



**COUTINHO
SLAMS
'INFLUENTIAL,
LAWMAKERS'**

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**HENGQIN PROJECT
APPARENTLY UNAFFECTED**
Ng Lap Seng's conviction
last week does not seem to
have negatively impacted his
Hengqin project

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MOP10 BILLION INCOME
During the first two quarters
of 2017, the government's
Fiscal Reserve recorded
an investment income of
MOP10.1 billion

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS



TURKEY Nearly 500 suspects, including generals and military pilots, went on trial yesterday in Turkey accused of leading last year's failed coup attempt and carrying out attacks from an air base in Ankara. Many of the suspects face life terms in prison for crimes that include violating the Constitution, murder, attempting to assassinate the president and attempting to overthrow the government.

CAMBODIA's prime minister yesterday ordered the ouster of an American-led Christian organization that seeks to rescue and rehabilitate women working in the sex trade, saying its comments in a TV report last week demeaned the country.



THAILAND Former Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra declared her innocence and asked for "kindness" from a court yesterday during her final statement in a criminal negligence trial that could land her in prison for 10 years if she is convicted.
More on p12

AUSTRALIA A survey of more than 30,000 Australian university students released yesterday found that half the respondents had been sexually harassed and almost one in 50 had been sexually assaulted on campuses, but few made formal complaints.
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GAMING

Rebound in revenue accelerates in July

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Venezuelan opposition leaders detained at gunpoint in raids

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SJM announces 2017 revenue dip

Macau gaming operator Sociedade de Jogos de Macau (SJM) has announced its first half-year results for 2017, showing that the group's revenue decreased by 2 percent when compared with the same period in 2016. Divided by gaming customers, mass market table gaming revenue was down by 0.5 percent in the period, while VIP revenue showed a decrease of 3.4 percent. Slot machine revenue fell by 3.2 percent. At the same time, adjusted EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortization) and profit attributable to the owners of the company decreased markedly by 7.7 percent and 12.9 percent year-on-year respectively. At the end of June 2017, SJM estimated that it commanded a 16.7 percent share of Macau's gaming revenue; consisting of a 21.4 percent share of mass market revenue and a 14.2 percent share of VIP revenue. The financial report released by the company also noted that its new resort, the Grand Lisboa Palace, is making good progress despite the industrial accident on June 18. It continues to anticipate an opening in the second half of 2018.

APT to bring 2 new annual poker events

The Asian Poker Tour (APT) has signed an exclusive five-year agreement with Macau Billionaire Poker (MBP) and the Babylon Casino to bring a minimum of two international poker events per year to Macau for the next five years. One of those guaranteed events is APT's year-end festival where the Player of the Year celebrations are staged every December. "For too long Macau has been restricted in terms of the variety of poker tournaments on offer which we believe has restricted the growth of poker, not only in Macau but also in Asia," said Tim Chen, the CEO of MBP, according to a statement issued by APT. "Given the incredible growth and following for poker from mainland players, more professional tournaments are needed." The first event under the new APT-MBP partnership will be the APT Finale Championships Macau 2017, to be held at the Babylon Casino from November 28 until December 9, subject to regulatory approval.

UM scholar publishes work in leading scientific journal

Dr Vivien Wang, a professor from the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) at the University of Macau (UM), recently published a paper in volume 67 of *Molecular Cell*, a leading journal of biology. According to a press release from UM, the journal focuses on research into cell biology at the molecular level, with an emphasis on new mechanistic insights. Wang's work could potentially provide a theoretical basis for treating infectious diseases, autoimmune diseases and even different cancers in the future. Wang studied at Macau Pui Ching Middle School before pursuing further studies at the University of California, San Diego.

Coutinho: Influential lawmakers want to restrict free speech

Lynzy Valles

LAWMAKER José Pereira Coutinho is calling for a re-consideration of measures that he fears will restrict lawmakers' freedom of speech at the Legislative Assembly (AL).

Following his disappointment over the proposed ban on banners at the AL, which was recently withdrawn from vote, Coutinho lamented that some legislators are still seeking to protect their own interests by supporting the shortening of lawmakers' oral inquiry time at plenary sessions.

Last week, the AL passed a motion to discuss the amendment of AL internal rules, which was criticized by several lawmakers.

The original draft of the bill included 24 proposals, with one of them proposing to reduce lawmakers' oral inquiry time from the current five minutes to three minutes.

Another proposal was to remove the restrictions on the length of time of some sessions of the lawmakers' inquiries to government representatives.

Coutinho, who is also president of the Macau Civil Servants Association (ATFPM) has again condemned the government for making such proposals. His criticism stems from his belief that a reduced window of opportunity will dis-



Pereira Coutinho (left) and Leong Veng Chai

courage lawmakers from fully exercising their freedom of speech.

"In some sense, we feel that it would be more and more difficult for us to exercise the right to ask questions to the government," the lawmaker commented.

He also cited his belief that some of the proposals would create opportunities for the government to selectively answer lawmakers' inquiries.

The legislator added that when the government selectively replies to their inquiries, it would most likely mean that some of the public's concerns will be ignored.

"We can ask two or three questions but they can only choose to answer one. So what

happens to the other questions? How do we explain it to the residents?" he asked

He also doubted that legislators would be able to comprehensively fulfill their duties to serve the public when the government becomes selective in answering issues.

Despite the discussion of amendments to AL internal rules, which was held on Thursday, Coutinho was still not satisfied, as the lack of transparency in the house was not discussed.

"There are still very important issues that the AL didn't tackle like the transparency of its six working commissions," he said.

Coutinho pointed to Hong Kong's Legislative Council, stressing that legislators in the

neighboring SAR are obliged to declare their other professions and that this information is listed in the government's official website.

The lawmaker lamented that there is no system in the region that oversees what legislators are doing aside from being involved in the AL. He also recalled that there have already been several instances where their speech rights were subjugated.

"There have been, in the past, many ways to suppress legislators. We feel that in the future they will still suppress our freedom of speech."

"We really don't know exactly who is behind the scenes doing that. We don't think it's something coming from the Macau government," the lawmaker continued.

Coutinho stressed that only a few "influential lawmakers" are members of the AL and government institutions and that this discrepancy affects the administration works.

According to him, the influential lawmakers are working on self-interest "so they can still survive by having a monopoly in one of the most important economic activities in Macau."

Coutinho has further hinted that the lack of transparency in the MSAR government provides convenience for the "few influential lawmakers" to continue their hidden agenda.

Art historian Wu Hung to hold lecture this month

THE Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) has invited art historian Wu Hung to host a lecture titled "Moving Pictures: Ancient China's Gift to World Art" on August 27 at the Macau Science Center Convention Hall.

Wu is a permanent member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and a renowned art

historian, critic and curator. He is a distinguished professor of the art history department and East Asian languages and civilizations department at the University of Chicago, the director of the Center for the Art of East Asia, and the consulting curator the Smart Museum of Art in Chicago.

In the lecture, Wu

will analyze several well known ancient Chinese scrolls, such as "Nymph of the Luo River", "Han Xizai Evening Banquet" and "Along the river during the Qingming Festival". Handscroll paintings are a type of Chinese art with distinctive cultural characteristics, boasting a long history and deep influence.

Wu will lead the au-

dience to think about the social and cultural meaning of ancient Chinese handscroll paintings from an innovative perspective, and will explain how the creative use of handscroll paintings create a unique visual tradition in the world of art.

The lecture is part of the IC's "Lecture by Masters of Culture" program, which

began in 2013. The IC regularly invites world famous scholars, artists and individuals from cultural circles to come to Macau and share their experience and knowledge.

The lecture will be conducted in Mandarin with simultaneous translation to Portuguese. Admission to the lecture is free although limited seats are available. Reservations can be made online on the IC's website from today, or by phone during office hours.

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Casinos' July gains cap year of recovery as VIPs flock

A rebound in Macau's casino revenue accelerated in July as spending by high-rollers continued to add momentum to the year-long recovery despite China's efforts to curb capital outflows.

Gross gaming receipts in the world's largest gaming hub rose for a 12th straight month, increasing 29 percent to 23 billion patacas (\$2.9 billion), according to data released by Macau's Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau yesterday. That topped the median estimate for a 26 percent increase in a Bloomberg survey of nine analysts, and is the biggest gain since February 2014.

Macau's gaming revenue has been steadily recovering after China's corruption crackdown and slowing economy hit the market for more than two years. While an improving economy and the opening of new facilities have helped bring players back to Macau, the outlook still bodes uncertainties as Chinese authorities introduce efforts to halt hundreds of billions of dollars worth of outflows, some of which exit the mainland via gambling operations.

"Risk of heightening enforcement and potential policy pressures we had flagged have certainly not gone away," said Daiwa Capital Markets Hong Kong Ltd. analyst Jamie Soo in a note yesterday. "Some of the pressure on the

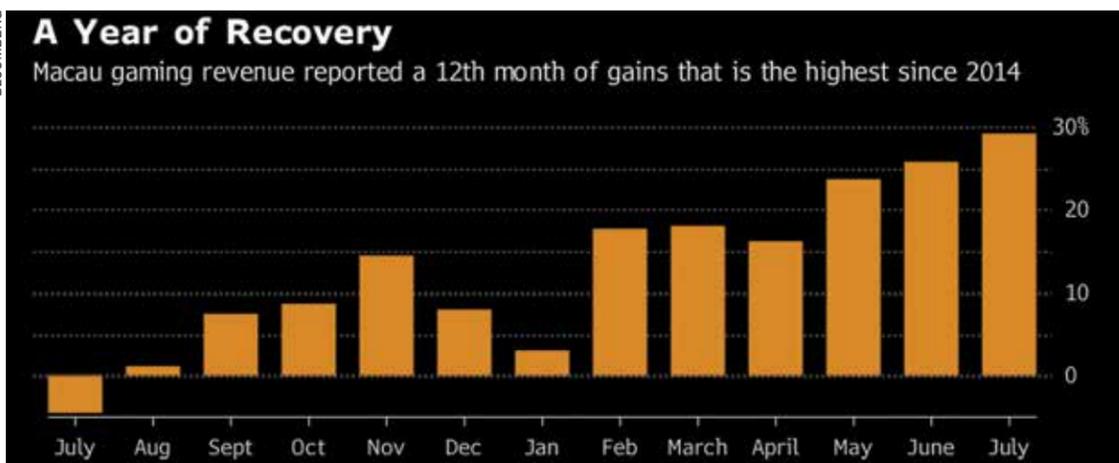
gaming revenue does take time to manifest itself, and the seasonal impact of stronger mass numbers for summer months may very well smooth out the potential negative impact of this in the near term."

Still, the third quarter looks to be off to a strong start, and the market will likely react favorably to the numbers, Soo added.

Wynn Macau Ltd. shares rose

Risk of heightening enforcement and potential policy pressures we had flagged have certainly not gone away.

JAMIE SOO
DAIWA CAPITAL ANALYST



0.2 percent in Hong Kong, paring an earlier rally of as much as 1.2 percent. MGM China Holdings Ltd., which was raised to a buy at Morningstar, climbed 1.3 percent.

Bloomberg Intelligence's index of Macau gaming stocks has rallied 20 percent this year through Monday. Wynn Macau surged 37 percent in the period, while Galaxy Entertainment Group Ltd. jumped 43 percent.

