



PROPERTY MARKET EXPECTED TO REMAIN STABLE

P5



CROWN RESORTS WORKERS RELEASED
China yesterday released 10 employees of Crown Resorts, including two Australian citizens

P8



FIRST OVERSEAS MILITARY BASE
China dispatched forces to Djibouti to man Beijing's first overseas military base

P10

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WORLD BRIEFS



MALAYSIA Authorities have raided a construction site and detained 77 foreigners as part of a fresh crackdown on illegal immigration. As one of Southeast Asia's richest countries, Malaysia has long attracted workers from nearby nations such as Indonesia, the Philippines, Bangladesh and India. **More on p13**

THAILAND's military government has approved the purchase of eight supersonic T-50TH trainer jets from South Korea at a cost of 8.8 billion baht (USD258 million). The South Korean planes will replace Czech-made L-39 trainers, which have been in service for more than two decades



MYANMAR Buddhist demonstrators have protested the arrival of the U.N. human rights envoy to Myanmar for an information-gathering trip in troubled Rakhine state, where security forces have been accused of rights abuses against the Muslim Rohingya minority.

PAKISTAN A deepening political crisis in Pakistan has spooked investors and risks fresh street protests amid a corruption probe into Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. **More on p12**

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JUDICIARY POLICE DAY

Gambling-related kidnappings rise P2



Q&A GRAHAM ELLIOT
CHEF

‘If I had to choose one thing to eat, it would just be sushi’ P7

Nomura predicts 25pct GGR expansion

Nomura Holdings has forecasted 25 percent year-on-year growth in gross gaming revenues (GGR) for the month of July in a report released this week. The prediction is based on the company's retrospective estimate of MOP756 million in daily revenue for the week beginning July 3. Last month, GGR reached almost MOP20 billion, up by 25.9 percent compared to June 2016, the low-point of the Macau gaming contraction. Meanwhile, GGR in July 2016 was around MOP17.77 billion. By segment, Nomura estimated that the average daily VIP volume has increased by between 12 and 15 percent compared with June 2017, while that of the mass market is holding about 7 to 8 percent higher. Nomura's latest forecast assessment reports the expectation of a significantly higher volume in both the VIP and mass market segments than its previous forecast a week earlier. These expectations are based on the probability of stronger visitation from Hong Kong after Chinese President Xi Jinping wrapped up his visit. The company also said it expects a deceleration in month-on-month GGR growth in the second half of this year, due to a lack of new resort openings, except for MGM Cotai, which is due near year-end.

Macau Orchestra and Science Center host concert

The Macau Orchestra and Macau Science Center will present the concert "Science and Music Festival" on July 15 at the Macau Science Center's Exhibition Center. The concert will combine the visual and acoustic elements of classical music with scientific concepts. The concert will take the audience on a musical journey entitled "The Musical Train." The concert will include fun interactive segments to encourage audience participation and engagement.

Health Bureau apologizes for failure that led to injuries

The Health Bureau (SSM) apologized for a "procedure failure" that led to several people falling on a slippery pavement, the SSM informed in statement. The incident occurred when members of the Bureau were applying larvacide in the streets near the Border Gate Square. Due to a procedure failure, the product was left on the pavement which made it slippery and led to several citizens falling and sustaining injuries. In its statement, the SSM sincerely apologized for the oversight, noting that one of the passers-by who fell, a 50-year-old female, received treatment and was later examined at a public hospital due to pain in her right elbow and lower back. The patient's pain was not explicable by any pre-existing condition.

Arson and gambling-related crimes on the rise

Renato Marques

OVER the past year, Macau has registered very little growth and even declined in many areas of crime. Gambling-related kidnappings are the main exception to this downturn and arson has registered a significant hike over the past twelve months, the director of the Judiciary Police (PJ) Chau Wai Kuong relayed yesterday while presenting the yearly review of crime rates.

According to Chau, the police force registered an increase of about 9 percent in the total number of police processes opened, in comparison with the previous year, noting that the crime rate of violent crimes such as homicide, serious assaults, kidnapping (non-related to gambling) and organized crime, "remained low with a number of occurrences close to zero."

For the 12-month period ending May 2017, the number of kidnapping (523) and loan sharking (413) cases related to the gaming industry rose by 20 percent and 6 percent respectively, compared to the prior 12-month period.

The number of cases related to drug trafficking and drug consumption also surged by around 13 percent.

The area of crime that registered the most dramatic change in the statistics was arson; the number of cases related to arson registered 150 percent growth, year-on-year (from 18 to 45 cases).

On the topic, Chau remarked, "most of the cases were solved," noting, "many of them were due to negligence [cigarette ends poorly discarded]".

In his opening speech during the celebrations of the PJ Day, Chau also reviewed the major cases resolved in the last 12 months, namely the ones related to drug trafficking, where he said the cooperation between police forces from Macau, Hong Kong and Zhuhai are becoming more and more decisive.

Highlighted as one of the challenges for the force, cyber-crimes have been growing and becoming more complex and hard to trace. Chau noted, "the PJ, under the leadership of its immediate superiors, will participate actively in the creation of the center for cyber security and do its best regarding its preliminary works."

On the sidelines of the event and replying to questions from media, the PJ director said, "we are doing preparatory works in terms of legislation." He emphasized that although the infrastructure is already in place, "only after the legislative works conclude, is it possible to start the operations of this [Cyber Security] center." He continued by saying the center has promised to be vigilant and alert to "cases of dangerous communication" on the internet.

Chau also remarked that the police force is reinforcing collaboration with school institutions during the school holidays period to tackle cases of students' "drug consumption" during the school break.

In the ceremony, a total of 128 merit awards were awarded, 11 of them for exceptional merit as well as 15 other group and team awards to the officers and departments that performed to the highest level during the past year.

RENATO MARQUES



Chau Wai Kuong

HKZM Bridge traffic rules and parking details to be announced soon

THE Commissioner-General of the Unitary Police Service (SPU) Ma Io Kun, was questioned by the media on the arrangements that would be made for the traffic and security measures that would be put in place during bad weather conditions for the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau (HKMZ) Bridge. He said that, "We have a tripartite committee that in negotiating on those matters," adding that the committee have placed priority on topics such as "traffic organization and arrangements and parking issues." He noted that regarding the parking, "there will be a parking lot and at this moment it is expected that cars can park there. But we are still negotiating that," he said, remarking that soon a

policy will be published on those matters.

Advancing on the traffic arrangements, the Commissioner-General of the SPU said that, "cars when arriving from Zhuhai must stop in the parking lot [not circulate on the Macau roads]." He added that a similar procedure should be taken by the other neighboring regions [HK and Zhuhai]. According to Ma, the agreements are at a "final stage" since the measures will have to be published before the bridge opens, scheduled for later this year.

According to several sources from mainland, the HKZM Bridge is planned to be inaugurated on the occasion of the 18th anniversary of the Macau SAR on December 20.

OFFICER INVOLVED IN SCHEME TO BE FIRED

A JUDICIARY Police (PJ) officer is set to be fired by the police force, the Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak revealed. It was found that the officer was involved in a swindle scheme back in 2015, when he and his girlfriend defrauded 320 mainland workers, accepting money from them on the pretense of helping them to find a job in Macau. "After analysis of the case by

our juridical department, we have decided to dismiss this officer," Wong said. Noting that the police have already provided information on the case Wong said that "the officer still has an opportunity to present an appeal [regarding the decision]." The officer and his girlfriend are accused of unlawfully making a profit of approximately MOP1.5 million from the victims.

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A MACAU TIMES PUBLICATIONS LTD PUBLICATION

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Realtors expect property market to remain stable



From left to right: Oliver Tong, Alison Yip, Jeff Wong and Mark Wong

Julie Zhu

THE residential property market rebounded amid a period of robust primary sale prices, leading to strong price growth in some of the residential projects, according to JLL, a global real estate services and investment management company, in its Macau mid-year property review for 2017.

Mark Wong, a senior manager at JLL said, "the overall economy in Macau performed quite well in the first half of the year, underpinned by the active investment sentiment with the launch of several new residential projects."

"The government's implementation of cooling measures to curb the overheated property market, which lowered the loan-to-value ratio for borrowers, who are not first-time homebuyers, coupled with the Federal Reserve's interest rate hike and contraction of balance sheet, is expected to reduce the total residential transaction volume in the short term."

"However, with the economic fundamentals in Macau remaining optimistic, the completion of a large-scale gaming facility within the year and the positive effects that will be brought about by the completion of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge, we expect Macau's property market to remain healthy and stable in the

second semester," said Wong.

The total residential sales transaction volume in Macau continued to grow during the first half of the year. According to the MSAR government's statistics, a total of 4,690 residential sales transactions were registered in the first five months of 2017, representing a significant growth of 49.1 percent year-on-year.

Investment in the overall residential market was active in the first six months of 2017, due to the positive response to the launch of presale projects, according to JLL.

The capital values for high-end and mass-to-medium residential properties rose by 8.8 percent and 6 percent respectively between January and the end of June, compared to the end of 2016, while yields decreased to 1.3 percent and 1.5 percent respectively.

The JLL report also said that the rental values for high-end residential properties grew by 3 percent and remained stable for mass-to-medium residential properties, compared to the end of 2016.

"In fact, the government may explore the possibility of adding additional binding terms and conditions to the public auction, such as requiring successful bidders to reserve part of the floor area for building community facilities like public youth apartments," said Jeff Wong, Head of Residen-

tial at JLL Macau.

"This can help prevent the transaction prices from being pushed too high on the one hand, and alleviate the demand-supply imbalance in the sandwiched-class housing sector while encouraging the developers to bear some corporate social responsibilities on the other."

The office market in Macau remained broadly stable in the first half of the year. During the first five months of 2017, the total number of new incorporations registered in Macau was 2,256, up 22 percent year on year.

In the sales market, the number of retail units sold in the first quarter of 2017 totalled 170, up 32.8 percent year-on-year.

According to JLL Macau Retail Index, the overall retail capital values dropped by 1.4 percent in first half of the year, while the overall retail rental values fell by 6.4 percent, compared with end of 2016. The yields for the overall retail market fell to 1.8 percent as of June 2017.

Oliver Tong, Head of Retail at JLL Macau, said that "the Legislative Assembly has voted through the new bill currently, trying to exert control on the real estate leasing market by means of administrative measures."

Tong added that the administrative measures might put the landlords, "at risk of bearing unnecessary losses caused by the offering of rent-free

periods, property tax, and capital expenditure."

When asked how JLL sees the government's earlier policy which tightened mortgage lending conditions for both non-first-time resident buyers and non-resident buyers who purchase a residential property, or enter into a pre-purchase of an unfinished flat, Wong replied that JLL does not endorse the policy because, "Macau is a free economy market, and the restriction does not benefit Macau's commercial environment." In turn, Wong suggested that the government should try increasing the supply of houses instead of restricting the market.

Wong admitted that the government policy worked but reiterated that that tactic harms the free market and that it is not the best practice.



A pedestrian walks past a water fountain in Zhuhai

Zhuhai launches smart city five-year plan

ZHUHAI has recently approved a smart city five-year plan with the city's government hoping that Zhuhai will become a city known for its dedication to the advancement of arts, culture, sports and its first-class medical systems. In addition, it aims to become a city "where the public can retrieve any information in a matter of seconds".

According to the plan, Zhuhai will try to start the 5G network applications in 2020.

The city will also try to transform more than 70 percent of the city's manufacturing into "smart manufacturing."

Waste management enterprises should be able to smartly monitor more than 80 percent of the sewage discharge, and navigation and transport bodies should be able to record more than 60 percent of real-time car traffic.

