"I'm sure he'll want to come back. It was a close decision and I'm sure he'll want to come back and prove himself," he said.

Arum said there was a clause for a rematch, but he'd give it time before talking to Pacquiao about it.

"I don't know Manny's future position. Is he going to stay

in politics and not continue in boxing? I don't know, and he doesn't know," Arum said. "It's unfair to ask him now."

Pacquiao's camp had talked about a rematch with Mayweather if he got past Horn, hoping to avenge his loss on points in the 2015 mega fight. That seems to be a long shot now.

Pacquiao entered the fight with a record of 59-6-2, but the last of his 38 wins by knockout was in 2009. Horn hadn't lost any of his previous 17 professional fights, but had never encountered anybody with Pacquiao's credentials.

"I take massive confidence from this fight," Horn said. "I believed in myself before, now I've climbed the Pacquiao mountain."

Roach said the quietly spoken Horn was "a little bit rougher than I thought he was. Maybe a little bit more physical."

"Like every time you come you come out of a clinch in a headlock, something is wrong there," he said. "I don't know if the referee couldn't control that or what it was."

"But, I thought it was a pretty close fight. I thought Manny had a real good round in the 9th — I thought it was maybe a two-point round — and I just told Manny, 'give me one more of those and the fight's over,' but he just couldn't do it. We lost the decision."

Roach said he couldn't judge the fight, given how close he was.

"I hear there's a lot of people think it's controversial, think Manny won, but it went the other way and we have to live with that."

At Marawi City in the southern Philippines, where local officials organized a free public viewing to give some respite from the disastrous siege by militants, hundreds of people gathered to cheer for Pacquiao.

"Many couldn't accept the result initially but the entertainment side of it provided a respite," Marawi crisis committee spokesman Zia Alonto Adiong told The Associated Press. "The message of courage and resiliency, I think Manny Pacquiao provided that today." AP

TOUR DE FRANCE

Thomas in yellow as first full road stage begins

GERAINT Thomas of Team Sky is in the race leader's yellow jersey as the 2017 Tour de France embarks on a first full road stage.

Chris Froome was sixth, 12 seconds behind, and gained time on all of his expected challengers. He gained 35 and 36 seconds on Richie Porte and Nairo Quintana, respectively.

The largely flat 203.5-kilometer Stage 2 Sunday from Duesseldorf, Germany, which hosted the short opening time trial, finishes in Liege, Belgium. The long finishing straight should lend itself to a high-speed mass sprint.

The race has already lost Alejandro Valverde to a crash on Saturday.

Valverde, a podium fi-

nisher in 2015, crashed out of the Tour de France in the opening time trial on rain-slickened roads, dealing a blow to his teammate Nairo Quintana's hopes of winning the race.

Quintana had been counting on Valverde, a Tour veteran, to help him overthrow defending champion Chris Froome

of Team Sky.

But the Movistar rider's wheels slid from under him on a left-hand bend on the course in Duesseldorf on Saturday, sending him sliding hard into metal barriers.

The Tour announced on its website that Valverde was out of the race and had been taken away in an ambulance. MDT/AP



opinion

Rear Window
 Severo Portela



VEXING ISSUES

1 - Here we go again with the four-yearly procedure to select, by universal suffrage, a 14-seat section of the 33-strong floor of the Legislative Assembly at the Nam Van Lakes! Despite being a momentous occasion in the executive-led Macau Special Administrative Region political calendar, both its established routine and swampy non-evolving character gives the September 17 elections the atmosphere of "Here we go again to another day at the races." Or rather, we do prefer the translation of the sage local lingo: same, same, but different!

This is why, once again, we have more or less the same candidates, waging more or less the same political agendas. First: as to the running tickets, the difference is in the undertone brought about by the arbitrary increase in the number of confirmed nomination committees for the direct election process of the 2017 Legislative Assembly Election from 20 to 25. A frivolous and uninformed electoral reading would brag about progress in the SAR's democratic development, even though the increase in the number of lists will increase the "price" of each seat. Secondly the failure to present political agendas comes with a "more" and a "less": more constraints and conditions in the CAEAL Electoral Law and less ability to confront and maneuver around that uninspired regulatory nonsense.