The recovery is still susceptible to any renewed anti-corruption crackdowns from the mainland,

especially as China gears up for the 2017 party congress this fall. Investor concerns remain amid reports of mainland police investigating questionable money transfers and freezing accounts of junket operators who ferry in wealthy players to gamble large sums on credit. Macau regulators are also requiring facial recognition and identification card checks at ATMs to curtail the overseas shifting of currency.

Revenue from high rollers, which was hurt the most amid the

downturn, has shown a faster pace of recovery this year. It grew 35 percent in the second quarter, better than the 8.1 percent in the market for recreational gamblers, according to the city's gaming regulator.

"VIP segment, for now, continues to see broad recovery across big and smaller junkets, a trend admittedly well above what we had envisioned," JPMorgan Chase & Co. analyst DS Kim said in a note before the revenue data release. **Bloomberg**

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EDUCATION

IPM hosts 9th Macau-wide IT competition

THE Macao Polytechnic Institute (IPM) organized its ninth edition of the "Macau-wide IT Competition - Alice 3D Programming Contest." The theme of this year's contest is "Macau - our livable city".

The competition received 89 entries from 260 contestants representing all sectors of the Macau community, including secondary and tertiary institutions.

Competitors this year focused mostly on creating projects related to the protection of the ecological environment and the need to develop a green city. Competitors were also keen to offer solutions to make better use of public transportation for the convenience of citizens and tourists in Macau. These potential solutions address the overcrowding that is increasingly experienced in Macau because of its dense population.

During the competition, IPM provided specialized training in "Alice 3D" programming to provide participants with a better understanding of the programming skills needed to complete their projects.



First prize winning team of the competition (open category)

Competitors mentioned that while developing their projects, they had been able to further master their 3D programming skills as well as improve their creativity and team-building techniques. Participating teams also stated they were able to receive valuable feedback from the judging panel during the oral presentation stage.

The institute chose the theme "Macau - our livable city" because Macau ranked fourth out of 289 cities in China in terms of livability, according to a report on the competitiveness of Chinese cities released in 2016 by the Chinese

Academy of Social Sciences. The institute stated in a press release that with the standard of living increasing, public attention on livable cities has surged.

Vice president of IPM, Im Sio Kei, said in a speech at the awards ceremony that the competition will further support the popularity and application of information technology in Macau, providing a good platform for contestants to demonstrate their achievements. He added that IPM will continue to organize similar events for students and members of the general public who have an interest in this area.

Imports up 10 percent in June

TOTAL merchandise imports in June 2017 increased by 10.4 percent year-on-year to MOP6.17 billion, according to information from the Statistics and Census Service. Of this figure, imports of motor cars and motorcycles nearly doubled compared with June 2016, and imports of watches increased by 51.8 percent.

The total merchandise export for the month amounted to MOP938 million, which represents an increase of 14.3 percent year-on-year. As a result, the merchandise trade deficit amounted to MOP5.24 billion.

In the second quarter of 2017, the total value of merchandise imports (MOP17.23 billion) and merchandise export (MOP2.67 billion) grew by 5.3 percent and 10.8 percent year-on-year respectively, resulting in a trade deficit of MOP14.56 billion.

In the first half of the year, merchandise import grew by 5.6 percent year-on-year to MOP35.12 billion, while merchandise export increased by 9.8 percent to MOP5.62 billion. The trade deficit in

this period reached MOP29.5 billion.

By place of origin, in the first half of 2017, merchandise import from mainland China (MOP11.51 billion) and the Portuguese-speaking countries (MOP306 million) decreased by 6.7 percent and 3.3 percent year-on-year respectively. However, imports from the European Union (MOP9.07 billion) increased by 14.8 percent.

As for exports, merchandise headed for mainland China increased by 2.3 percent year-on-year to MOP917 million in the first half of 2017, of which exports to the nine provinces of the Pan Pearl River Delta (MOP870 million) also grew by 2.3 percent.

Exports in the first half of 2017 to Hong Kong (MOP3.5 billion), the EU (MOP100 million) and the U.S. (MOP95 million) rose by 16.8 percent, 8.7 percent and 26.8 percent year-on-year respectively. Exports to Portuguese-speaking countries (MOP0.7 million) dropped by a whopping 87.8 percent year-on-year.

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NG LAP SENG

Billionaire's Hengqin project apparently unaffected

THE conviction of a Macau real estate billionaire last week does not seem to have negatively impacted a commercial project he initiated on the neighboring island of Hengqin.

Macau magnate Ng Lap Seng, who was convicted of bribery, conspiracy and money laundering on Friday, spearheaded the integrated commercial project, which is being managed by a partnership between his New Fenghong Real Estate Development company and China Resources Land Ltd.

New Fenghong is owned by Ng's Sun Kian Yip (SKY) Group – the same company which was to manage the Macau-based United Nations conference center that landed Ng in the bribery and corruption scandal.

Covering a total ground floor area of over two million square meters, construction of the joint venture, Hengqin Wanxiang World, began around a year ago. When completed, the project is expected to create approximately 50,000 jobs in Zhuhai and generate nearly RMB1 billion in tax revenue on an annual basis.

According to developers, though it will be primarily involved



AP PHOTO
Ng Lap Seng (center) leaves a Federal court in Manhattan on July 27

in commercial and trade activities - including "online-to-offline commerce." The site also has the additional aims of accelerating the development of Hengqin and promoting economic growth in Macau, Hong Kong and Guangdong Province.

China Resources is a state-owned conglomerate based in Hong Kong, which consists of a group of companies involved in a wide range of industries. SKY Group is owned by Ng, with the billionaire's son, Ng Kei Nin, having occupied the position of board chair-

man for several years.

In September last year, Ng Kei Nin refused to answer questions on whether his father's detention would affect the project. The younger Ng was speaking at a press conference for the project and he assured attendees that the Hengqin development was progressing according to schedule.

This reaffirmed the earlier comments of William Kuan – a business partner of Ng and a board member of SKY Group – who said in October 2015 that the company was unaffected by the

case, especially since the elder Ng "has not directly participated in the company's operations for the past few years."

Construction of the Hengqin Wanxiang World began around a year ago

Indeed, the project appears to be going ahead as planned, without any indication that it has been impacted by the trial or conviction of its figurehead.

Nevertheless, the press conference last year for the integrated commercial project was not attended, as might be expected, by the mayor of Zhuhai nor the director-general of the Hengqin New Area Administrative Committee, Niu Jing.

Separately, Ng Kei Nin was named in the 2015 Panama Papers leak, with a company registered in the British Virgin Islands since 2001, named Star Gear Technologies Ltd. Search engine queries return few results on the company. **DB**

Newborn baby abandoned in trash bin died

A newborn baby was found dead yesterday inside a toilet in a restaurant, according to a statement released yesterday by the Judiciary Police. A cleaning lady, working in a restaurant of a hotel in the Nam Van area, found the baby while she was working. The baby girl was wrapped in a plastic bag with the umbilical cord still attached. The baby showed no breathing signs while she was being transported to the Centro Hospitalar Conde de São Januário. Her death was confirmed at the hospital.

Chan Meng Kam calls for more bicycle usage

Lawmaker Chan Meng Kam questioned the government about how they plan to ensure the safety of bicyclists while they ride within the city. Chan observed that riding bicycles is an environmentally-friendly mode of transportation and that Macau has a goal devoted to establishing a green transportation network. He continued by pointing out that in spite of their stated goals the Macau government has not yet promoted bicycles as a transportation option. Cham suggested that the government should reserve lands on the new urban zone as bike paths to encourage residents to use bicycles. He also questioned the government on how they plan to efficiently deal with any violation of bicycle usage.

Zhuhai ranked first in GDP growth in Guangdong

Zhuhai sits at first place in Guangdong province in terms of GDP growth in the first half of 2017, according to a report by Jornal Va Kio. The city's GDP grew 9.2 percent year-on-year to RMB115.156 billion. In both its regional GDP and its industrial added value growth rate, Zhuhai ranked first among 21 cities in Guangdong.

SCIENCE

New dome show features 'Lights of Wonder'

Julie Zhu

STARTING from yesterday, the Macau Science Center (MSC) is presenting an all-new dome show called, "Aurora: Lights of Wonder," at the center's Planetarium.

According to the MSC, the show is "the world's first 4k [4,000 pixel resolution] real time virtual reality full dome show," and features the Northern Lights, also known as the Aurora Borealis. The show will explain how these lights are formed and their appearance and location patterns through the year.

The show is presented in Cantonese and offers translation channels in Mandarin, Korean and English.

The 30-minute long 2D movie is directed by South Korean astrophotographer O-Chul Kwon, who,

after spending several years preparing, finally captured the dazzling footage during an aurora substorm in 2015.

As explained by MSC representatives yesterday during a press conference, the faster the aurora moves, the brighter it becomes. Thus, unlike usual time-lapse images, high resolution video at 30 frames per second was taken by ultra-high sensitivity cameras and by low light sensors to capture the auroras as they are. Given these facts, the audience can experience sophisticated and dynamic features of the real aurora storm that was witnessed and captured by the director.

Animations and computer graphics were used throughout the show to explain the science phenomenon of the northern lights and to share the le-

gends that have been built around them.

The show offers the audience a chance to see the auroras from the International Space Station for the first time and will share with the audience the best locations to see auroras. The processes that create the lights' vivid colors and shapes will be explained, as will the different kinds of auroral substorms the latest scientific breakthroughs in auroral studies and the auroras on other planets.

Charles Si Man Chon, head of the Planetarium Department at MSC, said that "in regards to the scientific part, the movie talks about how the auroral groups are formed, how the sun interacts with our planet. Overall, I think it is a really good piece of knowledge for our audience to learn about."

"We will run the show



for at least one year," informed Si, adding that "maybe we can keep it longer depending on the audience's reaction."

During the summer vacation, and starting from yesterday, 10 sessions will be available for the public every week.

For the rest of this week, two shows will be available from Wednesday to

Saturday, one in the morning, and one in the afternoon.

The show has won both the Audience Award in the fourth International Planetarium Movie Festival 2016 in South Korea and the Janus Astro Award for Best Astronomy-oriented full dome show in the 11th Full Dome Festival 2017 in Germany.

HEALTH

First case of Dengue fever confirmed

THE Health Bureau (SSM) confirmed on Monday that the first case of Dengue fever infection of 2017 has been detected in Macau and the bureau is urging citizens to take preventive measures against mosquito bites.

The patient is a 60-year-old man. On July 27, the man presented symptoms of fever, fatigue, and muscle and joint pain.

On July 30, he went to the Kiang Wu Hospital, where he was tested for and diagnosed with Dengue fever.

The patient did not travel outside of Macau before the onset of symptoms.

Currently, the patient is considered stable, and none of the patient's relatives or his co-workers exhibited similar symptoms.

To confirm the patient's infection source, SSM will investigate the resident's residence and the area of his workplace.

In addition, SSM will carry out chemical elimination of mosquitos at all the above-



A fumigation was held yesterday

mentioned sites. The bureau has also called on residents of that area to cooperate by adopting anti-mosquito measures.

SSM has repeated their appeals to all Macau residents to pay due attention to their environmental hygiene by abiding to prevention measures such as eliminating stagnant waters at home or workplace and avoiding areas infected with a proliferation of mosquitoes and larvae.

The bureau suggests people who travel to places where Dengue fever is frequently detected, especially in Southeast Asia, to wear long-sleeved clothes and stay in places equi-

pped with air conditioners or anti-mosquito facilities.