With respect to information infrastructures, Zhuhai is trying to increase its coverage to reach 5,000 Gigabits per second (Gbps), with 4G covering all regions across Zhuhai. The city's government expects the

smart industry promotion center to attract and help around 100 enterprises. The general advancement is expected to positively impact other enterprises which operate exclusively in Zhuhai's own dialects.

Regarding the environment, Zhuhai will upgrade 30 percent of the city's waste management industries to smart supervision systems.

In terms of convenience for the public, 90 percent of Zhuhai's administrative processes will be able to be conducted through online services and 80 percent of Zhuhai residents' health files will be uploaded so that they are electronically accessible.

The five-year plan will be enacted from 2018 until 2023.

According to the schedule, in 2018 Zhuhai will achieve: a comprehensive deployment of smart city construction; the establishment of an industrial ecological groundwork; the development of digital information technology; a broadband network and the enhancement of the development of multi-party cooperation mechanism.

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CE to attend AL plenary session in August

Chief Executive Chui Sai On will be attending a plenary session of the Legislative Assembly (AL) on August 2, to reply to the Assembly members' queries on government policy and social issues. The session will start at 3 p.m. and will be broadcast live on the television and radio channels of TDM, and on several official websites. Besides attending AL plenary sessions every year to deliver the Policy Address relating to the following fiscal year, the Chief Executive also attends two similar sessions each year.

Lawyer believes court verdict to be affected

The lawyers of other defendants in the case related to the city's former top prosecutor, Ho Chio Meng, believe that the final verdict of the Court of First Instance – where they are sitting trial – might be affected by the verdict of the Court of Final Appeal that is trying Ho. One defense lawyer said that Ho's case has been influenced by media reports, which caused some witnesses to be unable to recount facts in an objective manner. The lawyer considers that the investigation into these defendants is also doubtful. According to a report by TDM, the Public Prosecutions Office is seeking heavy punishments for all defendants involved in Ho's case.

SPORTS

High demand for tickets to Volleyball Grand Prix

TICKETS for the 2017 Federation Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB) Volleyball World Grand Prix Macau, which will be held from tomorrow until Sunday at Macau Forum, are nearly sold out. Yesterday, the Chinese and U.S. teams attended a promotional activity at the event booth located at Senado Square.

The president of the Sports Bureau (ID), Pun Weng Kun, told the press on the sidelines of the event that tickets were high in demand as only a small number of tickets are available for Friday's match.

According to the online ticketing website, tickets for the matches are sold out.

"Ticket sales reaction from the public was great. A month before, tickets for specific dates had already been sold out," said Pun to the press, clarifying that at that point they had not reserved any group tickets.

Pun cited his belief that the public's interest in volleyball matches has been increasing.



Pun Weng Kun (center, right) and members of the Chinese team



Members of the U.S. team

China's women's volleyball team beat Serbia for the gold medal at the Rio Olympics last year

"The volleyball matches have been going on for a while. I believe the public's understanding of this competition is strengthening," said Pun.

"The national team has also done well in the [Rio] Olympics 2016."

China's women's volleyball team beat Serbia for the gold medal at the Rio Olympics last year.

Pun also supposed that sporting competitions such as the

2017 FIVB Volleyball World Grand Prix Macau would assist the development of the region's tourism, adding that he hoped that the competition would be held in Macau yearly.

With six matches, the 2017 FIVB Volleyball World Grand Prix Macau 2017 will see China play against Italy tomorrow, followed by Turkey on Saturday, and the U.S. on Sunday. **LV**

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Macau Catholic Center to be revamped

AFTER being unused for over 20 years, the Catholic Center in Macau will be redeveloped into a 20-storey building for exhibitions, formations, and hospitality purposes. The Macau Diocese has planned to redevelop the center since 2011 but no progress was made until this year.

Last month, the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau of Macau opened a public consultation to receive recommendations or objections for the redevelopment project.

Teresa Lo, assistant coordinator of the project, spoke to the Union of Catholic Asian News (UCANews), stating: "The consultation ended on July 4 and the Macau Diocese will now wait for the result and any final amendments of government documents to begin."

The diocese hopes that the building can be revamped into the first Catholic-run hotel in Macau, with around 200 rooms for pilgrims and visitors.

Lo said that, in addition, public exhibition rooms will display the history of the Catholic Church in Macau and multi-function rooms will be available for faith for-



mation services, as well as evangelization.

Father Pedro Chong, Vicar-General of the Macau Diocese, who is leading the redevelopment project, told TDM news four years ago that the redeveloped building would be mainly for pilgrims. He also stated that he hoped the Catholic Center would become a spot for both locals and tourists to get in touch with Catholicism.

Local Catholics believe that the delay for the redevelopment project is partly due to the early retirement of Bishop José Lai in January last year. He was succeeded by Bishop Stephen Lee, a former auxiliary bishop of Hong Kong.

According to the UCA-News media report, Catholics in Macau are excited to hear the announcement

of redevelopment and are awaiting the opening of the revamped Catholic Center.

One local Catholic named Luis Leong said: "There were many debates on whether to renovate or to rebuild the center in the past. But I am happy to hear that it will be reconstructed because the building is dilapidated."

As the Catholic Center is located in a busy area in central Macau where both tourists and locals gather, Leong believes that the new building can offer good evangelization opportunities with the exhibition rooms and provide a serene chapel for visitors to pray.

"Things are working well under Bishop Lee and Father Pedro Chong. We hope it is a sign of the revival of our local church," Leong said.

Q&A GRAHAM ELLIOT
CHEF

'If I had to choose one thing to eat, it would just be sushi'

Lynzy Valles

CHEF Graham Elliot, the award winning Michelin starred chef and television personality from American cooking show Top Chef, visited Macau last week where he met with the press at a food-tasting event. The Chicago-based chef is slated to open a restaurant at MGM Cotai, named 'Coast'. Its name is inspired by America's relaxed West Coast lifestyle. In a press interview, Elliot talks about his impressions of Macau and his culinary preferences.

- The markets here are very different from the United States. How do you find it?

Graham Elliot (GE) - Yes. You know, I think it's amazing how authentic everything is [here]. You know a lot of times the markets in the States, they appeal to people who have a lot of money and want really fancy things. And what I've seen here is it's for everybody. And these things are really fresh. [...] Just seeing things are that alive and beautiful and the vegetables – stuff like that. And it's very inspiring and we actually thought we want to get these kinds of things on the menu. So now we're looking at how we're going to maybe redesign parts of the kitchen in this place so that we can have that kind of stuff.

- What did you eat in Macau that you find is special?

GE - Clube Militar was cool. We tried to get as many Portuguese things as possible and ordered a ton of different dishes. Then we hit a bunch of local spots yesterday where we had almond cookies, which were great. We went to the spot where they made all the traditional Portuguese egg tarts, again trying to hit as many places as possible, even if they were not Michelin starred fancy restaurants. We went to all the little food stalls to try some of those things, and some of the streets that we walked in were places where we got lost.

- Will Coast source local ingredients?

GE - Yes, absolutely! I'm not from France, I'm not from Japan, I'm not from England but I've traveled all over because my dad was in the navy, es-



pecially within the Philippines and Hawaii, then through the 50 states of the US. I'm allowed to use ingredients from everywhere to make my style of food. Since I'm here, the more places I go, more people I meet, and with the different dishes I try, it will all be reflected in the menu.

- What will be the highlights of Coast?

GE - The highlight isn't going to be just signature dishes, it's going to be things that are influenced by the coastal region. So the wood burning over, shellfish bars, pizzas – you know, things that are very light and fresh, not steaks. You know, you might have one burger on the menu, but it's not a burger place. It's not just an American restaurant, it's Western but inspired by things from the ocean and fresh produce. It's important to realize that a restaurant is also an extension of the chef and the company, and things like that. So it's not just cuisine, it's the feel of the place, the

energy, the decor, the uniforms, the music, all of that. So when you come in, it should be like you're going to the person's house; it's very fun and relaxed.

- How important are the dining options to the overall resort experience in MGM Cotai?

GE - I think that everybody nowadays is a foodie, right? Everybody loves great cuisine; they love going to restaurants and taking pictures of everything. So before, I think restaurants used to be places where you were only offered food, but now it's equally as important to provide a gaming experience as well. People demand it, and I think that MGM leads the way by bringing in some great chefs and showing that food can be something very, very special.

- What attracted you to bring Coast to Macau?

GE - You know, I had an opportunity to showcase what I do out here. The fact that it

was MGM and a new property based in this region, and it had so much diversity in history all meant that it was an opportunity that I wanted to jump at being a part of. My first real position as a chef, where I guess I began to make a name for myself, was at the Peninsula Hotel. I actually worked under Chef Oliver Weber [director of Culinary at MGM] so the chance to work with him again was very exciting.

- The overwhelming majority of visitors to Macau are obviously from mainland China. How does it affect you in terms of what you're thinking about for menu choices, or does it not really affect you?

GE - No, it absolutely does. And that one thing, I think, probably means that the menu is 75 percent there now, but instead of coming and dropping my restaurant and dishes here, I had to go back and change and say, "maybe this is going to be a little spicier, this is going to have less

cream or cheese here, [...] things like that... So the more that I taste, the more that I get to travel, and seeing things from this area absolutely influences the menu.

- Do you have any expectations to how guests will receive the menu that you've prepared?

GE - Yes, I think that if you go into any type of venture like this with an open mind and open eyes and you're willing to change, you're going to be successful. So I want to be able to hear feedback from everyone and keep adjusting so that maybe this dish is not spicy now, or maybe this one is too small and it should be larger to serve a family. So, I think that if every day and week we keep going, we're going to learn from that and really cater towards those people who come in.

Everybody nowadays is a foodie, right? Everybody loves great cuisine; they love going to restaurants and taking pictures of everything.

GRAHAM ELLIOT

- What is your favorite dish?

GE - There are changes all the time but if I had to choose one thing to eat – for example, if I'm stuck on a deserted island – it would just be sushi. It's important to have a relationship with food and know the history of it, where it's from, and sometimes things can get too muddled and messy by putting too many things on a dish. So when you have a fish that comes out of the water and you've sliced it and you've taken care of it, when you taste [...] it's delicious and pure. I think that's something that resonates with me.

- What is your cooking philosophy?

GE - I guess a couple things would include the idea that "less is more." Sometimes the best ingredients are the ones that you don't put on the plate – so just some very pure flavors. The other thing is understanding that cuisine is a grey area. It's not black and white. You can turn it into anything you want. [...] We should always be [able] to change, and make things new and exciting.

Some Crown Resorts workers released, including 2 Australians

CHINA yesterday released 10 employees of Australia's Crown Resorts Ltd., including two Australian citizens, after they completed nine months in prison for organizing gambling tours in violation of China's strict gaming laws.

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs confirmed that two Australians were freed after time served in detention prior to their trials was counted toward their sentences. They have been identified earlier as Jane Pan and Jerry Xuan.

A third Australian, Jason O'Connor, who heads the company's international VIP programs, is expected to be released next month after 10 months in prison. O'Connor was sentenced in a group trial last month with Pan, Xuan and 16 others.

Of the 19 defendants, 11 were jailed for nine months and another five for 10 months. The remaining three, who mainly did office work, were exempted from punishment although they were convicted of the same gambling charge.

Casino gambling and gambling pro-



In this June 26, 2017, file photo, an unidentified Crown Resorts employee (left) is escorted by security as she leaves the Baoshan District People's Court after attending her trial in Shanghai

motions are illegal in mainland China, although the gaming industry forms the economic backbone of Macau.

Chinese law mandates sentences of up to three years in prison for anyone who "for the purpose of profit, gathers people to engage in gambling, runs a gambling house or makes gambling his profession."