However, this situation does not bear the weight of a cliché as degraded as a history that repeats itself - first as a tragedy, second as a farce - since the situation does not qualify as social drama or even farcical play. The MSAR is no longer living a political game of moving forward or back, winning and losing in a well-defined constitutional landscape. Now it is pure ideology.

One has to wonder how high the spirits among young democrats will be in the New Macau Association to confront the reality of political disenfranchisement, with Scott Chiang having been refused entry to Hong Kong, and the electoral threat posed by those merely trying to hijack NMA votes. Veteran democrats Ng and Au have already reacted through a non-confrontational statement of wishful thinking: they hope that one day the system will evolve to a gentler democratic platform. New Hope once again is facing a similar threat to the one poisoning NMA's chances to survive in an increasingly unfavorable zeitgeist. But veteran pro-labor Pereira Coutinho is resilient and always manages to expand his constituency in order to replace the wandering vote.

Here we go again, wondering how conservatives will split the vote, betting on the private war of the regional tickets, and not betting on the gaming-related candidates. They are probably betting on their way out of the AL.

2 -The above-mentioned intrusion of ideology in the political discourse as defined in the Basic Law does not mean we have to fear it will circumscribe itself to the political dynamics. It will tend or try to contaminate legislative and judicial foundations. To illustrate or illuminate this trap we may consider the irreversible god-forsaken smoking ban in casinos and the draft to be tabled this week.

3 - Finally, one word about Liu Xiaobo, aka Black Horse, currently ailing with untreated late-stage liver-cancer, and the alleged leniency with which authorities handled the discovery that Bo Xilai, who was also jailed, had cancer. Bo was allegedly free to undertake life-saving treatment. White Horse?

THE PORTUGAL: GRENADES, AMMO STOLEN IN DARING RAID

Defense officials in Portugal say they are compiling a list of weapons and ammunition stolen from the national armory in a brazen daytime raid.

The Portuguese Army and the Defense Ministry say hand grenades, 9 mm ammunition and perhaps other weapons were stolen from the arsenal, which had no electronic surveillance and was guarded by military patrols.

Officials said Friday they won't provide further

details until the military police have concluded an investigation.

Defense Minister Azeredo Lopes said criminals broke in by cutting a hole in a perimeter fence.

Lopes described the robbery last week at Tan-cos Air Base, 100 kilometers north of Lisbon, as a "very professional" job and a "serious" breach of security. He said he has informed Portugal's European Union and NATO partners of the theft.

Tourists, locals buy Nevada's legal recreational marijuana

Regina Garcia Cano,
 John Locher

CCHEERS and long lines of tourists and locals alike greeted the first day of sales of recreational marijuana on Saturday as Nevada became the fifth state with stores selling pot to the public in a market that is expected to outpace all others in the U.S. thanks to the millions of visitors who flock to Las Vegas each year.

Veteran consumers, first-timers, twenty-somethings and retirees were among those who defied triple-digit temperatures before they made it into stores across the Las Vegas area, some of which opened shortly after midnight and later provided free water, live music, valet parking and coveted promotions on their valuable product. Eager employees guided customers and answered questions from product potency to Nevada's consumption regulations.

Minnesota resident Edgar Rosas Lorenzo on Saturday flew with his family to Sin City for his sister's wedding. But even before he checked in to his hotel, he stopped at a dispensary on the Las Vegas Strip.

Lorenzo, 21, said he learned of the legalization of recreational marijuana in Nevada while he was at the airport waiting for his flight to depart. He drove with his sister and soon-to-be brother-in-law from the rental car facility in Las Vegas straight to the dispensary. They waited in line about 40 minutes before he could buy one-eighth of an ounce of marijuana and hemp wraps.

"It was worth the wait. I'm going to come get some more tomorrow," Lorenzo said after paying about USD60 in cash at Essence dispensary. "It helps me sleep. I get back pain. I have a slipped disk."

Some dispensaries took to social media to spread the word or tried to draw in buyers with special events. Some gave away free marijuana to their first 100 customers, and at least one entered buyers into a raffle for free pot for a year.

Those 21 and older with a valid ID can buy up to an ounce of pot. As of Friday, the state had licensed 44 dispensaries to sell recreational marijuana.



People wait in line at the Essence cannabis dispensary in Las Vegas

Thirty-nine of those shops are in the Las Vegas area.