Yesterday, SSM, together with the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau, conducted a joint action to kill mosquitoes at Rua da Praia do Manduco.

IACM said that the bureau will strengthen anti-mosquito work in the city's parks, and public facilities.

During yesterday's action, the bureau detected four rubbish piles.

SSM noted that there have been six suspected cases of Dengue fever this year in Macau and only one has been confirmed as an infection.

SSM believes that there will be new cases in the future.

Fiscal Reserves record MOP10 billion income

DURING the first two quarters of 2017, the government's Fiscal Reserve recorded an investment income of MOP10.1 billion, according to a statement from the Monetary Authority of Macau (AMCM), representing an annualized rate of return of 4.4 percent.

At the end of June 2017, the total assets of the Fiscal Reserve stood at approximately MOP478.1 billion, composed of the basic reserve of MOP128 billion and the excess reserve of MOP350.1 billion.

Assets of the Fiscal Reserve continued in the first half of 2017 to be divided into the categories of global bonds (31.5 percent), global equities (13.1 percent) and money market instruments (55.4 percent). Currency exposure mainly included the use of the USD, HKD and RMB.

Income from equity markets constituted the bulk of the MOP10.1 billion. Representing around MOP6 billion, the AMCM accredited the return to an improvement in the U.S. economy "coupled with a reduction in political risks in the Eurozone, [which] helped fuel a significant rally in global developed market equities."

Investment in fixed income markets brought the Fiscal Reserves an income of around MOP2.5 billion during the first half of 2017.

"The U.S. Federal Reserve interest rate hikes during the first and second

quarter [...] brought unfavorable price performance in global bonds," noted the AMCM statement. "However, on a relative basis, bonds in the U.S. and U.K. outperformed their European peers for the first six months."

Meanwhile, in the first half of 2017, income from money markets amounted to about MOP1.9 billion.

A small loss was registered by the AMCM in this six-month period in the area of foreign exchange markets.

The reduced strength of the USD from the start of the year – partly owing to "hawkish changes in certain major central banks' policy tone" – led to a decision to take a hedge against the weakening currency. Subsequently, a controlled loss of MOP0.3 billion was registered in the foreign exchange markets.

HEAD OF AMCM TO STEP DOWN

ACCORDING TO a report by Radio Macau, the current head of the Monetary Authority of Macau (AMCM), Anselmo Teng, will step down from his position shortly. Teng has been in the role since the 1999 handover. He will leave the responsibility for the AMCM in the hands of his colleague, Benjamin Chan, according to the report.

Africa-inspired exhibition to open today

THE exhibition "Kiss Africa - Macau + Lusofonia: Recent works by Eugénio Novikoff Sales" will begin today at 6:30pm with a launch ceremony at Albergue SCM.

The exhibition is a showcase of 14 acrylic artworks filled with colors and expressions towards different cultures.

Sales was born in Macau in 1960 but moved to Mozambique, Africa, at the age

of six. His father was from Macau and his mother from Belarus under the former Soviet Union. In his days in Mozambique, he grew fond of the black mahogany sculpture of Mozambique's artists, and African art as a whole. He was an artistically inclined child and aspired to become a painter.

"Drawing and painting became my toys. My father was supportive since the beginning, bringing all the

painting materials that were needed," he stated in a press release from Albergue SCM.

"I always liked to paint, doesn't matter if I'm happy or sad," he added.

In 1975, Sales moved to Portugal for three years before returning to Macau.

His global travels have been part of his daily life and are a main source of inspiration and motifs for his paintings.

His first solo painting exhibi-

tion was held in 1980 at the now defunct Museum Luis de Camões, followed by the Hong Kong Arts Center in 1981. In 2008, he was invited to participate in the Beijing Olympics Fine Arts Exhibition, an art show that featured artists from more than 80 countries. In 2014, he participated in the 12th National Fine Arts Exhibition in Beijing and received an honorable mention for his art.

Sales is currently a member of the prestigious Olympia Fine Art Association (OFAA), a group comprising more than 100 professional artists, painters and sculptors from over 40 countries.

Sales' works of art can be found in private collections as well as in museums across Macau, Hong Kong, Portugal and mainland China.

The exhibition will be open to the public at the A2 Gallery of Albergue SCM from August 2 to September 3. Admission is free.



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AUSTRALIA

RBA holds rate as currency seen subduing inflation, growth

Michael Heath

AUSTRALIA'S central bank kept interest rates unchanged and warned a rising currency is expected to subdue inflation and weigh on the outlook for growth and employment.

The Australian dollar has surged more than 11 percent this year, hampering the Reserve Bank's efforts to transition the economy to growth led by exports like education and tourism. That prompted Governor Philip Lowe to end 16 months of gentle cautioning that a rising exchange rate could merely "complicate" the handover.

"The higher exchange rate is expected to contribute to subdued price pressures in the economy," Lowe said in his statement, the longest since 2013. "It is also weighing on the outlook for output and employment. An appreciating exchange rate would be expected to result in a slower pick-up in economic activity and inflation than currently forecast."

"The bank would be particularly concerned if the Australian dollar remains stubbornly high, should the terms of trade decline as the bank is currently expecting," said Paul Brennan, chief economist for Australia at Citigroup Inc.

Lowe and his deputy,



Guy Debelle, began to ramp up their rhetoric on the Australian dollar last month and have elevated the negative impact of its strength. Still, policy makers showed renewed confidence in the labor market - following the biggest two-month full-time job gains in almost 30 years - predicting that the jobless rate would "decline a little" over the next couple of years from the current 5.6 percent.

"The commentary around the labor market is still somewhat cautious despite consistently strong employment numbers," said Bill Evans, chief economist at Westpac Banking Corp. in Sydney. "That is because concerns around wages growth remain, with the damaging feedback loop from low wages growth to weak consumption and business investment being of paramount concern."

The RBA reiterated that wage growth remains low and will likely be so for some time yet. That, together with new entrants in the retail industry - read Amazon.com - are

likely to keep inflation subdued, notwithstanding sharp electricity price increases.

The RBA has kept rates unchanged for a year and refrained from joining global counterparts in signaling plans to withdraw stimulus amid concern about weak wages and tepid inflation. Its easing cycle began in late 2011 and was designed to cushion a transition away from mining to services and manufacturing, encouraging firms to hire and invest.

"The low level of interest rates is continuing to support the Australian economy," Lowe said in his concluding paragraph.

But the RBA still faces a problem with low rates and property. The Sydney and Melbourne housing markets have shown bubble characteristics. While low interest rates encouraged construction and the hiring of former miners, they unleashed a speculative frenzy among real-estate investors looking to cash in on tax breaks.

The central bank has supported regulators' moves to strengthen home-lending standards and discourage the use of interest-only loans by owner-occupiers and investors. Still, Sydney and Melbourne prices climbed 1.4 percent and 3.1 percent respectively in July.

Bloomberg

Didi takes on rival Uber in Europe; First stop Estonia

Marie Mawad

UBER Technologies and Didi Chuxing are once again going head-to-head, this time in Estonia.

The Chinese giant with a multi billion-dollar war chest is backing Estonia's Taxify OU with a financial investment and support on technology developments, the companies said yesterday. The partnership-Didi's first major move into Europe - will give Taxify a boost to grow in cities from Prague to London and launch in cities including Paris in the coming months, founder Markus Villig said.

"It will be hard for Uber to be number one everywhere - we see each region will be dominated by a local champion," Villig, who is also Taxify's chief executive officer, said in an interview. "We're focused to be No. 1 in Europe and Africa."

Last year Didi bought Uber's brand, business and data in China, drawing a truce to a bruising battle between the two companies for leadership in the country. Didi has since expanded globally by sponsoring local players, and is already an investor in Grab, Uber's biggest competitor in Southeast Asia; Ola, the largest ride-hailing company in India; and Lyft, the main Uber rival in the U.S.

Uber has also been merging with local partners, following expensive attempts to win over regional business. Last month the San Francisco-based company and Yandex NV announced they would merge their ride-hailing businesses in Russia. Uber will invest USD225 million and take a 36.6 percent stake in the new venture that will be valued at \$3.73 billion.

Taxify's strategy is broadly to steal market share from Uber in cities from



Tallinn, Estonia to Johannesburg by focusing on items like driver pay and training, Villig said. Europe is promising in terms of possible regulatory easing that would unlock markets like Germany and Scandinavia, while Africa has potential to dramatically grow in terms of number of rides, he said.

■ Taxify's strategy is broadly to steal market share from Uber

"Didi didn't have a partner yet in Europe and Africa - that's where we come in," said Villig, who described Didi as largely a passive investor, whose investment doesn't entail strategy or management changes at this point.

Despite a number of setbacks in Europe, Uber still dominates key markets, and has been working to win over regulators. It has recently been working with the Estonian Tax and Custom Board on a pilot project on taxation between customers and drivers.

Didi and Taxify declined to disclose the financials of the latest investment. Taxify had raised 2 million euros (\$2.4 million) prior to the Didi deal, Villig said. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

WYNN DONATES MOP80 MILLION TO UM DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION



Wynn Resorts Macau recently donated MOP80 million to the University of Macau Development Foundation (UMDF) to support the long-term development of the University of Macau (UM) and its Asia-Pacific

Academy of Economics and Management (APAEM).

The donation is part of a commitment made by Wynn Resorts Macau to UMDF in 2011. According to a press release from Wynn, the continuous su-

pport has enabled APAEM to conduct independent and groundbreaking research, with the academy backed by a strong teaching and advisory team of well-known scholars, including three Nobel Prize laureates who serve on its Honorary Advisory Board.

In the press release, the company states that it has always supported the development of education and the nurturing of highly skilled, local employees as the company strongly believes that education is the foundation of a society's most important values, namely knowledge and culture. Through their efforts, Wynn aims to play a key role in developing local expertise and sharing knowledge throughout the region.

SEAFOOD EXPO ASIA TO TAKE PLACE IN HONG KONG THIS SEPTEMBER



The Seafood Expo Asia which is returning to Hong Kong for the eighth time will take place from September 5 to 7 at Hong Kong's Convention and Exhibition Centre.

This year's Seafood Expo Asia will enable visitors to discover a variety of seafood products, services and equipment from Asia and around

the world.

Based on last year's success, the event attracted more than 8,800 seafood professionals from 69 countries and the 2017 edition of Seafood Expo Asia will feature a diverse program with a host of innovative exhibits showcasing brands. The exposition will give consumers

the chance to meet new and existing suppliers, hear from experts on current trends in the industry and participate in special events.

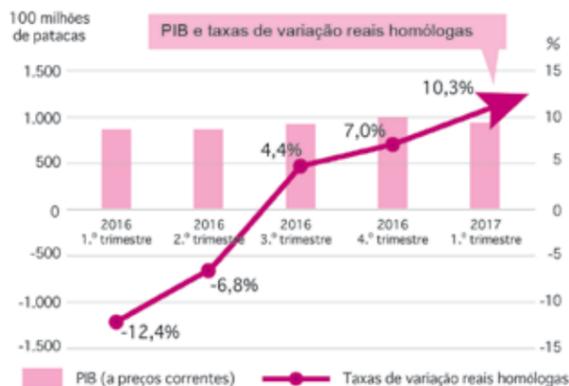
According to the World Bank, the Asia Pacific region will account for 70 percent of global fish consumption by 2030.