However, foreign casinos have skirted the ban by packaging gambling excursions as destination vacations to Australia and elsewhere.

Those have become particularly attractive under Chinese President Xi Jinping's ongoing corruption crackdown that has deterred many gamblers from traveling to Macau due to fears of being surveilled by the authorities.

The raid on Crown Resorts employees last October was seen as a sign of Beijing's intensifying crackdown on social ills such as gambling, illegal drug use and prostitution. AP

IC calls for proposals for architecture exhibition in Shenzhen

THE Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) is calling for proposals for the Macau exhibition at the seventh Shenzhen and Hong Kong Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism and Architecture 2017.

Submissions are open to curators, both individuals and groups, until August 2.

The project will be supervised by an official working group, while proposals will be reviewed by the jury commission for the Macau exhibition.

The open call for submissions is to select outstanding local individuals with high-quality work so that the event operates in a fair and open manner, while also encouraging the public to actively participate.

IC held a briefing yesterday at the Cultural Affairs Bureau building at Tap Seac Square, introducing the Bi-City Biennale's background, venue and theme for the year, among other relevant information.

With this year's theme,

"Cities, Grow in Difference", the Bi-City Biennale explores concerns surrounding urban spaces like "urban villages" and the spirit of conservation of the city's historical buildings and continuation of the historical context. It seeks to encourage exploration and reflection on a new model of urban growth by introducing familiar topics related to daily life.

The first Bi-City Biennale was held in Shenzhen in 2005, and is the only international exhibition dedicated to urbanism. Since 2005, it has featured a total of over 930 exhibits from around the world and has organized more than 510 events and forums, attracting over 1.1 million visitors.

The IC said in a statement that the Macau government hopes to strengthen the cooperation between Macau and Shenzhen, and promote Macau's cultural exchange, through this year's biennale.

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THE biggest oil traders, feeling the squeeze in a world awash with crude, are seeking an edge by offering tailor-made cargoes in an offshore megastore.

By selling bespoke from a fleet of ships anchored off Singapore and Malaysia, the likes of Vitol Group, Trafigura Group, Glencore Plc and Gunvor Group are seeking to lure buyers who are becoming more demanding. With crude from the U.S. to Africa and Europe stored in their tankers, the traders can mix and match oil of differing quality and characteristics to offer made-to-measure cargoes that meet their customers' niche specifications.

As a glut that's pummeled crude over the past three years persists and waning price volatility reduces opportunities to profit, traders are contending with increased competition and smaller margins. Now, they are leveraging their global network to source a variety of oils to be shipped to Southeast Asia on very large crude carriers. Then, the cargoes are divided up, blended if needed, and transferred into smaller tankers to make customized packages.

"These floating vessels allow traders to sell cargoes in smaller parcels which can help when refineries are processing crude for the first time, or when local jetties cannot take in larger vessels," said Nevy Nah, a Singapore-based analyst at industry consultant Energy Aspects Ltd. "It also allows sellers to blend different grades to meet specific quality requirements."

Grades such as Eagle Ford from the U.S., Algeria's Saharan Blend, North Sea's Ekofisk and Venezue-

Oil traders selling bespoke crude at offshore megastore



la's Diluted Crude Oil have been offered from tankers in the Straits of Malacca, in addition to Australia's Van Gogh and Oman oil, according to a Bloomberg poll of five refiners and traders involved in the region's activity. The waters off Singapore and Malaysia are ideal for setting up shop because they're a gateway to key nations including China, the top energy user, and India, where demand is growing fastest.

At least 15 such vessels are currently floating in the region - all VLCCs with the capacity to carry 2 million barrels of oil each, according to the survey and ship-tracking data compiled by Bloomberg.

The amount of oil stored in tankers reached a 2017 high of 111.9 million barrels last month,

according to Paris-based tracking company Kpler SAS. Traders thrived in 2015 and 2016 by taking advantage of the glut that led to a strong "contango" - when contracts for later delivery trade higher than near-term prices. That

Oil giants are using a fleet of ships anchored in the Straits of Malacca to supply Asian mega-customers, China and India

market structure allowed them to buy oil cheap, store it and benefit later by locking in their profit through derivatives in so-called "cash-and-carry" deals.

Now, there are doubts over whether such trades will be profitable.

Chronic oversupply in global oil and petroleum markets coupled with low price volatility "reduced profitable opportunities for trading," Trafigura Chief Executive Officer Jeremy Weir said last month, when the third-largest independent oil trader reported a 22 percent drop in first-half profit.

The latest storage strategy means the traders are less beholden to the vagaries of futures prices. At the request of buyers, they can supply as little as 200,000 barrels of oil from tankers for delivery in Asia within a week.

That's attractive for refiners looking to purchase trial cargoes of new grades, crude on smaller vessels, or barrels that are needed in a relatively short time.

Without the floating stores in Asia, getting such smaller shipments from farther away, including the U.S., Europe and Africa, would probably be too expensive for refiners due to high freight costs.

"It caters to smaller and mid-sized refiners who may have capacity or infrastructure constraints and who may be motivated to manage their inventories very closely," said John Driscoll, the chief strategist at JTD Energy Services Pte. "With the vessels, there is readily available supply without shipping or transit times that can suit a unique requirement." **MDT/Bloomberg**

HONG KONG

Razer said to target an IPO at up to USD5 billion valuation

Lulu Yilun Chen, Crystal Tse

RAZER Inc. is shooting for a Hong Kong initial public offering that could value the gaming gear maker at as much as USD5 billion and help fund development of its own mobile phone, people familiar with the matter said.

The company - which makes accessories from mice to laptops that bear a green tri-headed snake - is developing a mobile device tailored for its consumer base of hardcore gamers, according to the people. Razer's share sale, which will give it ample ammunition to develop new gadgets, will seek to value the company at \$3 billion to \$5 billion, the

people said, asking not to be identified talking about internal plans. It aims to list around October, the people said.

Razer, which sells products online and in chains like Best Buy across the U.S., has said it wants to use Hong Kong as a beachhead from which to accelerate its expansion into China's \$25 billion gaming market. The company now sells its product there via e-commerce giants JD.com Inc. and Alibaba Group Holding Ltd., co-founder Tan Min-Liang said in an interview in June. It's sold \$1 billion worth of product globally in the past three years, Tan added.

Razer's IPO would be one of the largest tech

debut in the Asian financial center in years. The company, co-founded in 2005 by Singapore-born Tan, considered a U.S. IPO as far back as 2014, people with knowledge of the matter said at the time. In October the same year, the company was valued at \$1.5 billion, according to data from researcher CB Insights. The company declined to comment on its IPO plans in an email yesterday.

The company, whose backers include Intel Corp. and a unit of Temasek Holdings Pte, counts gaming hardware as its main source of revenue but is also developing a virtual currency called zGold and building up its community.

Razer, which sponsors more than 300 eSports athletes, is building a software platform that connects and launches games for some 35 million users.

The global video games industry is expected to grow by about 25 percent to \$146 billion in 2020 from an estimated \$117 billion this year, according to data from Euromonitor International. The Asia-Pacific market, however, is slated to expand by a much faster 39 percent to \$65.3 billion over the same period, driven by 40 percent growth in gaming software alone, the data show. The comparable hardware market is expected to expand 22 percent. **Bloomberg**



Razer co-founder Tan Min-Liang

HK STOCKS SURPASS 26,000 LEVEL

HONG KONG stocks rose for a third day, closing above the key 26,000 level for the first time in more than a month, as banks led the gains. The Hang Seng Index advanced 0.6 percent to 26,043.64 at the close. Banks accounted for the benchmark's top three gainers, with Industrial & Commercial Bank of China Ltd. and China Construction Bank Corp. rising at least

2.5 percent to lead the rally. Improving Chinese economic figures and earnings have helped Hong Kong's benchmark rise every month in 2017. Gains in the gauge stalled in June after it failed to remain above the 26,000 level. That sent volatility to a two-year low before recovering this week to near the highest since November amid a rally in Chinese financial shares.

CHINA on Tuesday dispatched members of its People's Liberation Army to the Horn of Africa nation of Djibouti to man the rising Asian giant's first overseas military base, a key part of a wide-ranging expansion of the role of China's armed forces.

The defense ministry said on its website that a ceremony was held at a naval pier in the southern Chinese port of Zhanjiang presided over by navy commander Vice Adm. Shen Jinlong.

It said the personnel would travel by navy ship but gave no details on numbers or units. Photos on the website showed naval officers and marines in battle dress lining the rails of the support ships Jingangshan and Donghaidao.

China says the logistics center will support anti-piracy, U.N. peacekeeping and humanitarian relief missions in Africa and western Asia. It says it will also facilitate military cooperation and joint exercises as the PLA navy and other services seek to expand their global reach in step with China's growing economic and political footprint.

Djibouti is already home to

Beijing sends forces to first military base abroad, in Djibouti

the center of American operations in Africa, Camp Lemonnier, while France, Britain, Japan and other nations also maintain a military presence in the small but strategically located nation.

Multinational anti-piracy patrols in the Gulf of Aden that China joined in 2008 have

China says the logistics center will support anti-piracy, U.N. peacekeeping and humanitarian relief missions in Africa and western Asia

AP PHOTO



also given its navy ready access to the Mediterranean, and, in 2011, it took the unprecedented step of sending one of its most sophisticated warships

together with military transport aircraft to help in the evacuation of about 35,000 Chinese citizens from Libya.

In 2015, China detached three navy ships from the anti-piracy patrols to rescue Chi-

nese citizens and other foreign nationals from fighting in Yemen. The same year, it took part in its first Mediterranean joint naval exercises with Russia. **AP**

Warships conduct live-fire drills in Mediterranean

IN a demonstration of the Chinese navy's expanding global reach, the country's latest-generation warships conducted live-firing drills in the Mediterranean Sea this week while en route to joint exercises with the Russian navy, the defense ministry said yesterday.

The destroyer Hefei, frigate Yuncheng and support ship Luomahu took part in Monday's drills involving the ship's deck guns and small arms, the ministry said in a notice on its website.

"Maintaining a strict schedule of targeted exercises accomplishes transit, training and improvement en route, raising the flotilla's training levels and capabilities," it quote flotilla commander Liu Hui as saying.

The ships will next take part in the "Joint

Sea 2017" exercises in waters off the Russian cities of St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad, part of growing cooperation between the countries' militaries.

China's navy is the world's second-largest behind the U.S. and is increasingly operating in the Mediterranean, aided by the construction of a naval logistics base in the Horn of Africa nation of Djibouti.

Two naval ships departed Tuesday from the southern Chinese port of Zhanjiang with personnel to man the facility, China's first overseas military base.

While China says the base is needed to support peacekeeping, anti-piracy and other missions in the region, Beijing's rivalry with the U.S. is considered a key driving force behind the country's military expansion.

"The U.S. Navy is also more combat ready because it has been actively participating in joint drills and regional wars for decades," the official China Daily newspaper said in an editorial yesterday.

"This means China has to work harder to become a major naval power that can better defend its territorial rights and sovereignty," it said.

On Tuesday, China's sole operating aircraft carrier, the Liaoning, departed Hong Kong after a visit aimed at inspiring patriotism among citizens of the former British colony that reverted to Chinese rule 20 years ago. Taiwan's defense ministry said it was monitoring the progress of the carrier and its escorts as they traveled northward along the western portion of the Taiwan Strait. **AP**

Apple to build first China data center to comply with law

APPLE Inc. will establish its first data center in China to speed up services such as iCloud for local users and abide by laws that require global companies to store information within the country.