Tourists — 42 million of which stop in Sin City every year — are expected to make nearly two of every three recreational pot purchases in Nevada. But people can only use the drug in a private home as it remains illegal to consume it in public, including the Strip, hotels and casinos. Violators face a \$600 fine.

"I have yet to figure that out," Lorenzo said of where he will smoke the weed he got at the Essence dispensary, which along with others had stacks of pamphlets stating the regulations in every checkout station.

Meanwhile, Kristin Deneal got in line outside a pot shop at 5:45 a.m., after a different store that opened at midnight closed before she could make a purchase. She brought a folding chair and sat by the door, striking conversations with the security guard and others as the line continued to grow before doors opened at 9 a.m.

Deneal, a Las Vegas resident, said she is elated at being able to legally buy the drug that for decades she has had to buy through acquaintances. Smoking marijuana helps her cope with health conditions while also working a stressful job at a bank, she said.

"It looks like they have enough stuff for everyone, it's just a question of getting through the door," Deneal, 57, said.

State Sen. Tick Segerblom, one of the main proponents of marijuana legalization in Nevada, made the first purchase at The Source dispensary at a strip mall. Deneal and others followed. An hour after the door opened, at least 80 transactions had been recorded.

Some facilities are in strip malls, while others, in stereotypical Las Vegas fashion, are in neighborhoods shared by strip clubs. Some dispensa-

ries have ATMs inside because they only accept cash transactions for marijuana.

Lorenzo immediately posted photos of his stash on Snapchat. His friends have said they're jealous and asked where he bought the products, he said, adding that he'll plan another trip to Las Vegas specifically to legally purchase marijuana, not to visit the city's world famous casinos. "We just got here [...] Instead of looking around in Vegas, I'm in a dispensary," he said.

In the afternoon, people walking along the Strip seemed to be obeying the state's ban on public pot smoking. Recreational marijuana sales began shortly after midnight, just months after voters approved legalization in November, marking the fastest turnaround from the ballot box to retail sales in the country.

Hundreds of people lined up outside dispensaries that opened from 12 a.m. to 3 a.m. and had to turn away customers like Deneal. At Essence on the Strip, people were excited and well-behaved as a lone security guard looked on. A cheer erupted when the doors opened.

Despite the limits on where people can get high and restrictions on where the industry can advertise, dispensaries worked furiously to prepare for the launch. They stamped labels on pot products, stocked up their shelves, added security and installed extra checkout stations.

Nevada joins Colorado, Oregon, Washington and Alaska in allowing adults to buy the drug that's still banned by the federal government.

"I've been living in Vegas for 15 years, and I keep missing the cities that legalize marijuana and edibles. So I'm happy that it's here now," said Babs Daitch, who was waiting in line. AP

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	15-35 Good	
High Density Residential Area	15-35 Good	
Ambient	25-45 Good	

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS

PHILIPPINES U.S. and Philippine navy ships have patrolled waters in the southern Philippines where kidnappings by ransom-seeking Abu Sayyaf militants have sparked a regional security alarm. The coordinated patrol, which was aimed at detecting and deterring threats, "was safe and routine," the US Navy reported.

AUSTRALIA Cricketers in the country will boycott an Australia tour of South Africa unless Cricket Australia takes action within days to resolve a bitter pay dispute, the players' union said yesterday.



INDIA Shops and businesses reopened in India amid confusion Saturday, hours after the government introduced a new nationwide tax that will change the cost of nearly everything people buy, replacing a complicated mix of state and federal taxes. More on p13

TURKEY's official news agency says two ruling party officials serving in district organizations have been shot and killed, and ruling party officials blamed Kurdish militants.



FRANCE's president is promising support for a new multinational force against extremists in Africa's vast Sahel region as he meets in Mali with leaders from five regional countries. President Emmanuel Macron said that France will provide combat support, 70 tactical vehicles and communications equipment to the new 5,000-strong force.

BRITAIN Key government ministers are pressuring Conservative British Prime Minister Theresa May to ease austerity and remove a pay cap for public sector employees.

BRAZIL Security forces have briefly detained a 23-year-old woman who climbed over a fence and entered the residence of President Michel Temer. The president was asleep inside the palace at the time.