Event director, Iris Kwan, stated that "forming relationships with customers in this part of the world is vital for global seafood producers and suppliers when one considers that seafood consumption is projected for considerable growth across the entire region."

Kwan confirmed that the exposition will feature both new companies and newly participating countries showcasing a diverse range of the world's seafood.

Desenvolver a economia e melhorar a qualidade de vida da população

A economia apresenta uma tendência de crescimento em 2017.



Aumento do comércio externo de mercadorias face ao ano transacto

Nos primeiros cinco meses do ano, o montante total foi de 33.810 milhões de patacas, correspondente a um aumento de 5,8% comparando com o período homólogo do ano transacto.



O sector a retalho apresenta uma tendência de crescimento, com um aumento de 12% no 1.º trimestre



Segurança social de dois níveis

Primeiro nível

O regime da segurança social presta a todos os cidadãos de Macau (incluindo os grupos vulneráveis) a protecção básica na terceira idade e no risco de trabalho, e engloba a pensão para idosos, a pensão de invalidez, o subsídio de casamento, o subsídio de nascimento, o subsídio de desemprego e o subsídio de doença.

Segundo nível

O regime de previdência central não obrigatório visa reforçar a protecção social dos residentes de Macau na terceira idade, e complementar o regime da segurança social vigente. O Governo da RAEM transferiu, nos últimos 8 anos, incluindo 2010, para as contas individuais de previdência dos cidadãos qualificados, a verba de incentivo básico e a repartição extraordinária de saldos orçamentais, acumulando o saldo destas contas, no máximo, 56.000 patacas. O Regime de previdência central não obrigatório já foi aprovado na Assembleia Legislativa e entrará em vigor no dia 1 de Janeiro de 2018.

O Governo da RAEM impulsiona o desenvolvimento da diversificação das indústrias e promove o desenvolvimento das indústrias emergentes

- Decorridos mais de vinte meses de ajustamento, em 2017, a economia de Macau passou de uma fase de queda à estabilidade, apresentando uma tendência de crescimento;
- Pelo 9.º ano consecutivo, Macau está classificado entre o grupo das economias "quase livres" classificadas pela *Heritage Foundation*, com uma pontuação global de 70,7 pontos em termos de índice de liberdade económica, que é acima da média mundial;
- O Fundo Monetário Internacional referiu que a economia da RAEM registou uma inversão da tendência de queda, para a recuperação, tendo melhorado a previsão do seu crescimento económico para 2,8% em 2017.

Emprego dos residentes

2.º trimestre de 2017
A taxa de desemprego global é de **2%**
A taxa de desemprego dos residentes locais é de **2,7%**

Rendimento do emprego

2.º trimestre
Mediana do rendimento do emprego: **MOP\$15.000**
Mediana do rendimento do emprego dos residentes locais: **MOP\$18.000**
Mantém-se inalterada em termos anuais, e desceu MOP\$1.000 em termos trimestrais

Índice de preços no consumidor geral

1.º semestre
Aumento de **0,94%** do índice de preços no consumidor geral, em termos anuais
Redução de 2,21% em comparação com o 1.º semestre de 2016

Devido à estratégia «Prioridade às Conferências», o desenvolvimento do sector de convenções e exposições registou resultados positivos preliminares.

Modalidade	Quantidade	Número de participantes	Aumento anual
Conferências	344	54.000	↑ 111,9%
Exposições	7	163.000	↑ 48,9%
Actividades de atribuição de prémios	15	4.400	↑ 135,9%
Total das modalidades	366	221.700	↑ 61,8%

Nota: A tabela estatística das convenções e exposições contém os dados do primeiro trimestre de 2017

O Governo da RAEM continua a envidar todos os esforços para assegurar a qualidade de vida dos grupos em situação vulnerável

Benefícios • subvenções

- Subsídio para idosos: MOP\$8.000 por ano
- Subsídio de invalidez especial: MOP\$16.000 por ano
- Subsídio de invalidez normal: MOP\$8.000 por ano
- Subsídio provisório de invalidez: MOP\$3.450 por mês

Apoio financeiro regular

Entre Janeiro e Junho de 2017
3.901 Famílias beneficiadas
Montante total atribuído: cerca de **MOP\$120.000.000**

Subsídio para idosos

Em 2016
73.719 Beneficiários
Montante total atribuído: cerca de **MOP\$588.000.000**
Incluem-se nos dados referidos os pagamentos retroactivos relativos ao ano anterior e os reembolsos

Serviço de apoio alimentar de curto prazo

Entre Janeiro e Junho de 2017
2.440 Beneficiários/vezes
Montante total atribuído: cerca de **MOP\$6.000.000**

Subsídio do Programa de inclusão e harmonia na comunidade

Primeira concessão do ano de 2017 (primeiro semestre)
4.246 Famílias beneficiadas
Montante total atribuído: cerca de **MOP\$16.000.000**
Destinatários: os três tipos de famílias em situação vulnerável que auferem baixos rendimentos e são beneficiários de apoio económico regular

Subsídio de invalidez

Em 2016
11.416 Beneficiários
Montante total atribuído: cerca de **MOP\$124.000.000**
Incluem-se nos dados referidos os pagamentos retroactivos relativos ao ano anterior e os reembolsos

Subsídio provisório de invalidez

Entre Janeiro e Junho de 2017
496 Beneficiários
Montante total atribuído: cerca de **MOP\$12.000.000**

Centro de Avaliação Conjunta Pediátrica

O Governo da RAEM criou, em Junho de 2016, o Centro de Avaliação Conjunta Pediátrica, inter-serviços, com vista à detecção, avaliação, diagnóstico, tratamento precoce e acompanhamento da aprendizagem das crianças.

Planeamento dos Serviços de Reabilitação para o Próximo Decénio (2016–2025)

São abrangidos serviços repartidos por 13 importantes áreas, tais como, intervenção precoce, serviços de saúde, educação, emprego, apoio comunitário, criação de ambiente de acessibilidade, propondo-se, no total, cerca de 350 projectos de acção a implementar, de forma ordenada, em 3 fases a curto, médio e longo prazo, respectivamente. Em simultâneo, cabe ao Grupo Director Interdepartamental do Planeamento dos Serviços de Reabilitação para o Próximo Decénio da RAEM, composto por 14 serviços públicos, organizar, coordenar e promover os respectivos trabalhos.

Subsídio para equipamentos/serviços sociais

Entre Janeiro e Junho de 2017, foram regularmente subsidiadas pelo Instituto de Acção Social 245 instituições/serviços de equipamentos/serviços sociais, sendo o montante financeiro de cerca de MOP\$553.000.000.

Plano de Acção para o Desenvolvimento dos Serviços de Apoio a Idosos nos Próximos Dez Anos (2016–2025)

São abrangidas 4 categorias principais: "serviços médicos e de assistência social", "garantia dos direitos", "participação social" e "ambiente de vida", e 14 subcategorias, tendo sido propostas, no total, cerca de 400 medidas a implementar, de forma ordenada em 3 fases, a curto, médio e longo prazo, respectivamente. Em simultâneo, cabe ao Grupo Director Interdepartamental do Mecanismo de Protecção dos Idosos de Macau, composto por 13 serviços públicos, organizar, coordenar e promover os respectivos trabalhos.



UNITED NATIONS

Diplomat says US and North Korea are key to peace - not Beijing

Edith M. Lederer, United Nations

THE United States and North Korea hold “the primary responsibility” for de-escalating tensions and negotiating peace on the Korean Peninsula — not China, Beijing’s U.N. ambassador said yesterday [Macau time].

Liu Jieyi said that if Washington and Pyongyang refuse to reduce tensions and hold new talks as called for in U.N. Security Council resolutions, “then no matter how capable China is, China’s efforts will

not yield practical results — because it depends on the two principal parties.”

The Trump administration has accused China of failing to rein in North Korea’s nuclear and ballistic missile programs and warned of possible economic reprisals on Beijing, which is responsible for 90 percent of trade with the northeast Asian nation.

In comments clearly directed at the U.S. and North Korea, Liu said instead of complying with Security Council calls to de-escalate ten-

sions and re-launch six-party negotiations, tensions have heightened as a result of new missile tests, statements that “all options are on the table,” and deployment of the U.S. THAAD anti-missile system.

And in criticism aimed specifically at the United States, the Chinese ambassador said implementation of Security Council resolutions is also being hampered by unilateral sanctions and “pre-conditions put to starting the dialogue” with Pyongyang.

The Trump administration has

declared that all options, including a targeted military strike, are on the table to block North Korea from carrying out threats against the United States and its allies in the region. But a pre-emptive attack isn’t likely, U.S. officials have said, and the administration has been pursuing a strategy of pressuring Pyongyang through new unilateral sanctions and appealing to China to use its influence.

Pyongyang’s two recent successful tests of intercontinental ballistic missiles have created even more urgency as the U.S. administration seeks to stop its efforts to master the complex process of mounting a nuclear warhead capable of hitting the United States.

As for resuming talks, which stalled in 2009, the United States has said it won’t enter negotiations with North Korea until the country proves it will move toward abandoning its nuclear weapons program.

Trump tweeted Sunday: “We will no longer allow this to continue. China could easily solve this problem!” And U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley joined in the criticism, saying China “must decide whether it is finally willing to take this vital step” of getting tough on the North.

Liu, at a news conference marking the end of China’s presidency of the Security Council in July, tried to shift the responsibility for engaging North Korea from Beijing to Washington and Pyongyang.

“They hold the primary responsibility [...] to start moving in the right direction, not China,” he said.

“China has been implementing the [U.N.] resolutions in good faith, in the comprehensive way,” Liu said, “and we urge other countries to do so. The fact that the resolutions are not so far implemented in the comprehensive and precise way says a lot about the kind of difficulties that we

face at the moment.”

He said the international community should move together on several fronts — “make sure that the political will to resolve the issue of denuclearization is translated into actual moves, negotiations, dialogue, reducing tension on the ground,” and ensure that there is no international support for North Korea’s nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

Liu said China will keep working with other countries to achieve denuclearization and peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, and “we believe that each relevant party should [...] shoulder the responsibility, and uphold the obligations provided for in the relevant Security Council resolutions.”

He said China is still seeking support for its proposal in which North Korea would suspend nuclear and missile tests in exchange for the U.S. and South Korea halting their joint military exercises. The package proposed by China and backed by Russia also includes denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and “a peace and security mechanism” in place for both North Korea and South Korea, Liu said.

The Security Council has already imposed six rounds of progressively tougher sanctions against North Korea, and the United States is discussing a new sanctions resolution with China.

Liu said he is in contact with ambassador Haley “on a daily basis” and the new resolution is “under discussion.”

Following the two recent missile tests, he said, it’s important to look at how to eliminate nuclear weapons and ensure peace on the Korea Peninsula and “what measures should be put in place to prevent further testing, and at least to make sure that the nonproliferation regime works better to stop the nuclear and ballistic missile programs.” **AP**

UN

Liu Jieyi urges support for new Israel-Palestinian peace plan

CHINA’S U.N. ambassador urged the international community to support President Xi Jinping’s new four-point proposal to end the decades-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict and establish an independent Palestinian state.

Liu Jieyi said at a news conference that China’s future diplomatic efforts will focus on trying to move toward a negotiated solution based on the four proposals.