The new facility, which will be entirely driven by renewable energy, will be built and run in partnership with Guizhou on the Cloud Big Data, Apple said in a messaged statement. Apple aims to migrate Chinese users' information, now stored elsewhere, to the new facility in coming months. The data center is part of a USD1 billion investment by the iPhone maker in the province.

The data center was partly driven by new measures that bolster control over the collection and movement of Chinese users' data, and can also grant the government unprecedented access to foreign companies' technology. Forcing companies to store information within the country has already led some to tap cloud computing providers with more local server capacity.

"The addition of this data center will allow us to improve the speed and reliability of our products and services while also com-



An Apple Store in Shanghai

plying with newly passed regulations," the company said in its statement. "Apple has strong data privacy and security protections in place and no backdoors will be created into any of our systems."

Apple's partner was co-founded by the government of Guizhou, which has begun promoting the impoverished mountainous central province as the country's data center capital. It hopes the high-tech facilities will bring white-collar jobs to the region best known as the home of China's fiery national alcoholic beverage, baijiu.

Working more closely with the Chinese government is an important step

for Apple's business in the country, which is the tech giant's second-largest market globally. Apple's iTunes Movies and iBooks service were shut down by the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television last year after less than seven months of operations. Its market share has also fallen as consumers wait for an updated iPhone 8, which is likely to be released later this year, or switch to cheaper Android devices.

Since then Chief Executive Officer Tim Cook has visited China to attend forums and open research centers while meeting with local media to boost the brand's reputation there. **Bloomberg**



New Silk Road encroaches on U.S. turf in East Europe

James M. Gomez

IN the 19th century mansion in central Belgrade where bureaucrats plan some of Serbia's important overseas projects, 64-year-old Ivan Mrkic is busy unpacking boxes teeming with the books, research papers and maps he needs to become an instant expert on China.

Mrkic, a one-time foreign minister, anticipates investors from Hong Kong and Beijing will pour tens of millions of euros into eastern Europe and he wants Serbia - among the poorest - to be ready. For decades, U.S. money has powered steel plants and carmakers in post-Communist Europe, but the region is now hanging its hopes on China stepping into the void created by Donald Trump's isolationist turn.

"Sometimes it takes time for the Chinese to take a position, but once they do, the speed of realization is fascinating," said Mrkic, who's been tasked along with former President Tomislav Nikolic to set up a one-stop shop to facilitate trade and investment from the world's second-largest economy. "We decided we'd better create a special office to make sure everything works well."

From Poland on the Baltic Sea to Slovakia, Hungary and Bulgaria along the Danube river, governments are wooing Chinese investors to, in some cases, replace U.S. companies that are pulling out. It's a sign of what's in store with Trump's America relinquishing its role as the wor-

ld leader on issues from climate change to free trade and Chinese President Xi Jinping championing internationalism.

For Xi, the 16 central and eastern European nations and their more than 110 million consumers are a stepping stone into the European Union. Eleven are members already and the other five, among them Serbia, are vying for inclusion in the 28-nation bloc.

Sometimes it takes time for the Chinese to take a position, but once they do, the speed of realization is fascinating.

IVAN MRKIC

Forging a route into the continent is integral to Xi's plan to build a modern-day Silk Road to carve out new export markets for local businesses as the Chinese economy slows. In keeping with that vision, Beijing in November pledged to plough 10 billion euros (USD11 billion) of capital into central and eastern European countries, many featuring among the more than 60 nations targeted by Xi's Belt and Road initiative.

The cash-starved countries of

emerging Europe, including Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia, have keenly reciprocated the advances, sending top officials Beijing this year to curry favor just as equity markets in four of the region's capitals, including Warsaw and Sofia, are ranked among the top 10 performers worldwide this year.

"My wish is that the Chinese will help and employ as many of our citizens as possible," said Julius Beluscak, the mayor of the eastern Slovakian village of Velka Ida, where United States Steel Corp. has run a factory for 17 years and is now in talks to sell it to Hong Kong-based Hesteel Co.

Speaking at the City Hall overlooking the village's main, pothole ridden road, Beluscak said the condition of the plant has been deteriorating for years and pollution is the worst in the country. He hopes the new owner will invest in greener technologies. Hesteel already bought a Serbian factory in Smederevo for 46 million euros almost a year ago, and is in negotiations to take over U.S. Steel's plant in Kosice, Slovakia, too.

"I wouldn't say the village is benefiting" any longer from U.S. Steel's presence, Beluscak said.

Eastern Europe's leaders are pulling out all the stops to charm the Chinese. When Xi embarked on a regional tour through various capital cities last year, he was welcomed in Prague with a parade through the Czech capital's main boulevards. They were decorated with red-and-

yellow Chinese flags for the occasion, some of which were defaced by protesters decrying China's policies in Tibet.

"There may be more willingness to put human-rights issues with China on the back burner," said Ian Bond, the director of foreign policy at the Brussels-based Centre for European Reform and a former British diplomat. "In many respects, economically, there is a lot of concern in Europe about the direction the U.S. is heading in."

The camaraderie between eastern Europe and China is making some in western Europe uneasy. The EU has been pressing Xi to give its companies the same free access to do business in China that the Chinese get in Europe. Many also worry Beijing is seeking to gain greater political clout by driving a wedge between the bloc's founding and newer members.

At odds with the European Commission over a range of issues including rule of law and migrant policy, Poland's ruling Law and Justice party has also been chumming up with Trump, who got a warm reception during a visit to Warsaw last week. Czech President Milos Zeman, meanwhile, wants stronger ties with China and Russia rather than NATO and the EU.

But alienating their more advanced neighbors by courting China may not even be worth it, according to Kerry Brown, an associate fellow at Chatham House in London and a former first secretary to the British Embassy in Beijing.

Chinese foreign direct investment into the region still pales in comparison to the U.S. and the EU. In Poland, the largest of the economies, U.S. investors poured a net 62.2 million euros into the country in 2015 versus a net outflow to China. Barely any of the \$3.9 billion of investments Zeman predicted would materialize in 2016 actually did.

"Eastern European expectations are high and I wonder if that isn't a big problem," said Brown. "The Chinese are not just there to hand out aid and money. There is a big expectation that China is a charity. I just don't think that is very realistic."

While China's no-strings-attached approach to investment is generally welcomed by developing countries, they often have poor credit ratings and questionable governance. China has struggled to recoup loans in Venezuela and Africa, and several projects in Central Asia have spurred protests.

"There are also challenges for China, for instance the culture gap and also political risks," said Wang Huiyao, director of the Beijing-based think tank Center for China and Globalization. "Chinese companies are not good at cross-cultural adaptation, and they really have to hone their management skills and build themselves into truly multinationals."

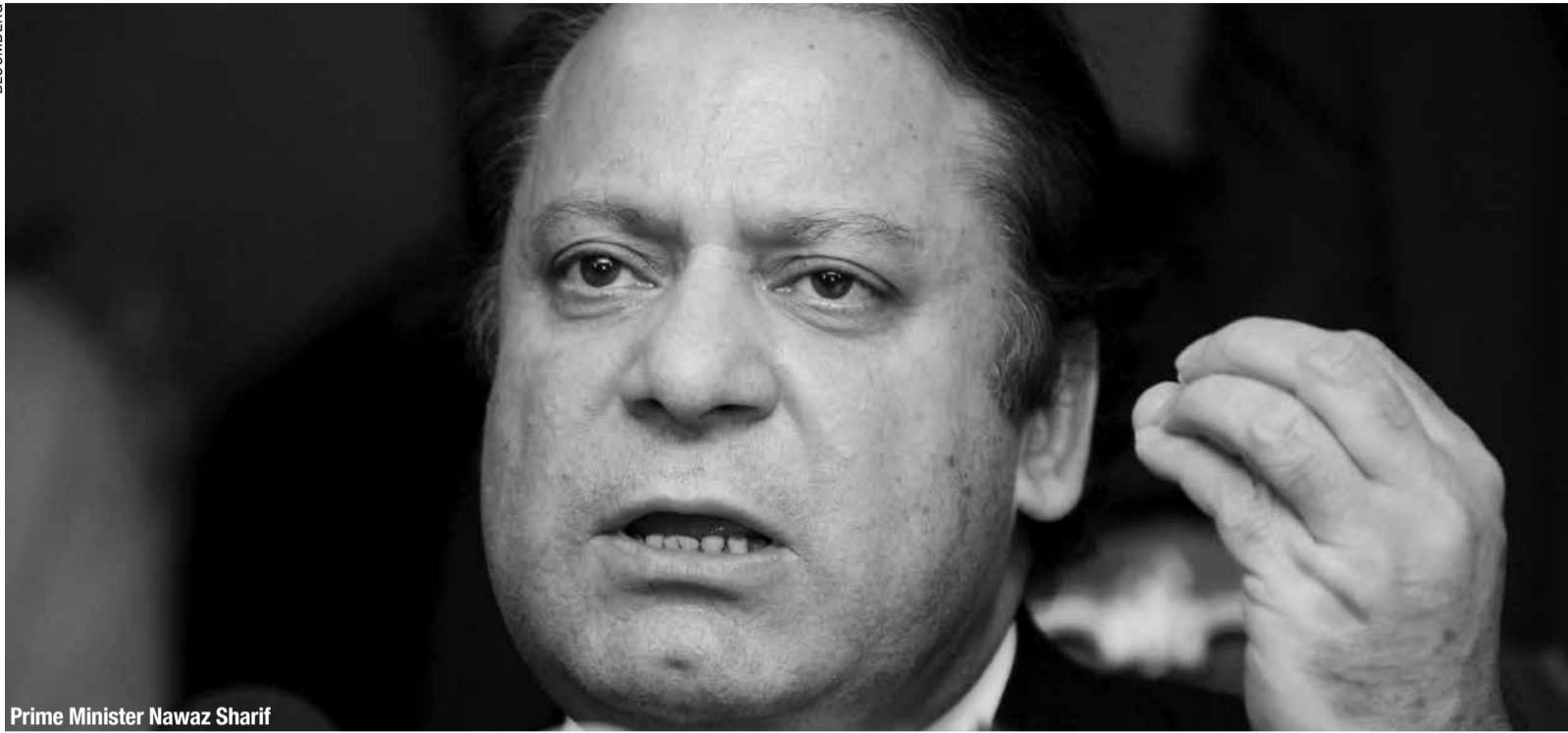
A steady stream of new deals is developing nonetheless. Chinese companies are in talks to invest in a factory manufacturing LED lighting and a coal mine in Poland, as well as a high-speed rail upgrade linking the Hungarian and Serbian capitals. Hungary's government also signed a deal in May with Bohong Group Co., a maker of car components and exhaust systems, while Chinese conglomerate CEFC bought a stake Travel Service AS and brewer Pivovary Lobkowicz in the Czech Republic.

Back in Belgrade, Mrkic and about two dozen colleagues moved into the first-floor mansion hall in late June that previously housed the directorate responsible for Serbs displaced by years of war, which was pushed to the ground floor.

Mrkic said he planned to hire experts and interpreters to help make it easier for Chinese investors to learn about the opportunities in Serbia. Among the deals in the works is one to refurbish the Belgrade airport and another to buy a stake in copper mine RTB Bor. A Chinese investor is even considering purchasing a network of spas in Serbia, well known for tourist resorts featuring geothermal springs and medicinal mud.

"We're in an embryonic stage," Mrkic said. "I know that many countries in central and eastern Europe vie for the Chinese attention, some may have been more efficient" than Serbia, "but our projects with China have really flourished." **Bloomberg**

BLOOMBERG



Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif

PAKISTAN

Corruption claims, currency crisis rattle leaders

A deepening political crisis in Pakistan has spooked investors and risks fresh street protests amid a corruption probe into Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

Sharif's fate rests in the hands of the Supreme Court after an investigation found evidence of possible corruption, calling into question the legitimacy of his family's accumulated wealth.

The probe recommended cases to be filed against the prime minister and his three children for failing to account for foreign assets. It highlighted alleged document forgery and "irregular movement of huge amounts" in loans and gifts

as well as a significant gap between the "declared sources of income and the wealth accumulated" by the ruling family.

If an accused cannot account for his sources of income, "the court shall presume, unless the contrary is proved, that the person is guilty of the offense of corruption," the report reads.

Sharif, who has pledged to step down if found guilty of graft by the court, has denied any wrongdoing. The prime minister will challenge the investigators' findings in court, the minister for planning and reform, Ahsan Iqbal, said on Monday.

Pakistan's key stock index slumped 4.7 percent to a seven month low on Tuesday, its biggest decline in more than eight years. The graft report delivers more bad news to a government already facing a widening current account deficit and currency crisis.

The recommendations against Sharif "came closer to a worst-case scenario," according to a report by Karachi-based BMA Capital, "increasing political uncertainty in the near-term."

The Supreme Court will hold a hearing into the findings on July 17. If it accepts the charges it could lead to Sharif's resignation or dis-

qualification as a member of parliament.

It comes a week after Pakistan was hit by the biggest plunge in the rupee's value in nine years, said to have been the central bank heeding calls to weaken the currency to allow some relief to exporters. Instead, the finance ministry denounced the decline and swiftly filled the vacant position of governor. By then the State Bank of Pakistan had revised an already widening current account.

"The government is distracted and is lacking focus," said M. Abdul Aleem, secretary general of the Karachi-based Overseas Chamber of

Commerce and Industry, which represents multinational firms including Barclays Plc, Akzonobel Pakistan Ltd. and Proctor & Gamble Co. "Foreign investors are in a state of confusion and uncertainty because they are looking for some policy control and show of governance."

The past few weeks have dealt a blow to the credibility of Sharif's administration. His government had ushered in a period of relative stability after taking office in 2013, with the economy expanding at a rate of over 5 percent annually. That came with the help of an International Monetary Fund bailout aimed at resolving a balance-of-payments crisis. China is also financing infrastructure projects across the country valued at more than USD50 billion.

But the economy has also shown signs of vulnerability. Pakistan's bread-and-butter exports such as textiles are waning, some of which has been blamed on a managed currency the IMF said last year was overvalued by as much as 20 percent. That has also helped push the current account deficit wider to \$10.6 billion in the 11 months through May.

In a report on Tuesday, Moody's Investor Services said despite Pakistan having a strong medium-term growth outlook on the back of the Chinese funding, the nation's fiscal deficits are relatively wide and its debt burden high. Pakistan could also benefit from greater currency flexibility, Moody's said.

That "would contribute to a more durable accumulation of foreign exchange reserves over time, which would help to strengthen external buffers and export competitiveness," Moody's said, while affirming Pakistan's stable B3 rating - six levels into junk territory. "Domestic politics and geopolitical risk also continue to represent a significant constraint on the rating." **MDT/Bloomberg**

Shruti Srivastava,
Swansy Afonso

GOLD imports by India, the world's second-biggest user, more than doubled in June from a year earlier amid a rush by jewelers to build up inventories ahead of a tax change.

Inbound shipments surged to 72 metric tons last month from 31.8 tons a year earlier, according to a person familiar with provisional data from the finance ministry, who asked not to be identified as the figures aren't public. Finance Ministry spokesman D. S. Malik declined to comment on the numbers.

India's government has embarked on the most radical tax overhaul in decades, ushering in a new nationwide goods and services tax to replace dozens of local levies. Speculation that the new tariff may be

INDIA

Gold imports said to double ahead of new tax



as much as 5 percent for bullion traded locally, including for manufacturers buying from importers, prompted a jump in imports to 126 tons in May.

The gold rate was eventually set at 3 percent, and implemented from July 1.

"Imports will slow down now as whatever stock-building had to happen,

has happened," Ranjeeth Rathod, managing director at importer MNC Enterprises (P) Ltd., said by phone from Chennai. While imports have jumped, retail purchases have been weak and will remain low until the festival season starts from mid-August, he said.

Indians buy gold during festivals and for marriages as part of the bridal trousseau or as gifts. The nation imports almost all the gold it uses. Local consumption is forecast to rise to 850 tons to 950 tons by 2020 from about 650 tons to 750 tons in 2017, according to an estimate from the World Gold Council. **Bloomberg**

Sri Lanka Cricket apologizes to undressed workers

CRICKET authorities in Sri Lanka have apologized to stadium workers who were forced to walk away in their underwear at the completion of a game against Zimbabwe when local organizers took their uniforms back.

Dozens of villagers recruited on a temporary basis to work at Mahinda Rajapaksa Stadium in Hambantota for Monday's limited-overs international between Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe were seen walking away in

their underclothes. "It is unbelievable that officials in certain levels could even think in this manner," Sri Lanka Cricket President Thilanga Sumathipala said. "I apologize to" the workers.

"They come because of their love for cricket, to help us while watching the game," Sumathipala added. "We pay them money and give them a uniform which they keep as a souvenir." He said will ask local organizers to apologize to the workers. **AP**

Stephen Wright, Jakarta

INDONESIA

President signs decree to ban radical groups

INDONESIA'S president has signed a decree giving the government the power to ban radical organizations, in a move aimed at outlawing groups behind an apparent rise in the political clout of hard-line Islam.

The measure announced yesterday by the country's top security minister follows months of sectarian tensions in the world's most populous Muslim nation that shook the government and undermined its reputation for practicing a moderate form of Islam.

It amends an existing law regulating mass organizations, allowing the government to sidestep a potentially lengthy court process to implement a ban. It is likely that Hizbut Tahrir, a group that campaigns for Indonesia to adopt Shariah law and become a caliphate, is among the targets of the decree after the government announced in May that it planned to ban the group.

Wiranto, the coordinating minister for politics, security and law, said the decree is aimed at protecting the unity and existence of Indonesia as a nation and not at discrediting Islamic groups. Wiranto,



Indonesia's President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo addresses the media earlier this year

who uses one name, said the decree was signed by President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo on Monday.

New York-based Human Rights Watch condemned

the move, calling it a "troubling violation" of the rights to freedom of association and expression despite it being supported by moderate groups such as Nahdlatul

Ulama, Indonesia's largest Muslim organization.

Indonesia researcher for Human Rights Watch, Andreas Harsono, said the government already has the

power to take legal action against any group suspected of violating the law.

"Banning any organization strictly on ideological grounds [...] is a draconian action that undermines rights of freedom of association and expression that Indonesians have fought hard to establish since the Suharto dictatorship," Harsono said.

Hizbut Tahrir, along with groups such as the violent Islamic Defenders Front, was behind months of massive protests in Jakarta, the capital, against the city's minority Christian governor, an ally of Jokowi who was accused of blaspheming Islam. He subsequently lost a bid for reelection to a Muslim candidate and was imprisoned for two years for blasphemy despite prosecutors downgrading the charge to a lesser offense.

Hizbut, a global organization, is estimated to have tens of thousands of members in Indonesia.

Ismail Yusanto, a spokesman for the group in Indonesia, said it plans to seek a judicial review of the decree in the Constitutional Court.

"The move just shows an arbitrary action aimed at disbanding Hizbut Tahrir," he said. **AP**

PHILIPPINES

Troops clash with communist rebels as Marawi siege nears end



PHILIPPINE troops clashed yesterday with communist rebels in the south, leaving eight rebels and a soldier dead, officials said. The fighting erupted after patrolling troops encountered some 40 New People's Army rebels in southern Compostela Valley province, said army spokesman Capt. Alexandre Cabales.

The guerrillas later fled, leaving behind the bodies of eight rebels and six high-powered guns. A wounded soldier died on the way to a hospital, he said.

On Monday, troops in the same province captured a camp of the rebels, who have been waging

one of Asia's longest-running Marxist insurgencies.

The violence happened despite a statement by officials and rebel peace negotiators that they would suspend offensives to allow troops to focus on quelling a bloody siege by Islamic State group-aligned militants that in southern Marawi city.

President Rodrigo Duterte said on Tuesday that the disastrous siege may end in 10 to 15 days but warned that the threat posed by the brutal group will continue to plague the country.

Duterte also said he would try again this week

to travel to Marawi city to be with government troops but acknowledged that bad weather and the danger posed by the militants' deadly firepower have frustrated his travel plans.

"I think in 10 to 15 days it'll already be OK," Duterte said of the protracted urban battle with the militants, whose supply of weapons has surprised him.

"But remember the new scourge is ISIS, it will continue to haunt us," he said, using an acronym for the Islamic State group, in a speech before business executives.

After 50 days of ground assaults and airstrikes, troops have recaptured most areas of the city, with the death toll recently surpassing 500.

Security officials received intelligence about the planned attack days before the unprecedented Marawi siege unfolded, but they, along with the president, have acknowledged they underestimated the militants' firepower. **MDT/AP**

MALAYSIA

77 foreigners detained in migrant worker crackdown

Syawaludin Zain, Port Dickson

MALAYSIAN authorities have raided a construction site and detained 77 foreigners as part of a fresh crackdown on illegal immigration.

Immigration officials said more than 3,100 foreigners and 63 employers who allegedly hired workers illegally have been detained since a sweep began July 1. The crackdown is targeting migrants who come to Malaysia illegally to work mostly low-wage jobs in the construction, plantation and manufacturing industries.

As one of Southeast Asia's richest countries, Malaysia has long attracted workers from nearby nations such as Indonesia, the Philippines, Bangladesh and India.

Immigration officials who conducted the midnight raid Tuesday and early yesterday at the construction site in northern Negeri Sembilan state found 77 of the 85 workers had no valid do-



Malaysian Immigration Office task force members stand guard outside a construction site

uments. Most of them are Indonesians, living in wooden make-shift dormitories at the site. Reporters were notified of the raid and invited to go along.

The 77 workers were handcuffed and sent to the immigration depot, where they are expected to be deported, officials said.

The new sweep followed the expiry of a deadline to register foreign workers from 15 countries. Officials have said only 161,000 of 600,000 illegal migrants who are eligible to apply for work permits had done so by June 30.

Malaysia, which has a

population of 31 million, relies heavily on foreign labor to fill menial jobs shunned by locals. There are some 2 million registered foreign workers in Malaysia and another million believed to be working illegally. The government regularly seeks to flush out the illegal workforce, but this had previously caused labor shortages in certain sectors.

Immigration chief Mustafar Ali has said that some 30,000 illegal migrants were deported this year. He warned that employers who hire illegal migrants could be caned, in addition to facing prison time and fines. **AP**

UK welcomes Spanish king and queen with military pomp

BRITAIN'S Queen Elizabeth II and her husband welcomed the king and queen of Spain with an extravagant military ceremony yesterday.

The three-day state visit by King Felipe VI and his wife, Queen Letizia, came amid rising tensions between Spain and Britain over what Brexit means for the future of Gibraltar, a tiny British territory which borders Spain.

There was no sign of discord as the Spanish royals arrived at Buckingham Palace, though, with Britain treating them to the full pomp and pageantry traditionally rolled out for visiting heads of state.

Prince Philip and Felipe first inspected troops at central London's Horse Guards Parade, a former royal jousting yard. Dozens of soldiers on horseback then escorted both monarchs and their spouses



Spain's King Felipe and Britain's Queen Elizabeth II sit together in a carriage as they are taken to Buckingham Palace

in a spectacular procession down The Mall, decorated with Union Jack and Spanish flags. Felipe rode with the queen in the 1902 State Landau, a gilded carriage built for the coronation of King Edward VII, while Philip travelled with Letizia in a separate carriage.