Xi signaled China’s stepped-up engagement in the Middle East when he met about two weeks ago

in Beijing with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and outlined the plan.

The four points are:

— Advancing the two-state solution based on 1967 borders with East Jerusalem as the capital of a new Palestinian state.

— Upholding “the concept of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security,” immediately ending Israeli settlement building, taking immediate measures to prevent violence against civilians, and calling for an early re-

sumption of peace talks.

— Coordinating international efforts to put forward “peace-promoting measures that entail joint participation at an early date.”

— Promoting peace through development and cooperation between the Palestinians and Israel.

China views both Israel and the Palestinians as “important partners” in its “One Belt, One Road” initiative, a mammoth Chinese-funded push to develop transport routes including ports, railways and roads to expand trade in a vast arc of countries

across Asia, Africa and Europe, the ambassador said. China has also proposed launching a “China-Palestine-Israel tripartite dialogue mechanism in order to coordinate the implementation of major assistance programs in Palestine,” he said.

But the gaps between Israeli and Palestinian leaders remain wide, preventing any meaningful talks since 2009.

Tensions escalated recently after Arab gunmen killed two Israeli police officers at the major holy site in Jerusalem on July 14, prompting Israel to



install security devices that sparked Arab outrage and clashes. Under intense pressure, Israel removed the metal detectors last week and prayers at the Al-Aqsa Mosque ended peacefully on Friday.

Liu said China plans to hold a seminar for Israeli and Palestinian “peace activists” this year, seeking “to contribute wisdom for the settlement of the Pa-

lestinian question.”

He urged the international community to “respond positively to the proposals made by China because we believe these four proposals once fully implemented will really go a long way towards helping the issue to be solved through negotiations, and also contribute to stability of the relations between the two sides.” **AP**

Xi says China will never permit loss of 'any piece' of land

Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

CHINESE President Xi Jinping issued a tough line on national sovereignty yesterday amid multiple territorial disputes with his country's neighbors, saying China will never permit the loss of "any piece" of its land to outsiders.

Xi's declaration came during a nearly one-hour speech in Beijing marking the 90th anniversary of the founding of the People's Liberation Army, which has formed a key pillar of support for the ruling Communist Party since 1927 and is the world's largest standing military, with 2.3 million members.

"The Chinese people treasure peace and we absolutely do not engage in invasion and expansion. However, we have the confidence to conquer all forms of invasion," Xi told government leaders and current and retired PLA members gathered at the hulking Great Hall of the People, the seat of the legislature that sits beside Tiananmen Square.

"We absolutely will not permit any person, any organization, any political party — at any time, in any form — to separate any piece of Chinese territory from China," Xi said to applause. "No one should expect us to swallow the bitter fruit of damage to our sovereignty, security and development interests."

Xi made no reference to any specific conflicts or disputes during his address, which focused largely on the PLA's growth from a scrappy guerrilla force fighting Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists and Japanese invaders into one of the world's most powerful, if largely untested, militaries.



AP PHOTO

However, China is currently engaged in a weeks-long border standoff with Indian forces near the countries' disputed border high in the Himalayas, with Chinese spokesmen demanding that Indian troops withdraw to avoid a clash potentially worse than the brief but bloody war the two fought in the region in 1962.

China has also long been embroiled in a contest with Japan over East China Sea islands, as well as with five other governments over competing claims to territory in the strategically vital South China Sea. Beijing also threatens to use force to conquer Taiwan if peaceful enticements prove insufficient. China considers the self-governing democratic island Chinese territory.

In his speech, Xi also emphasized that the military's highest loyalty is to the ruling Communist Party, underscoring the PLA's key role as regime preserver through crises such as the bloody suppression of 1989 pro-democracy protests at Tiananmen Square. Top Chinese leaders have consistently rejected calls to make the PLA loyal to the government and people instead.

"The people's army will resolutely safeguard the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and our country's socialist system, resolutely safeguard national sovereignty, security and development interests, and resolutely safeguard regional and world peace," Xi said.

The speech followed a para-

de Sunday at a training ground on the edge of the Gobi Desert during which Xi donned fatigues and declared that the military has the "confidence and capability" to ensure China's sovereignty, security and national interests.

Xi, who commands the PLA as chairman of the Central Military Commission, has frequently spoken of his "China Dream" to restore China to a leadership position in international affairs with a modern, far-reaching military force to match.

The parade at the Zhurihe base in Inner Mongolia featured troops and advanced weaponry, and was another forceful indication of Xi's iron grip over the PLA and every other political power base within the party

ahead of a pivotal congress this autumn that will award him a second five-year term as leader.

That followed similarly high-profile military reviews in Beijing in 2015 and Hong Kong in June. Last week, Xi bestowed newly created "Aug. 1" honors on servicemen in a further elevation of the armed forces' stature.

“We absolutely will not permit any person, any organization, any political party to separate any piece of Chinese territory from China.”

XI JINPING

Xi and his predecessors engineered a radical upgrading of the PLA's capabilities through years of double-digit percentage increases in the defense budget, making China the world's second-largest military spender after the United States, although growth has slowed alongside a cooling of the overall economy.

That has also spurred a global role for the PLA, which was formerly overwhelmingly preoccupied with securing China's territorial integrity.

Alongside its blue-water navy, China is building its first overseas military base in the Horn of Africa nation of Djibouti, and Chinese ships held drills last month with Russia's navy in the Baltic Sea, more than 10,000 kilometers from their home ports. **AP**

Forex regulator is said to be examining top dealmakers

CHINA'S foreign-exchange regulator is examining how some of the country's biggest dealmakers used their domestic assets as collateral to get loans overseas, people familiar with the matter said.

The State Administration of Foreign Exchange recently began reviewing loan guarantees for Anbang Insurance Group Co., Dalian Wanda Group Co., Fosun International Ltd., HNA Group Co. and the Chinese owner of the AC Milan soccer team, the

people said, asking not to be identified discussing private information. The regulator's examination doesn't mean the companies have done anything wrong, the people said.

Wanda declined to comment. Representatives at Anbang, HNA and the regulator didn't immediately respond to queries from Bloomberg. Fosun said all its procedures have been legal. Representatives for the AC Milan owner couldn't immediately be reached.

The review, which be-

gan after a separate examination by the nation's banking regulator, steps up the government's scrutiny of the five companies as China seeks to clamp down on capital outflows and debt. The once-prolific acquirers are facing mounting pressure at home and abroad, with HNA recently scrapping the purchase of an in-flight entertainment provider and Wanda agreeing to sell most of its theme-park and hotel assets.

SAFE is specifically looking for potential im-

proprieties involving so-called "overseas loan under domestic guarantee," a type of financing where borrowers pledge collateral in China to receive bank guarantees or letters of credit, which are then used to take out loans from the overseas branches of Chinese banks, according to the people.

Among things the regulator will look for include whether the companies falsified information or inflated the value of their assets to receive guarantees, the people said. **Bloomberg**



Guo Guangchang, whose Fosun International Ltd. is under scrutiny by Chinese authorities over its foreign mergers and acquisitions.

INDIA

Human-wildlife conflict: One human killed every day

Nirmala George, New Delhi

A deadly conflict is underway between India's growing masses and its wildlife, confined to ever-shrinking forests and grasslands, with data showing that about one person has been killed every day for the past three years by roaming tigers or rampaging elephants.

Statistics released this week by India's Environment Ministry count a total of 1,144 people killed between April 2014 and May of this year.

That includes 426 human deaths in fiscal 2014-15, and 446 killed the following year. The ministry released only a partial count for 2016-17 of 259 killed by elephants up to February of this year, along with 27 killed by tigers through May.

"Conflict is already one of the biggest conservation challenges," said Belinda Wright, founder of the Wildlife Protection Society of India, based in New Delhi. "In India it is particularly acute because of the high human population."

That population of 1.3 billion is still growing, and as it does it is



Wild elephants chase back Indian villagers who were trying to chase them away from their Misamari village on the outskirts of Gauhati, Assam state, earlier this year

increasingly encroaching into the country's traditional wild spaces and animal sanctuaries, where people compete with wildlife for food and other resources.

The growth of human settle-

ments is often seen as economic development. But for some who are living on the edge of wildlife borders, this development can come at a high cost.

Of the 1,052 lives claimed by

elephants in the last three years, many had simply been in the way when the pachyderms wandered out of jungles in search of vegetation and raided farmers' crops. Wildlife experts say these conflicts have increased as elephants increasingly find their usual corridors blocked by highways, railway tracks and factories.

"The shrinking of good quality habitats and access of the animals to movement corridors are absolutely critical for India's conservation efforts and the future of its iconic mammals," Wright said.

N.V.K. Ashraf, a veterinarian at the Wildlife Trust of India, said the high death toll was likely because large numbers of people are dependent on forests for their livelihood.

"People going deep into the forests in search of food or forest produce run the risk of crossing the path of a tiger or a herd of elephants," he said.

The human conflict with tigers has gradually increased since the 1970s, when India launched a nationwide tiger conservation program that carved out sanctuaries in national parks and

made it a crime to kill a big cat. Though methods for counting tigers have changed, census evidence suggests the number has increased from about 1,800 then to 2,226 in 2014.

But the increase in tigers hasn't been met with a proportional increase in habitat, activists say.

While the government did not provide any numbers for deaths caused by other big cats, conflicts with leopards have become so common that villagers regularly mount hunting parties when one ventures near their homes, threatening children and livestock.

"The instinct of people when a leopard wanders into a village or urban settlement is to corner the animal and kill it with sticks and stones," Ashraf said.

India's elephants and tigers are also some of the most hunted animals in the country, sought for their ivory tusks or bones that are sold on the black market for use in traditional Chinese medicine without any evidence that they have an effect. Elephants are also threatened by speeding trains. AP

1,144

Number of people killed in India between April 2014 and May of this year

THAILAND

Former PM says she's innocent, asks for 'kindness'

FORMER Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra declared her innocence and asked for "kindness" from a court yesterday during her final statement in a criminal negligence trial that could land her in prison for 10 years if she is convicted.

The case centers around a rice subsidy program that Thailand's current military government says she grossly mishandled. Yingluck's bank accounts were frozen after an administrative ruling held her responsible for about USD1 billion of the losses from the subsidy.

The case against Yingluck is widely seen as an effort to put another nail in the coffin of the political machine founded and directed by her brother, former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who was ousted in a 2006 coup for alleged corruption and disrespect for the monarchy. The telecommunications mogul has been in self-imposed exile since 2008 to escape a prison sentence on a conflict of interest conviction.



Yingluck Shinawatra

The 2006 coup triggered years of sometimes-violent battles for power in Thailand.

The Shinawatras' critics describe them as corrupt, profit-seeking politicians, but their supporters have repeatedly voted them and their political allies into power. The supporters say the traditional political establishment opposes Thaksin because his electoral popularity threatens their entrenched privileges.

Thailand's judiciary has been the target of widespread criticism that it operates with a political bias against Thaksin and his supporters.

"I beg the court for kindness and [to] please dismiss the

charge," Yingluck said in her closing statement to the court, according to prepared remarks. The verdict is to be issued Aug. 25.

Hundreds of Yingluck's supporters outside the packed court shouted, "Prime minister, fight, fight!" Yingluck led the last elected government in Thailand before being ousted as prime minister in 2014 when a court ruled that a personnel transfer involved nepotism. The army initiated a coup soon afterward and a military-led government has remained in power since.