Felipe and Letizia are the

first Spanish monarchs to visit Britain since Felipe's father toured the country in 1983.

Felipe is expected to speak about Gibraltar when he addresses Parliament later yesterday.

He and his wife will then dine at a state banquet in the ballroom of Buckingham Palace, where they are staying. **AP**

As Russia scandal touches his son, Trump privately rages

THE snowballing revelations about Donald Trump Jr.'s meeting with a Russian lawyer during last year's presidential campaign have broadsided the White House, distracting from its agenda as aides grapple with a crisis involving the president's family.

The public has not laid eyes on the president since his return from Europe Saturday. But in private, Trump has raged against the latest Russia development, with most of his ire directed at the media, not his son, according to people who have spoken to him in recent days. The only comment from Trump on the matter for much of the day came in a brief statement via spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders, who said Tuesday that the president believes his son is "a high-quality person."

Yesterday morning, Trump tweeted that his son was "open, transparent and innocent," again referring to the investigation as "the greatest Witch Hunt in political history." The president also questioned the sources of the media reporting on the story.

The bombshell revelation that Trump Jr. was eager to accept information from the Russian government landed hard on weary White House aides. While staff people have grown accustomed to a good news cycle being overshadowed by the Russia investigations, Trump aides and outside advisers privately acknowledged that this week's developments felt more serious.

Trump Jr. released four pages of emails Tuesday in which he communicates with an associate trying to arrange a meeting with a Russian lawyer. In the emails, the intermediary says the attorney has negative information about Democrat Hillary Clinton that is part of the Russian government's efforts to help Trump in the campaign. The then-candidate's son responds: "I love it."

This new setback raises new questions about whether the Trump campaign coordinated with Moscow during the election, a charge the president has denied for months. And it points those questions more directly at the inner circle of Trump's own family. **AP**

AD

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Maggie Hyde, Aya Batrawy

Tiny Qatar is living large despite month-long Arab siege

IT'S been more than a month since four Arab nations cut land, sea and air routes to Qatar, but in the gas-rich Gulf nation's glimmering malls and luxury hotels there is little sign of hardship.

High-end clothing stores hawk the latest summer trends. Grocery stores are brimming with meats and cheeses from Europe and Turkey, and just last month the country's main port received 4,300 cars and sheep from Australia.

Luxury hotels like the W and St. Regis serve lavish meals around the clock and alcohol flows for visitors. Famous Barcelona soccer players Gerard Pique, Sergio Busquets and Jordi Alba met with fans last week at a mall in the capital, Doha, which will host the 2022 World Cup tournament.

"We don't feel any difference. It's a celebration everywhere," Qatari Badr Jeran said as he shopped at the mall.

Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt moved to isolate Qatar in early June, severing diplomatic ties and closing off their air space and shipping lanes over Doha's support for Islamist groups across the region, many of which are viewed as terror groups by its rivals. Qatar denies supporting extremism and has condemned the closures as an attack on its sovereignty.

Worried residents rushed to grocery stores, emptying shelves of dairy products and other food imports after Saudi Arabia sealed Qatar's only land border, but they were quickly restocked.

If the Arab nations intended to bring about a change in government, those hopes appear to have been dashed by an outpouring of popular support for Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, the 37-year-old emir. Signs on cars and billboards read "We are all Tamim. We are all Qatar".

Here's a look at how Qatar has weathered the crisis:

AP PHOTO



A sports car drives through downtown Doha

MONEY — LOTS OF IT

Shortly after the crisis began, a Twitter account called DohaUnderSiege began documenting life under the blockade. One post showed a fully stocked hotel buffet and said: "Breadlines have begun. Personally saw several middle-aged men at breakfast scuffling over the last baguette."

The tongue-in-cheek posts point to the fact that Qatar is fantastically wealthy. It is one of the world's richest nations per capita, making its citizens on average wealthier than even those in neighboring Gulf states.

Qatar has a population of around 2 million, but only a little more than a quarter-million are citizens, meaning the government has a lot of wealth it can spread around.

Qatar has some USD340 billion in reserves. Around \$40 billion of

that is in cash plus gold, and \$300 billion is in reserves with the Qatar Investment Authority, according to central bank governor Sheikh Abdullah Bin Saoud Al Thani. Qatar's sovereign wealth fund has invested strategically over the years in international luxury brands and real estate in major cities like New York and London.

ENERGY

Qatar's main source of revenue is its natural gas, which continues to flow uninterrupted. It is the world's largest liquefied natural gas producer, which it ships on tankers around the world. An undersea pipeline provides gas to Oman and the UAE, which heavily relies on Qatar's gas despite severing diplomatic ties.

The crisis has actually served as a "a good sort of trial run" for the Qa-

taris to determine how to manage their economy in the face of such an event, said Noha Aboueldahab, a visiting fellow at the Brookings Doha Center think tank.

Costs have increased for the government because of the roundabout routes that need to be taken to fly or ship food and other goods into the country, but she says the added expense has yet to be felt by shoppers.

The government says it's covering a ten-fold increase in shipping costs for food and medicine.

HELP FROM FRIENDS

Qatar's ally Turkey and its neighbor Iran have quickly stepped in to fill any gaps, as has Morocco. Instead of carrying the Saudi Almarai dairy brand, the shelves are now stocked with milk and produce from Turkey.

One of the reasons cited for the Arab nations' decision to cut ties was Qatar's relations with Iran, with which it shares a massive undersea natural gas field. But here too, the blockade seems to have had the opposite effect. Iran's kept its airspace open, allowing Qatar Airways and other airlines to circumvent the closures.

Past investments in desert agriculture have also helped head off any food crisis. Despite the sweltering, arid climate, farmers have found ways to grow organic produce like tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, eggplant and champignon mushrooms inside greenhouses.

NEW ROUTES

Since the Arab quartet's June 5 blockade was announced, Qatar has launched five new shipping routes — two to Oman, two to In-

dia and one to Turkey.

Doha's brand-new Hamad Port, south of the Qatari capital, is operating at "full capacity," says the port's director, Abdelaziz Nasser Al-Yafei. The facility, part of a \$7.4 billion port infrastructure project, only began general cargo operations in October, and was fully up and running in early December.

■ If the Arab nations intended to bring about a change in government, those hopes appear to have been dashed

Maersk Line, which had previously shipped much of its Qatar-bound cargo via Jebel Ali, has retooled its operations to keep Qatar supplied via Oman.

Hamad Port received 212 ships in June, with 24,000 containers, 4,300 cars, 61,000 livestock and 6,400 tons of construction materials. On one evening earlier this month, five large ships docking in Hamad Port unloaded sheep from Australia, food from Turkey and cars made in South Korea.

The peninsula-nation can also look to its national carrier to fly in goods. Qatar Airways, one of the region's biggest airlines, operates 200 aircraft, including 21 cargo planes. **AP**

Africa's richest man invests USD4.6b in Nigeria farming

Emele Onu, Tope Alake

DANGOTE Group, controlled by Africa's richest man, Aliko Dangote, plans to invest USD3.8 billion in sugar and rice and \$800 million in dairy production in the next three years as the company seeks to expand and deal with a shortage of dollars in its home market of Nigeria.

The conglomerate plans to increase its production of sugar to 1.5 million metric tons a year by 2020 from 100,000 tons now and is seeking to add 1 million tons of rice, Edwin Devakumar, executive director at Dangote's industries unit, said

Tuesday in an interview in Lagos, Nigeria's commercial hub. The company also plans to have 50,000 cattle producing 500 million liters of milk a year by 2019, he said.

A lack of foreign exchange means companies are struggling to pay for imported goods, increasing the burden on local agriculture to meet demand for food from Nigeria's population of more than 180 million, Devakumar said. "All raw sugar has to be imported today, same thing for flour milling," he said.

Dangote, whose cement unit is Nigeria's biggest listed company, has been in-

vesting in agriculture as the country's government seeks to diversify away from oil, which accounts for 90 percent of the nation's export earnings and the bulk of revenue. The economy, which plunged into its first recession in a quarter-century last year amid falling crude prices, is forecast by the World Bank to expand by 1.2 percent this year.

The company has established Dangote Rice Ltd. and will list the unit on the Nigerian Stock Exchange "at the appropriate time," Devakumar said.

Dangote plans to cultivate 350,000 hectares (864,850 acres) of land for sugar cane

and add 200,000 hectares for rice, according to the executive director. The company has ordered five plants for sugar milling and 10 for rice from Switzerland to be located in the north of the country, he said.

The Lagos-based company will finance the projects through "internal resources or equity funding" and loans from banks and export-credit agencies, Devakumar said. The funds will be used mainly to procure "farm-development equipment" as well as sugar and rice mills, he said.

Dangote is "at the planning stage" to invest in other agricultural projects including



Aliko Dangote

production of soybean, oil palm, palm kernel and corn, according to the executive director. It will support rice cultivation by supplying high-yield seeds, pesticides and fertilizers to contract

farmers, he said.

Aliko Dangote, 60, has a net worth of \$12.1 billion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index. That ranks him just inside the top 100 worldwide. **Bloomberg**

what's ON



FLOAT INTO THE FLOW - THE EXHIBITION OF SOU CHON KIT

TIME: 1pm-7pm (Closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: September 17, 2017

VENUE: Artistry of Wind Box Community

Development ASSOCIATION, Rua Tomas Vieira 3A R/C

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 6685 9215

MACAU ARTS WINDOW 2017 - HUNDRED SPECIES - WORKS OF PEGGY CHAN

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

UNTIL: August 13, 2017

VENUE: Macau Art Museum

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

ABSTRACT PAINTINGS FROM THE MAM COLLECTION

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

UNTIL: September 17, 2017

VENUE: Macau Art Museum

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS AND CALLIGRAPHIES DONATED BY JAO TSUNG I

TIME: 10am-5:30pm (Closed on Mondays)

VENUE: Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de

Almeida, No. 95 C-D

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2852 2523

Offbeat

BATTLE OVER SELFIES TAKEN BY MACAQUE MONKEY BACK TO COURT

The battle over now-famous selfie photographs taken by a macaque monkey will head back to federal court.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in San Francisco on Wednesday will hear arguments on whether an animal can own the copyright to a photograph. The proceedings will be broadcast online.

A federal judge last year ruled that the monkey cannot be declared the photos' copyright owner, saying that while Congress and the president can extend the protection of law to animals as well as humans, there is no indication that they did so in the Copyright Act.

The lawsuit filed in 2015 by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals sought a court order allowing PETA to administer all proceeds from the photos for the benefit of the monkey, which it identified as Naruto, a free-living crested macaque from Indonesia.

PETA says Naruto has been accustomed to cameras throughout his life and took the selfies when he saw himself in the reflection of the lens. The animal rights organizations says the monkey drew the connection between pressing the shutter release and the change in his reflection, and made different facial expressions while pressing the shutter release.

The photos of the monkey of a toothy grin were taken in 2011 in Sulawesi, Indonesia with an unattended camera owned by British nature photographer David Slater.

Slater says the British copyright obtained for the photos by his company, Wildlife Personalities Ltd., should be honored worldwide.

PETA sued Slater and his San Francisco-based self-publishing company Blurb, which published a book called "Wildlife Personalities" that includes the "monkey selfie" photos.

If successful, this will be the first time that an animal is declared the owner of property, instead of being declared a piece of property himself, PETA attorney Jeffrey Kerr said.

"When science and technology advance, the law adapts," Kerr said. "There is nothing in the Copyright Act limiting ownership based on species, and PETA is asking for an interpretation of the act that acknowledges today's scientific consensus that macaque monkeys can create an original work."

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:50	RTPi Live
17:40	Revenge Sr 3 - Final
18:20	Now Generation (Repeated)
19:10	Miscellaneous
19:40	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:30	Miscellaneous
22:10	Now Generation
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:25	Miscellaneous
00:55	RTPi Live

Cinema



CINETEATRO

13 - 19 JUL

CARS 3

ROOM 1

2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00pm

Director: Brian Fee

Starring: Owen Wilson, Cristela Alonzo, Chris Cooper

Language: Cantonese

Duration: 102min

DESPICABLE ME 3

ROOM 1

10:00pm

Director: Eric Guillon, Kyle Balda, Pierre Coffin

Starring: Steve Carell, Kristen Wiig, Trey Parker

Language: Cantonese

Duration: 90min



WAR OF THE PLANET OF THE APES

ROOM 2

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

(3D) 7:15pm

Director: Matt Reeves

Starring: Woody Herrelson, Sara Canning, Judy Greer

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 140min

SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING

ROOM 3

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

Director: Jon Watts

Starring: Tom Holland, Michael Keaton, Robert Downey Jr.

Language: English

Duration: 133min

MACAU TOWER

6 - 26 JUL



SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING

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

Director: Jon Watts

Starring: Tom Holland, Michael Keaton, Robert Downey Jr.

Language: English

Duration: 133min

this day in history



1985 LIVE AID MAKES MILLIONS FOR AFRICA

The Live Aid concert for the starving in Africa has raised triple the £10m expected.

And as the London event draws to a close at Wembley Stadium, Britain had contributed £1,100,000 to the global total of £30m.

Described as the Woodstock of the eighties, the world's biggest rock festival was organized by Boomtown Rats singer Bob Geldof to raise money for famine relief in Africa.

Wembley was packed with a crowd of 72,000, and TV pictures, coordinated at BBC Television Centre, have been beamed to over 1.5 billion people in 160 countries in the biggest broadcast ever known.

The transatlantic concert began in London's mid-day sunshine with a fanfare for Prince Charles and Princess Diana and Status Quo performing Rocking All over the World.

Stars were flown in by helicopter into the arena in a line-up that included David Bowie, Wham and royal favorites Dire Straits.

Frequent appeals by Bob Geldof reminded viewers of the motive for the occasion: "Don't go to the pub tonight. Please stay in and give us your money. There are people dying now."

He himself took the call from the ruling family in Dubai who made the biggest single donation of £1m.

Across the UK eight appeal centers were set up with 200 phone lines to handle - mainly credit card - donations of up to £2,000.

In the US 22,000 pledges were received within five minutes of the Beach Boys taking to the stage in the simultaneous concert at JFK Stadium, Philadelphia.

The 16-hour music marathon is being completed there tonight with acts including Bob Dylan, Duran Duran and Paul Simon.

Nine months after the droughts, disease and famine in north eastern Africa were brought to the media's attention the UN has warned that 160m people are still affected.

Governments have begun a global relief operation but there are still problems of distribution in the worst hit areas - mainly Sudan and Ethiopia.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

After seeing BBC news reports of the African famine Bob Geldof and Midge Ure from Ultravox wrote the song Do They Know It's Christmas to raise money for the crisis. Mr Geldof went on a crusade to attract other stars to the cause.

Performing under the name Band Aid, they released the song on 7 December 1984. It was the fastest selling single ever and raised £8m. Live Aid eventually raised £40m. Half of the money was spent on food and half on long-term development. Bob Geldof was given an honorary knighthood in 1986.

On 2 July 2005 Bob Geldof organised Live 8 - a series of rock concerts around the world to raise awareness about global poverty and put pressure on the leaders of the G8 nations to tackle the problem.

Six days later the G8 summit at Gleneagles in Perthshire, Scotland, agreed a \$50bn aid package for Africa.

YOUR STARS

Aries

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

You don't usually ask for anyone's help to get things done - not that you'd take it, even if you did. Oh, just buckle down and accept it! Skip explaining to yourself why you couldn't manage this alone.

Taurus

April 20-May 20

Let go of all those 'what ifs' you've been allowing to keep you from doing exactly what you really want to do. The stars guarantee that you'll be smart enough to only take well-calculated risks.

Gemini

May 21-Jun. 21

When you refuse an ordinarily irresistible offer, don't be surprised if your friends look worried. They can all rest easy, though. This is only a temporary affliction.

Cancer

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Every now and then we all have a chance to step into the spotlight when it comes to relationships - to either make one, break one or take one to a brand-new, deeper level.

Leo

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

You're never happy to see the good times come to an end, but just this once, it may come as something of a relief. You work hard at your reputation as a fun-loving free spirit who'll try anything at least once.

Virgo

Aug. 23-Sept. 22

Your love life is currently a very busy place - and a pleasantly crowded one, too. You're entertaining four earthy, practical astrological energies in your house of love.

Libra

Sep.23-Oct. 22

This current astrological lineup is famous for beginnings of the emotional variety - and it's occurring right now in your house of family, home and emotions. Well. Needless to say, there's a lot going on in your life.

Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

Puzzles, riddles and intrigue most of all are at the very top of your list when it comes to what you enjoy on a daily basis. So if anyone foolishly entertains the thought of trying to outwit, trick or manipulate you.

Sagittarius

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

If any sign is famous for always being game to try something new, it's you. But with the power of the stars subtly yet powerfully insisting that you do something new and different in your house of financial matters.

Capricorn

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

So you thought you were serious yesterday? And totally unwilling to crack a grin, much less let anything slide? Well then, batten down the hatches, because you ain't seen nothing yet. That was practice.

Aquarius

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

It's all about seceeeecrets today, which means that for yet another day, you'll be dealing with someone else's privacy issues -- and doing your best to guard them with a passion.

Pisces

Feb.19-Mar. 20

Still leading the pack? Bet you are. Suddenly, you've decided that rather than being a follower - even though you're always extremely choosy about exactly who you follow - you're better suited to be a leader.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9 3 | | | 5
5 3 2 | | 1
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| 8 2 6 | | | | |
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Easy+

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

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

Hard

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

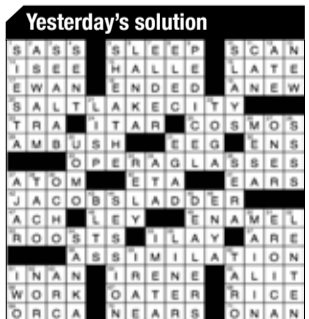
WEATHER

Table with columns: CHINA, MIN, MAX, CONDITION. Rows include Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, Urumqi, Xi'an, Lhasa, Chengdu, Chongqing, Kunming, Nanjing, Shanghai, Wuhan, Hangzhou, Taipei, Guangzhou, Hong Kong, WORLD, Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, London, New York.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Small mechanical devices; 8- Least lavish; 15- Tapering, four-sided pillar; 16- Arranged in a table; 17- Nonsense; 18- See-through material; 19- Sanctify; 20- Davis or Midler; 22- Univ. aides; 23- Oodles; 24- Tough pill to swallow; 25- Isn't wrong?; 26- Vane dir.; 27- Eagle's nest; 28- Ruin; 29- Change the meaning of; 31- Attitude; 32- Impulse; 33- Farrow and Hamm; 34- Doctrine maker; 37- Charm; 41- Cream-filled cookies; 42- Claw; 43- Gardner of films; 44- Badgers; 45- Small change; 46- Work with needles; 47- ___ loss for words; 48- Winning the race; 49- Angry with; 50- Revolving part; 52- Repeat; 54- Incinerate; 55- Superintendent; 56- Cyst; 57- Seesaws;

DOWN: 1- Male turkey; 2- Mother-of-pearl source; 3- Erased; 4- Glaze; 5- Half of zwei; 6- Half a fly; 7- Airborne; 8- Carved image; 9- Covenants; 10- Have ___ in one's bonnet; 11- Groove; 12- High spirits; 13- Diabolical; 14- Table support; 21- Writer Wiesel; 24- Light grayish brown; 25- Make ___ at; 27- Big dos; 28- Stigma; 30- Continental cash; 31- Grain stores; 33- Accused; 34- Sovereign; 35- Art of public speaking; 36- Made ineffective; 37- Writer Janowitz; 38- Authorization; 39- Pilot; 40- Chats; 42- Set in layers; 45- Hindu loincloth; 46- Gold standard; 48- Rat-___; 49- Nothing more than; 51- Doctors' org.; 53- Calendar abbr.;



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Taipa
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HKD 10.78M
Ocean Gardens complex
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Fully Furnished
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Ref: 16050589

Riveira H Unit, Tower 1
Macau
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Ref: 17060650

Camellia Court,
Hellene Gardens, Coloane
3 Bedroom Apartment
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Ref: 17020639

Cheoc Van
Coloane
Multi-Storey Property
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The All New **ODYSSEY**



Photos shown here may be different from Macau local markets.

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Honda Macau





Venus Williams

TENNIS | WIMBLEDON

Past, not crowd, favors Williams against Konta

Howard Fendrich, London

IF past success were all that mattered when Venus Williams faces Johanna Konta in the Wimbledon semifinals, the matchup would be quite a mismatch.

For Williams, Thursday's semifinal [Friday, Macau time] will be her 10th at the All England Club. For Konta, it'll be her first — and the first for any British woman in 39 years.

For Williams, it'll be the 22nd Grand Slam semifinal of her career. For Konta, her second.

"I definitely think experience helps, for sure. For a lot of the

players I've played, it's their first time in the third round or the quarterfinals [or] fourth round," said the 37-year-old Williams, who is making her 20th Wimbledon appearance. "So I have an opportunity to bank on experience in having dealt with those sort of pressures before."

One more discrepancy: Williams is aiming for a sixth Wimbledon singles championship and eighth overall at major tournaments. Konta owns zero such trophies.

"What Venus and her sister have given our sport is absolutely tremendous. The way they've elevated women's tennis is truly ins-

piring," Konta said. "So I feel very excited and very humbled to be sharing the court with her again."

The other semifinal also is rather lopsided in terms of past accomplishments: 14th-seeded Garbine Muguruza vs. 87th-ranked Magdalena Rybarikova. Muguruza won the French Open last year and was the runner-up at Wimbledon in 2015. Rybarikova, in contrast, had never been past the third round at any Grand Slam tournament in 35 previous attempts.

"She's going to be [the] favorite," Rybarikova said. "I'm here to enjoy the match. We'll see what's going to happen."

They've played each other four times previously, each winning twice. Muguruza won the only past match at a major, 14-12 in the third set at the Australian Open in 2013. Rybarikova won the only past match on grass, 6-3, 6-1 at Birmingham in 2015.

This will be the sixth meeting between Konta and Williams. Konta won three, including at the 2016 Australian Open, where she made her only other run to a major semifinal. Williams won their most recent match, on red clay at the Italian Open in May.

"I've never played her on grass," Konta noted, "so that will be a new challenge for me."

Indeed, the slick surface lends itself to Williams' power-based game, making her terrific serve that much tougher to handle and giving her groundstrokes extra sting.

"She's been on these courts many, many times, over many, many years," said Anabel Medina Garrigues, who coaches the woman Williams overwhelmed in

the quarterfinals, French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko. "It's like home for her."

Williams served at up to 119 mph against Ostapenko, finished with eight aces and only was broken once.

They've played each other four times previously, each winning twice

The American, the oldest Wimbledon semifinalist since Martina Navratilova was the runner-up in 1994, used body serves to tie up Ostapenko and could try that tactic again against Konta.

"It's definitely a real asset. Been working on that serve. It's working out for me just in time, just for these later rounds," Williams said. "I'd like to think that I can continue to rely on that as the matches continue."