After another court appearance late last month, Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, who led the 2014 coup, warned her supporters to tread carefully. He said the government would not prevent people from gathering, but that "everyone must show restraint" and let the court decide the matter.

"What is being done to her now is not fair," said Prasong Kaewtongta, 51. "I'm giving her moral support." AP

AUSTRALIA

Few speak up on sex assaults, harassment on Aussie campuses

A survey of more than 30,000 Australian university students released yesterday found that half the respondents had been sexually harassed and almost one in 50 had been sexually assaulted on campuses, but few made formal complaints.

The Australian Human Rights Commission, which surveyed students across all 39 universities in 2015-16, concluded that sexual assault and sexual harassment occurred at unacceptable rates at Australian universities.

The survey found 51 percent of respondents were sexually harassed at least once in 2016.

It also found 6.9 percent of respondents reported being sexually assaulted in 2015 or 2016, with

1.6 percent saying the assaults occurred in a university setting.

But only 9 percent of those sexually assaulted and 2 percent of the sexually harassed in the past two years had made formal complaints.

The commission recommended that universities ensure that staff and students representatives likely to hear such disclosures receive training to respond. It also urged universities to pay for surveys every three years to track progress in reducing such harassment and assaults.

The commission also recommended that university residences and residential colleges fund a review of factors that contribute to sexual misbehavior in their settings.

Universities Australia

lia said the 39 universities that the advocacy organization represents shared a commitment to do more to ensure every student was safe and could study in an environment where respect was paramount.

"We send a strong and clear message today that these behaviors are not acceptable. Not on our campuses and not in Australian society," chair Margaret Gardner said.

The National Union of Students accused universities of allowing rape cultures to develop on campuses around the country.

"Universities can no longer bury their heads in the sand and ignore sexual assault and harassment," the union women's officer Abby Stapleton said. AP

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Workers load packs of rice for North Korea into a Vietnamese ship at Gunsan port in Gunsan, South Korea

North Korea's evolving ways to get what it wants and needs

Hyung-Jin Kim, Seoul

NORTH Korea has been condemned and sanctioned for its nuclear ambitions, yet has still received food, fuel and other aid from its neighbors and adversaries for decades. How does the small, isolated country keep getting what it wants and needs?

Some put its success down to the extraordinary nuclear blackmail skills of a country whose leaders could be buying food instead of bombs and missiles. Some see the willingness of outsiders to help people in desperate need, regardless of how odious the government that rules them is, and others credit the feeling in South Korea that aid could improve ties.

North Korea has had gradual economic growth in recent years and doesn't appeal for foreign humanitarian assistance as much as it did in the past. Despite multiple rounds of U.N. sanctions, its leader, Kim Jong Un, has defiantly pushed his scientists to develop nuclear-tipped missiles capable of reaching the U.S. heartland. It test-launched two intercontinental ballistic missile in the past month, and once Kim perfects such weapons, he may try to extract bigger concessions from Washington.

An examination of how a country that frustrates and infuriates much of the world manages to get what it wants:

NUKES FOR AID

A relentless pursuit of nuclear weapons has been a major source of the country's ability to pull in aid and concessions.

Since the North Korean nuclear crisis first started in 1993, its government has agreed to several now-dormant disarmament-for-aid deals.

One accord was signed with the United States following bilateral talks in Geneva in 1994, while others were struck with several regional powers including Washington during on-and-off multilateral forums that lasted from 2003 to 2008.

Under those deals, North Korea halted atomic activities or disabled key elements of its weapons programs in return for security guarantees, heavy fuel shipments, promises of power-producing nuclear reactors and other aid. Despite it all, nothing has led to North Korea substantially dismantling its nuclear program.

Washington accused North Korea of cheating and covertly continuing its atomic work, while the North often accused the United States and others of failing to provide aid on time.

SOUTH SUNSHINE

Seoul, though the North's bitter enemy, has also helped its neighbor regularly.

During the Sunshine Era of

inter-Korean detente from 1998 to 2008, liberals in Seoul espoused greater reconciliation. This was welcome in North Korea, which had depended on outside handouts to feed many of its 24 million people and revive an economy devastated by a famine that killed hundreds of thousands in the mid-1990s.

South Korea shipped hundreds of thousands of tons of rice and fertilizer to North Korea annually and engaged in cooperation projects that became some of the few legitimate sources of foreign currency for the North. The value of the cash and goods provided to North Korea during that time was USD6.8 billion, according to Seoul's Unification Ministry.

Liberals credit their engagement with lowering border animosities and allowing two landmark inter-Korean summit talks and emotional reunions of families separated by war. Critics question whether South Korean aid and investment reached those who needed it most or instead helped finance the North's weapons programs.

Seoul's large humanitarian assistance programs and cooperation projects were suspended after conservatives came to power in 2008.

CHINESE SUPPORT

China is widely seen as crucial to U.S.-led efforts to strip North Korea of atomic bombs.

th. China is frustrated with North Korea, whose nuclear ambitions put Beijing in an awkward international position, but the Kim government still best serves China's national interests.

Some believe even a brief suspension of Chinese oil would cause chaos in the North and force Kim to change.

"If China stopped sending fuel shipments for just two to three weeks after the North's first ICMB launch on July 4, North Korea would not have dared conduct a second firing," said analyst Cheong Seong-Chang at South Korea's Sejong Institute.

THE FUTURE

Kim may see his future nuclear arsenal as the ultimate bargaining chip.

North Korea will receive new U.N. sanctions for its ICMB launches. But the country is already heavily sanctioned and won't likely feel real pain unless China halts its oil shipments or takes other harsh measures.

Kim likely won't talk with Washington or Seoul until he has a proven ICMB arsenal. His government ignored an offer last month by South Korea's new liberal president, Moon Jae-in, to hold talks on easing confrontation and resuming family reunions.

After he gets missiles that give him a credible deterrence against U.S. aggression, Kim may try to ease outside sanctions or wrest security guarantees and other concessions by using a proposed freeze of the North's future weapons activities — but not already-manufactured nuclear missiles — as a bargaining chip in negotiations.

"North Korea knows it can get bigger rewards when it has a bigger [nuclear] capability," said Shin Beomchul at the Seoul-based Korea National Diplomatic Academy. **AP**



File photo distributed by the North Korean government shows what was said to be a recent launch of a Hwasong-14 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)

Michael Weissenstein, Caracas

VENEZUELA

TWO of Venezuela's leading opposition figures were taken from their homes in the middle of the night by state security agents yesterday, in President Nicolas Maduro's first moves against his enemies since a widely denounced vote giving his government nearly unlimited powers.

The wife of opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez posted what appeared to be video of him being taken from their home after midnight.

"They've just taken Leopoldo from the house," Lilian Tintori wrote on Twitter. "We don't know where he is or where they're taking him."

Allies of former Caracas Mayor Antonio Ledezma posted video online of a man who appeared to be the opposition leader being taken by state security as a woman screams for help for neighbors.

"They're taking Ledezma!" she cries. "It's a dictatorship!"

Lopez was detained three years ago after protests against Maduro's government and sentenced to more than a decade in prison on charges that include inciting protesters to violence. He was released last month to serve the rest of his term under house arrest. Ledezma, a former Caracas mayor, was also detained in 2015 and has been under house arrest.

Both have recently posted videos online denouncing Maduro's decision to hold a vote for a constitutional assembly with the power to overhaul Venezuela's political system.

Maduro said yesterday [Macau time] he had no intention of deviating from his plans to rewrite the constitution and go after a string of enemies, from independent Venezuelan news channels to gunmen he claimed were

sent by neighboring Colombia to disrupt the vote as part of an international conspiracy led by the man he calls "Emperor Donald Trump."

"They don't intimidate me. The threats and sanctions of the empire don't intimidate me for a moment," Maduro said on national television. "I don't listen to orders from the empire, not now or ever [...] Bring on more sanctions, Donald Trump."

A few hours earlier, Washington added Maduro to a steadily growing list of high-ranking Venezuelan officials targeted by financial sanctions, escalating a tactic that has so far failed to alter his socialist government's behavior. For now, the Trump administration has not delivered on threats to sanction Venezuela's oil industry, which could undermine Maduro's government but raise U.S. gas prices and

■ Maduro said he had no intention of deviating from his plans to rewrite the constitution and go after a string of enemies



A rally against President Maduro during a vigil in honor of those who have been killed during clashes between security forces and demonstrators in Caracas this week

deepen the humanitarian crisis here.

The sanctions came after electoral authorities said more than 8 million people voted Sunday to create the constitutional assembly — a turnout doubted by independent analysts while the election was labeled illegitimate by leaders across the Americas and Europe.

Venezuela's National Electoral Council said turnout in Sunday's vote was 41.53 percent, or 8,089,320 people. The result would mean the ruling party won more support than it had in any national election since 2013, despite a cratering economy, spiraling inflation, shortages of medicine and malnutrition. Opinion polls had said some 85 percent of Venezuelans disapproved of the constitutional assembly and

similar numbers disapproved of Maduro's overall performance.

Opposition leaders estimated the real turnout at less than half the government's claim in a vote watched by government-allied observers but no internationally recognized poll monitors.

An exit poll based on surveys from 110 voting centers by New York investment bank Torino Capital and a Venezuela public opinion company estimated 3.6 million people voted, or about 18.5 percent of registered voters.

The national electoral council's vote counts in the past had been seen as reliable and generally accurate, but the widely mocked announcement appeared certain to escalate the polarization and political conflict paralyzing the country.

The constituent assembly will

have the task of rewriting the country's constitution and will have powers above and beyond other state institutions, including the opposition-controlled congress.

Maduro has said the new assembly will begin to govern within a week. Among other measures, he said he would use the assembly's powers to bar opposition candidates from running in gubernatorial elections in December unless they sit with his party to negotiate an end to hostilities that have generated four months of protests that have killed at least 120 and wounded nearly 2,000.

Along with the U.S., the European Union and nations including Argentina, Canada, Colombia, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Spain and Britain criticized Sunday's vote. Maduro said he had received congratulations from the governments of Cuba, Bolivia and Nicaragua, among others.

Maduro called the constitutional assembly in May after a month of protests against his government, which has overseen Venezuela's descent into a devastating crisis during its four years in power. Due to plunging oil prices and widespread corruption and mismanagement, Venezuela's inflation and homicide rates are among the world's highest, and widespread shortages of food and medicine have citizens dying of preventable illnesses and rooting through trash to feed themselves. **AP**

USA

Trump on tricky legal ground with 'Obamacare' threat

PRESIDENT Donald Trump's threat to stop billions of dollars in government payments to insurers and force the collapse of "Obamacare" could put the government in a tricky legal situation.

Legal experts say he'd be handing insurers a solid court case, while undermining his own leverage to compel Democrats to negotiate, especially if premiums jump by 20 percent as expected after such a move.

"Trump thinks he's holding all the cards. But Democrats know what's in his hand, and he's got a pair of twos," said University of Michigan law professor Nicholas Bagley. Democrats "aren't about to agree to dis-

mantle the Affordable Care Act just because Trump makes a reckless bet."

For months, the president has been threatening to stop payments that reimburse insurers for providing required financial assistance to low-income consumers, reducing their copays and deductibles.

Administration officials say the decision could come any day.

The "cost-sharing" subsidies are under a legal cloud because of a dispute over whether the Obama health care law properly approved the payments. Other parts of the health care law, however, clearly direct the government to reimburse insurers.

With the issue unresolved, the Trump administration has been paying insurers each month, as the Obama administration had done previously.

Trump returned to the question last week after the GOP drive to repeal the health care law fell apart in the Senate, tweeting, "As I said from the beginning, let ObamaCare implode, then deal. Watch!"

He elaborated in another tweet, "If a new HealthCare Bill is not approved quickly, BAILOUTS for Insurance Companies...will end very soon!"

It's not accurate to call the cost-sharing subsidies a bailout, said Tim Jost, a professor emeritus at Washington

and Lee University School of Law in Virginia.

"They are no more a bailout than payments made by the government to a private company for building a bomber," he said.

That's at the root of the Trump administration's potential legal problem if the president makes good on this threat.

The health law clearly requires insurers to help low-income consumers with their copays and deductibles. Nearly 3 in 5 HealthCare.gov customers qualify for the assistance, which can reduce a deductible of USD3,500 to several hundred dollars. The cost to the government is about \$7 billion a year.



The law also specifies that government "shall make periodic and timely payments" to reimburse insurers for the cost-sharing assistance that they provide.

Nonetheless, the payments remain under a cloud because of a disagreement over whether they were properly approved in the language of the health law, by providing an "appropriation."

The Constitution says the government shall not spend

money without a congressional appropriation.

House Republicans trying to thwart the ACA sued the Obama administration in federal district court in Washington, arguing that the law lacked specific language appropriating the cost-sharing subsidies.

The district court judge agreed with House Republicans, and now the case is on hold before the U.S. appeals court in Washington. **AP**

what's ON



RESTLESS NATURE BY TONG CHONG

TIME: 12pm-8pm

UNTIL: September 6, 2017

VENUE: Taipa Village Art Space, Rua dos Clerigos

No 10, Taipa

ADMISSION: Free

ORGANIZER: Taipa Village Cultural Association

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2857 6118

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

MACAO ILLUSTRATED - EXHIBITION OF CITY PLANS AND ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS FROM THE MACAO ARCHIVES' COLLECTION

TIME: 10am-6pm (Closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: December 3, 2017

VENUE: Archives of Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2859 2919

DEBRIS - WORKS BY ALEXANDRE FARTO AKA VHILS

TIME: 10am-7pm (Closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: November 5, 2017

VENUE: Navy Yard No. 1

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8399 6699

CONSTELLATION - WORKS BY NICOLAS DELAROCHE

TIME: 10am-9pm

UNTIL: October 8, 2017

VENUE: Tap Seac Gallery

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6866

THE ART OF ZHANG DAQIAN

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

UNTIL: August 6, 2017

VENUE: Macau Art Museum

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

Offbeat

1,700-POUND BARBECUE PIT STOLEN FROM ALBUQUERQUE RESTAURANT

Police are investigating a bizarre heist of a 1,700-pound barbecue pit from a popular Albuquerque restaurant.

The Albuquerque Journal reports (goo.gl/5oXrHZ) police say the black and red 200-gallon smoker was stolen early Sunday.

Daniel Morgan, the owner of Pepper's Ole Fashion BBQ, says the smoker was cooking up a batch of brisket when it was taken.

Morgan says most of the meat the restaurant serves is prepared in an indoor barbecue pit and he uses the custom built apparatus for catering gigs.

No arrests have been made.

Morgan says he considered launching a crowdfunding page to help cover the USD5,800 costs of a replacement.

TV canal macau



13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:58	Governmental Affairs and Social Affairs, attended by the Chief Executive (Live)
18:00	Zhean and Leon
18:50	Now Generation (Repeated)
19:40	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Portuguese in New England
21:25	Ui Di Sabroso Sr.2
21:40	Miscellaneous
22:10	Now Generation
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:15	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:50	RTPi Live

cinema



CINETEATRO

27 Jul - 2 Aug

PRIPARA THE MOVIE

ROOM 1

2:15PM

Director: Okubo Is Male

Starring:

Language: Cantonese (Chinese)

Duration: 58min

DESPICABLE ME 3

ROOM 1

3:30, 7:45pm

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 1

5:15, 9:30pm

Director: Matt Reeves

Starring: Woody Herrelson, Sara Canning, Judy Greer

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 140min



VALÉRIAN AND THE CITY OF A THOUSAND PLANETS

ROOM 2

2:30, 5:00, 9:30pm

Director: Luc Besson

Starring: Dane DeHann, Cara Delevigne, Clive Owen

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 137min

CARS 3

ROOM 2

7:00pm

ROOM 3

4:30pm

Director: Brian Fee

Starring: Owen Wilson, Cristela Alonzo, Chris Cooper

Language: Cantonese

Duration: 102min

MEOW

ROOM 3

2:30, 7:30pm

Director: Benny Chan

Starring: Louis Koo, Mary Ma, Jessica Liu, Andy Huang

Language: Cantonese (Chinese & English)

Duration: 109min

SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING

ROOM 3

9:15pm

Director: Jon Watts

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

Language: English

Duration: 133min

this day in history



1984: EURO COURT CONDEMNS PHONE-TAPPING

A Surrey businessman who accused the police of illegally tapping his phone is celebrating after a ruling by the European Court of Human Rights.

James Malone, a former antiques dealer from Dorking in Surrey, claims that while he was on trial for handling stolen goods in 1977, the police intercepted his telephone calls and his post.

In 1979, Mr Malone, who was acquitted on all charges, unsuccessfully tried to sue the Metropolitan Police in the High Court but the court said it had no jurisdiction in the matter.

Following a six-year campaign, Mr Malone's case was finally referred to the European Courts in May last year and a panel of 18 judges ruled today that the UK government was in breach of the European Convention.

Mr Malone was delighted by the decision although he is not convinced the practice will stop.

He said: "I am very pleased but I think that all that will happen is that the police or the government will not be caught with their trousers down again.

"Any safe-guard they bring in will just be to ensure that no-one will catch them doing it."

The British government has been told by the European Court to change its 'obscure' regulations.

Ministers had argued that post and telephone interceptions were justified in the interests of crime prevention and it was not necessary to incorporate regulations into the law.

Up to now, police have been allowed to carry out up to 400 phone-taps and 100 mail interceptions a year with authorisation from the home secretary.

There are also fears that the introduction of new electronic telephone exchanges will make the practice of phone-tapping even easier.

Campaigners have now called for new legislation which would require a judge to authorise all phone-taps.

The Home Office confirmed tonight the regulations will be revised and legislation will be introduced to take into account the European Court's judgement.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

In 1985 the government introduced the Interception of Communications Act which allowed the police and security services to tap phone lines or intercept paper mail, after obtaining a warrant from the Home Secretary (or the First Minister in Scotland), the Foreign Secretary, or the Northern Ireland Secretary.

But the boom in electronic communications made the situation extremely complex because the law failed to take into account methods of communication such as email, texting and pager messages.

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIP) Act, which came into force in July 2000, aimed to stop criminals using the internet by giving police the power to intercept computer traffic.

But the law was criticised by civil liberties campaigners who said the 'ordinary' user's privacy was under threat.

The debate continues

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Passion and romance are on the agenda, and you're certainly ready for them.

Taurus April 20-May 20 Ready to help unveil the surprise you've known was coming? Even though no one has officially told you about it yet?

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Today's announcement may come as somewhat of an eyebrow-raiser to those who aren't quite so familiar with you or your own startling astrological style.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 It's time for surprises - yes, more surprises - of a completely and totally romantic nature.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 You're due for a bit of romance. It's up to you whether it lasts forever or just for a day, of course.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Is somebody you care about on the cranky side? If they are, stop worrying about their state of mind.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Unexpected news - the kind that anyone would be just tickled to receive - is en route.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 When you least expect it, the world as you know it will go all topsy-turvy.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 You're always game to meet someone new and unusual as long as they're interesting.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Even you will be surprised at how blunt, honest and open you are about a situation that would be tricky.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You're not exactly known for your ability to keep things under wraps, mostly because you do so love drama.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 You're still worried about a certain work issue - something you really should have been able to let go of several days ago.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Easy+

9x9 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Medium

9x9 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Hard

9x9 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

WEATHER

Table with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION. Lists weather forecasts for various cities in China and the World.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Army attack helicopter; 6- ... Romeo; 10- This ... test...; 13- In the lead; 14- Tablet; 15- Lincoln and Vigoda; 16- 2:1, e.g.; 17- Golfer Aoki; 18- Ancient Andean; 19- 1982 Disney film; 20- Elevations; 22- As a whole; 24- Sick; 28- Edmonton team; 31- Vive ...; 32- Marry again; 34- CIA predecessor; 36- Drunkards; 37- Actor Linden; 38- Elected legislator; 41- It may be picked; 42- Icelandic epic; 44- Capek play; 45- Sumptuous meal; 47- Vassal; 49- Deadly fly; 51- Most desperate; 53- Sharp reply; 56- Personal view; 59- Requirement; 61- Lockup; 64- Geek; 65- Orange Bowl site; 66- Was indebted to; 67- Algonquian language; 68- Bay city; 69- Neth. neighbor; 70- Throw; 71- Williams of "Happy Days"; DOWN: 1- Wagon; 2- Chicago hub; 3- Back at the track; 4- Multicolored; 5- Fuss; 6- Each; 7- Actress Virna; 8- National symbol; 9- Island greeting; 10- Son of, in Arabic names; 11- Brief instant; 12- Al Jolson's real first name; 15- Bridal paths; 20- Owner; 21- "... the cows come home"; 23- Untruths, tells falsehoods; 25- Wrinkle removers; 26- Tag line?; 27- Essence; 29- Bellows; 30- Concorde, e.g.; 32- Hub-to-rim lines; 33- Like some statesmen; 35- Cushion, as a blow; 37- Grippled; 39- Crackpot; 40- Take five; 43- Ancient; 46- Eternal; 48- Sixth sense; 50- Wears away; 52- Color; 54- Lots and lots; 55- Rhythm; 57- Fiddling emperor; 58- Angers; 60- Zoologist Fossey; 61- Slow run; 62- Feeling of being overwhelmed; 63- Comparative suffix; 65- 1959 Kingston Trio hit;



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222
Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
PJ (Open line) 993
Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333
Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944
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Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
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OLYMPICS

Paris stops short of claiming victory after LA announcement

Samuel Petrequin, Paris

AFTER failing three times in recent bids, sheer joy was expected from Paris officials when Los Angeles ceded the 2024 Olympics to the City of Lights.

Paris bid leaders, however, opted for a diplomatic approach, stopping short of claiming the 2024 Games were guaranteed to be organized in their city.

"Paris 2024 is proud to be working together with the IOC and our friends in Los Angeles to reach a positive solution for both cities, the games and the whole Olympic Movement for 2024 and 2028," bid committee co-chairman Tony Estanguet said. "[The] announcements are a sign of the progress being made and the delivery of a good solution to the IOC members in September in Lima."

The L'Equipe sports newspaper was more enthusiastic yesterday, celebrating the French capital's victory by running a front page headline claiming "La Joie est Libre!" — a play of words on the expression "La Voie est Libre," which means the way has been cleared.