Williams said she thinks Konta plays with "a very similar style" — which, coming from her, is certainly a compliment.

One dynamic that never existed when they've met in the past: Konta will have thousands of spectators pulling loudly for her at Centre Court.

"I'm sure she's confident and determined," Williams said. "She's probably dealing with a different kind of pressure, playing here at home. But she seems to be handling it well."

Virginia Wade was the last British woman to win Wimbledon, all the way back in 1977. A year later, Wade was the runner-up to Chris Evert. Since then, the locals never had a countrywoman to cheer for this late in the tournament.

Until Konta. "I'm just surprised," said Wade, who sat in the Royal Box for Konta's quarterfinal win, "it's taken so long." **AP**

BOXING

Pacquiao disagrees with re-score, says no plans to quit

MANNY Pacquiao still disagrees with the unanimous decision that resulted in him losing the WBO world welterweight title to Jeff Horn, despite an independent re-scoring of the July 2 fight, and says he has no plans to retire.

On Monday, the WBO said in a statement that three of the five independent judges who scrutinized the bout awarded it to Horn, one awarded it to Pacquiao and one scored it a draw.

A Philippines government department asked the WBO to review the refereeing and the judging

of the so-called "Battle of Brisbane" in Australia after Horn, fighting for his first world title, won a contentious unanimous points decision against Pacquiao, an 11-time world champion.

The review concluded that Horn won seven rounds to Pacquiao's five.

Pacquiao was subsequently quoted in Philippines' media as saying "Let the people judge for themselves [...] people saw what happened. We have seen worse judgments in the past where judges manipulated results. Nothing surprises me now."

The 38-year-old Pacquiao yesterday indicated in a Twitter post that he won't be hanging up his gloves, suggesting a rematch against the 29-year-old Horn, a former schoolteacher, could happen.

"I love this sport and until the passion is gone, I will continue to fight for God, my family, my fans and my country," Pacquiao said.

Horn said he welcomed the outcome of the WBO review.

"It gives me evidence behind me that I can just use now. Instead of saying I think I won the fight, now a heap of other people —

professionally — think I won the fight," Horn said.

The fight, in front of more than 51,000 people, was scored 117-111 by Waleksa Roldan and 115-113 each by Chris Flores and Ramon Cerdan — Roldan's score coming in for heavy criticism. Pacquiao had Horn in wobbling and in trouble in the 9th round, but couldn't finish him off.

Horn rallied late to hold on for the points decision and remain unbeaten in 18 professional fights.

Australian media have reported the rematch could be in November, also in Brisbane. **AP**



opinion

Girl About Globe

Linda Kennedy



FLOORPLAN #TAUPEFAIL

I was trying to get to Nepal but ended up in leggings. Or rather, I was trying to get to 'Nepal' and ended up in 'leggings'. These were zones at Hong Kong Fashion Week, coloured differently on the floorplan for supposed ease of navigation but it was hard to tell biscuit from taupe from ecru. Squinting at the plan – definitely biscuit, surely? – I wondered: was this a test to see if one were a true fashionista who could appreciate a subtle palette? Clearly I wasn't. Asking for directions at an Information Booth led to a glance that radiated one thought: #taupefail

Hong Kong Fashion Week. It's the heart of style in Asia, with more booths than you have shoes, and zones called Urban Clothing and World of Accessories and many more. This week's edition for Spring/Summer had the theme of Style in Motion and a special focus on fashionable sportswear. It meant the greatest regional concentration of lycra anyone has ever known. If HK were ever required to be flexible, this was the day. Beijing, you missed it.

The plastic mannequins in the centerpiece displays seemed to have been sourced specially. Who knew there were mannequins that could do the splits? Or downward dog? Several looked like they would need hip replacements after their stint.

They weren't the only things wrongly positioned. Some trends, I felt, were not being promoted as they might to the attendees. First exhibit in this case, 'functional fabric'.

'What exactly is it?' I asked an exhibitor, as part of an interview, to be told 'functional fabric' was waterproof and usually two-ply, sometimes three. Its warmth might save me on a climb. And then came the true revelation. "It's also wrinkle-free," the exhibitor added.

I kept in an atmospherically-induced 'fabulous'. This was no-ironing fabric. And it was going under the guise of sports tech? Its ironing-lite talents were misguidedly being placed after waterproofness.

The next thrill: 'anti-blisters' shoes. Or perhaps that misrepresents the situation - they weren't even shoes, they were silicone soles which pressed onto your feet, ostensibly to allow you to run or walk on hot beaches. Again, wrong selling point. These were 'blister busters' - a no-shoe breakthrough.

I have long been frustrated by the inability of tech to develop an algorithm which perfectly calculates your foot's dimensions, and then sends by Bluetooth that information to a 3-D printer thereby creating bespoke footwear that might not end up causing agony. But, oh no, tech remains concerned with other reboots. Blisters are a reminder there are too few women in tech. If Elon Musk were female, and still got funding, we would have Foot X.

Press-on, peel-off soles. Perfect. No pressure points. No contact between leather or 'man-made material' (manufacturing is male too). What could go wrong? Where could be the rub? I see none. More visible feet? It might mean the requirement to start a petition for the state provision of pedicures on the basis that the retinal trauma caused, if such pedicures were not available, would ultimately be more expensive. A small workload for the return.

I never made it to Nepal, one of the new country pavilions at Fashion Week, and more crucially, near the café where pastry redemption was linked to your entry ticket. Perhaps forgoing calories was wise, given it was the fashion world. But the detour resulting from getting lost was definitely worthwhile. I came across a booth called 'Fook Hing Group Trading'. Some things never go out of style, and a cheap gag is one of them. This column is rocking that look today.

THE CHINA REPORTS 35 JAPANESE DETAINED ON TELECOM FRAUD CHARGES

China says it has detained 35 Japanese citizens on suspicion of telecoms fraud.

The June 30 detentions appeared to mark the largest roundup of Japanese citizens engaged in suspected illegal activity in China in years.

Foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said yesterday that the Japanese government had been informed of the detentions, but gave no details.

China has been cracking down on telecoms scams

targeting Chinese victims, many of them run from outside the country. Scammers send false bank notifications or other messages demanding that recipients transfer money to separate accounts to avoid penalties or win rewards.

Japan's Kyodo News agency said the scammers phoned victims in Japan. It said the 35 were detained in the southeastern province of Fujian earlier this month and Japanese authorities alerted on July 3.

Paraguay president's visit throws Taiwan diplomatic lifeline

THE visit by Paraguay's president to Taiwan this week offers a diplomatic lifeline to the self-governing island democracy whose international breathing space is being steadily chipped away at by Beijing.

Horacio Cartes and his delegation attended events yesterday commemorating 60 years of ties between Taiwan and the landlocked nation, the island's only diplomatic ally in South America.

Cartes' three-day visit comes almost a month after Panama switched relations from Taipei to Beijing, leaving Taiwan with just 20 diplomatic allies, mainly small developing nations in Central America, the Caribbean, the South Pacific and Africa. That development set alarm bells in Taipei.

"As far as the [Taiwanese] government is concerned, there is a growing sense of unfairness and unreasonableness by Beijing," said Alan Romberg, director of the East Asia program at The Stimson Center, a Washington think tank. "It is hard to see a way out."

At a welcoming ceremony in the capital Taipei, Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen issued a "most heartfelt welcome" to Cartes.

Cartes, who is making his third visit to Taiwan as president, offered words of comfort, saying: "Based on ongoing and earnest friendship, as well as mutual support, we will continue to reinforce Taiwan and Paraguay's inseparable cooperation and exchange programs."

Beijing renewed a campaign to diminish the island's global standing last year after cutting ties with Tsai's independence-leaning government, which has refused to endorse China's insistence that Taiwan is part of China.

Along with plucking away Panama and two of Taiwan's African allies, Beijing has barred Taiwan's representatives from attending the World Health Assembly and other gatherings to which they formerly had access.

Since Panama broke away, Taiwan's diplomats have redoubled their efforts to shore up ties with the island's remaining allies, with analysts



Paraguay's President Horacio Cartes (right) reviews an honor guard with Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen in Taipei

saying such relationships remain vital to Taiwan retaining its claimed status as a sovereign nation and maintaining its international profile.

Visits to allies in the Western Hemisphere also permit Taiwan's leaders to stop off in the United States to meet with American politicians and other supporters. The U.S. switched diplomatic recognition to Beijing in 1979, eight years after Taiwan's seat at the United Nations was given to China.

The loss of Panama had a major impact on Taiwanese public opinion and served as something of a wakeup call to the government, said Alexander Huang, director of the Institute of Strategic Studies at Taiwan's Tamkang University.

That's partly because the relationship stretched back more than 100 years when the Republic of China – the official name of Taiwan's government – ruled all of China from the mainland, Huang said.

Panama, home to the canal that is crucial to global trade, was also Taiwan's last partner of major strategic importance and its shift aroused fears of a domino effect on other allies, he said.

"So we need to make sure that even with the worst case scenario, we will try our very best with our counterparts to keep our interests protected, keep our personnel, and that our interests in those countries continue," Huang said.

And despite the challenges, Huang said he sees no prospects for cutting a deal with Beijing on endorsing its "One China" principle in return for

maintaining Taiwan's international presence.

"Everyone in Taiwan across party lines understands that China can continue to humiliate Taiwan because they have the power," Huang said. "But to continue this kind of game would not necessarily bring about a Chinese unification or win over the minds and hearts of Taiwan people."

Beijing's efforts to isolate Taiwan diplomatically have been "a big factor in the rise of pro-independence sentiment," said Ashley Esarey, a Taiwan scholar at Canada's University of Alberta.

However, maintaining relations with a small number of states is less important than it was two decades ago, since Taiwanese have shifted their thinking to emphasize "informal, substantive relationships over formal diplomatic partnerships," said Taiwan politics expert Shelley Rigger, a political scientist and longtime observer of Taiwanese politics at Davidson College in North Carolina.

Rigger and other observers said they expect Beijing to continue picking off Taiwan's remaining allies – including Paraguay – as a means of piling the pressure on Tsai.

China's campaign to not only deepen Taiwan's diplomatic isolation but also damage its economy by limiting Chinese tourist visits does seem to be having an impact, with Tsai's approval ratings down considerably since she took office May 2016. While political unification with China is deeply unpopular among Taiwan's 23 million people, support for trade and travel between the sides remains strong. MDT/AP

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	15-35 Good	😊
High Density Residential Area	20-40 Good	😊
Ambient	15-35 Good	😊

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS



SAUDI ARABIA said it will grant girls in public schools access to physical education, a decision that comes after years of calls by women across the kingdom demanding greater rights and access to sports.

CONGO Another 38 probable mass graves have been found in central Congo, where violence between troops and militia members has killed thousands of people since August, the United Nations announced yesterday.

GREECE After eight years of toil by the Greek people, the European Union says Greece is no longer breaking budget rules. Yesterday's recommendation from the EU comes after a sharp improvement in the country's finances following years of spending cuts and tax increases.



BRITAIN-SPAIN Queen Elizabeth II and her husband welcomed the king and queen of Spain with an extravagant military ceremony yesterday, amid rising tensions between the two countries over what Brexit means for the future of Gibraltar, a tiny British territory which borders Spain. More on p14

EUROPEAN UNION leaders and their Western Balkan counterparts pressed yesterday for continued economic integration amid Russia's increasing influence in the region and the EU's own troubles.

VENEZUELA Opponents of President Nicolas Maduro now find themselves rallying in support of an unexpected hero: the chief prosecutor who helped throw many of them into jail. Until recently, Luisa Ortega was seen as a hardline loyalist of the socialist administration, but now she is being lionized by the opposition for her decision to break with Maduro.