Although optimistic, Paris bid leaders remained cautious in their official reactions. That attitude is consistent with their position since launching the bid a



Banners showing the candidates at the International Olympic Committee Extraordinary Session on July 11

Other officials said they would not celebrate until a three-way deal between Los Angeles, Paris and the IOC is officially announced

little but more than two years ago, which contrasted with the perceived arrogance in previous bids for the 1992, 2008, and 2012 Games. The last time it bid, Paris was

considered the favorite in the race for the 2012 Olympics, only to lose out to London in a close vote in 2005 following a poor lobbying campaign. This time, they opted for a more humble and sports-driven approach, leaving government officials in a supporting role and making sure all the political hurdles were cleared before going forward.

There was no direct reaction from French president Emmanuel Macron, a strong supporter of the Paris project, and other officials said they would not celebrate until a three-way deal between Los Angeles, Paris and the International Olympic Committee is officially announced on Sept. 13 in Lima, Peru.

Macron's office issued a statement yesterday saying that the

French president spoke with IOC President Thomas Bach and that France "took note of Los Angeles' decision to bid for 2028 and to find a deal with the IOC and Paris."

"French President Emmanuel Macron welcomes this very important step towards obtaining the games for France in 2024 and remains very committed to make our country's bid win with all the French, the athletes, and all partners involved," the statement said.

Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo, who played a key role in convincing the IOC that Paris was the right city for 2024 by hammering the message that her city was not interested in hosting the 2028 edition, only said she was confident a "win-win-win" agreement can be secured ahead of the IOC session in Peru.

"Paris and Los Angeles are two amazing global cities that are united in their support of the Olympic cause and we stand together now to help the games thrive in 2024 and 2028," Hidalgo said. "As today's announcement shows, dialogue between the IOC and the two cities is progressing well."

Barring a major hiccup ahead of the IOC session, Paris will be hosting the Olympics for the first time in 100 years. Besides 1924, the French capital also hosted the Olympics in 1900. **AP**

US LEADERS CELEBRATING 2028 DEAL

LOS ANGELES leaders are celebrating an agreement with Olympic organizers to host the 2028 Summer Games. The city had sought to win the 2024 Games, but ended up agreeing to wait four more years. Mayor Eric Garcetti says 2028 was a better deal for the city that could bring hundreds of millions of dollars more to Los Angeles. President Donald Trump says Americans are proud to hear

that Los Angeles will host the 2028 Olympic Games. In a statement, the president said he's confident the 2028 Summer Games in Los Angeles will exemplify the Olympic ideal and the American spirit. He says America shines brightly during the Games and "LA 2028 will be no exception." Trump calls himself a proud supporter of the 2028 Games in LA.

FOOTBALL

Barcelona has 'doubts' about Neymar's future amid PSG rumors

Joseph Wilson, Barcelona

BARCELONA is worried, very worried, that Neymar might be headed to Paris-Saint Germain.

The Brazil striker is expected to be at practice on Wednesday, but no one seems to know if he'll accept a world record transfer or show up for training. Just in case, Barcelona is making moves to protect 26 million euros (USD30.7 million) that would be paid to Neymar if he stays in Spain, according to a club official.

The official, who spoke on customary condition of anonymity, said "given doubts concerning the

future of the player and while the situation is resolved" the money is being held from Neymar.

"What the club does with the money, it does not know yet, given the uncertainty of the future," the official told The Associated Press.

The 25-year-old Neymar would be due the money now as per his contract renewal last year. But the amount is tiny compared to the 222 million euros (\$262 million) that PSG would have to pay to trigger the release clause included in Neymar's contract.

Neymar is supposed to arrive in Barcelona after some publicity events in

China — both personal and for Barcelona. He is scheduled to return to training at Barcelona's training grounds just outside the city on Wednesday.

There are growing rumors that Neymar, who has had four seasons of winning trophies and scoring spectacular goals at Barcelona, will bolt for PSG.

Part of the gossip surrounding the possible transfer is that Neymar was to meet with doctors in Qatar for a medical. PSG is owned by a Qatari company.

But the Barcelona official said the "club is not aware of any medical exam of the

player with PSG."

Neymar's father, who acts as his agent and is also named Neymar, arrived in Barcelona on Monday. He was swarmed by journalists at the airport but revealed nothing about his son's intentions.

Neymar also remained mum about his future while playing for Barcelona during its preseason tour in the United States before heading off to Shanghai to boost his brand as a fashion icon.

Last year, Neymar signed a contract extension with Barcelona through 2021, with his buyout clause increasing to the current 222 million euros and 250 million (\$288 million) by



Barcelona's Lionel Messi and Neymar (right)

2018. The bonus Barcelona is now trying to protect is from that deal.

If PSG does sign Neymar, the cost of the transfer would more than double the 105 million euros (then \$116 million) that Manchester United paid a year ago for France midfielder Paul Pogba.

PSG starts its season on

Saturday, while Barcelona has until Aug. 13.

Two weeks ago, Barcelona president Josep Bartomeu told the AP that Neymar "is not on the market." He then told ESPN that if Neymar "wants to go . then they will have to pay the clause, right down to the last euro." **AP**

opinion

Macau Matters

Richard Whitfield



TAIPA FERRY TERMINAL
SHEMOZZLE

My hip replacement surgery recovery has proceeded well, and I am very happy with the outcome. I was finally able to travel home to Macau last Thursday but my medical advisors were insistent that I wore compression stockings for the flight. I have been informed that more and more people are wearing these stockings when they fly. They are difficult to put on and a bit uncomfortable, but a small price to pay if the stop you dying from a blood clot, or even if they just prevent swollen ankles after the flight.

On arriving on Hong Kong I got a seat on the next airport ferry to Macau. I have never understood why the Hong Kong government was so stupid as to put the ferry terminal in the international transit area so that people cannot use it to travel between Tung Chung and Macau. Simply relocating the terminal would make it a much more useful ferry route and would increase the traffic it carries. I also do not understand why nearly all the shopping and other amenities are in the departures area that is inaccessible to transit passengers – another very stupid design decision.

My first impression of the new Taipa Ferry Terminal was how “cavernous” it is. It seems 3-4 times the needed size, even if tourism numbers greatly increase. However, clearly ferry traffic will decrease when the new Hong Kong-Macau bridge opens because of competition from buses so the new terminal will remain a cavernous white elephant forever. Surely, a phased design could have been done so that a much smaller terminal was initially developed and then expanded over time as needed?

On finally reaching the baggage collection carousel I was immediately struck by the very small number of carousals (2) for such a large number of ferry berths (16) – surely the designers could have created a better balance? After watching the empty carousel rotate of at least 20 minutes, it stopped and needed to be repaired! How can a brand new ferry terminal have such breakdowns so soon after opening – did they do no quality control and acceptance testing for the new equipment (or is the equipment old and been sitting there idle for years)?

Eventually I got my bags back and left the arrivals hall, but there was no pick-up point for private cars. The signage for the car park also seemed non-existent. Surely, any competent ferry terminal design would incorporate an easy way for family and friends to pick up arriving passengers – not everybody coming to Macau is a tourist wanting to catch a taxi or bus. Following the advice of friends, my wife actually waited for me at the departures area where there are private vehicle waiting areas. Because of the circuitous building design and lack of signage it took me about 15 minutes of wandering around before finally getting a ride home.

As a final comment, the relative locations of the ferry terminal, the airport, the bus station and light rail stations are all nonsensical – I am totally mystified by why the ferry terminal was not located much closer to the airport, to make transiting much easier; and why the bus terminal was not located between the two so it could serve both places; and why they need two light rail stations, when one located between the airport and ferry terminals could also serve both (and why not put the bus terminal below the light rail station?).

Overall, the design of the new Taipa Ferry Terminal shows a complete lack of competence, let alone it being several years late in opening. In Macau we pay our public servants well, and for this we deserve competence, not the complete shemozzle we have received!

THE BANK OF ENGLAND WORKERS ON
BUZZ STRIKE FOR FIRST TIME IN 50 YEARS

Striking employees at the Bank of England wore comical masks depicting the face of Governor Mark Carney yesterday as they stood outside the institution demanding better pay.

The three-day strike – the central bank’s first in over 50 years – came after workers failed to reach a deal that would allow them to keep their wages growing as much as inflation, which is now at 2.6 percent annually.

Some 40 workers, including maintenance

and security workers, carried signs reading “Bank of England staff want fair pay.”

An official with the union, Unite, Peter Kavanagh, said the workers had “been left with no choice but to take industrial action because they are facing another year of having to endure a pay cut imposed upon them.”

Kavanagh said Carney should meet the protesters to explain “why hardworking men and women deserve to face years of pay cuts.”

Known for drama
chops, Nicole Kidman
is dying to do a comedy

Alicia Rancilio,
Beverly Hills, Calif.

PRATFALLS, gags, or dry wit, Nicole Kidman says she’d love to give them a shot.

The Oscar-winner says she never gets offered comedic roles and she’d like to change that.

“They always say I’m not funny,” said Kidman Saturday at a panel for TV critics to talk about her upcoming role in the second installment of Sundance-TV’s “Top of the Lake.”

The 50-year-old actress said she’s at a point in her life where she’s eager to try anything and isn’t worried about failure.

“I’m willing to fall on my face, I’m willing to get back up again. I want to keep trying,” she said.

She also added that she’s learning about comedy from her nine-year-old daughter with her husband Keith Urban, whom she’s “sure has Lucille Ball in her.”

Speaking to a group of reporters after the panel, Kidman said she grew up watching comedy shows like “I Love Lucy” and her father was a fan of the satirical MAD Magazine.

“The thing that makes me



Nicole Kidman participates in the “Top of the Lake: China Girl” panel during the AMC and Sundance TV Television Critics Association Summer Press Tour

“I’m willing to fall on my face, I’m willing to get back up again.”

NICOLE KIDMAN

close to people is laughing with them, I love it,” she added.

“Top of the Lake: China Girl” debuts in a three-night event beginning Sept. 10 on SundanceTV.

Kidman plays the adoptive mother to the daughter Elisabeth Moss’ character gave away at birth for adoption as a young mother. AP

THE
DECISIVE MOMENT



Dare divers. A man dives from the Old Bridge in Mostar, Bosnia, during an annual diving competition that has been drawing crowds for more than four centuries. More than 10,000 spectators watch 41 daring men take a jump from the 27-meter-high Old Bridge into the cold, fast-flowing Neretva River.

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

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS



PAKISTAN’s newly-elected Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has been sworn in to his office at the presidency palace in the capital, Islamabad. Top leaders from the ruling Pakistan Muslim League party, diplomats, bureaucrats and senior military officials attended the ceremony, which was held hours after the lower house of the parliament elected Abbasi as the prime minister with 221 votes.

JORDAN The lower house of Jordan’s parliament yesterday scrapped a provision in the kingdom’s penal code that allowed a rapist to escape punishment if he married his victim.

BULGARIA-MACEDONIA Macedonia and Bulgaria signed a landmark friendship agreement yesterday that is designed to dampen a historic rivalry in a section of the Balkans where many countries remain at odds over old ethnic and territorial disputes.

FINLAND Two Spanish NATO jet fighters briefly violated Finnish airspace while intercepting three Russian aircraft near Estonia yesterday, NATO said.



COLOMBIA The United Nations began removing containers holding more than 7,000 weapons from demobilization zones where the arms were handed over by former fighters for Colombia’s largest rebel group who are beginning life as civilians under a peace agreement.

BRAZIL A Brazilian baby who was shot while still inside his mother’s womb a month ago has been buried in Rio de Janeiro, in a case that has become a symbol of surging violence in the city’s slums.