



IMPERSONATION SCAM HITS MACAU
The Judiciary Police has received complaints about scammers impersonating telecom employees and law enforcement agents

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EXTRADITION TREATY MAY COVER CURRENT FUGITIVES
The extradition treaty between Macau and HK may apply not only to current fugitives but also to cases predating the agreement

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FOUNDER & PUBLISHER Kowie Goldenhuys EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Paulo Coutinho



“THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’”

WORLD BRIEFS

AP PHOTO



PHILIPPINES Pope Francis flew home yesterday after a weeklong trip to Asia, where he called for unity in Sri Lanka after a civil war and asked Filipinos to be “missionaries of the faith” in the world’s most populous continent after a record crowd joined his final Mass in the Philippine capital.

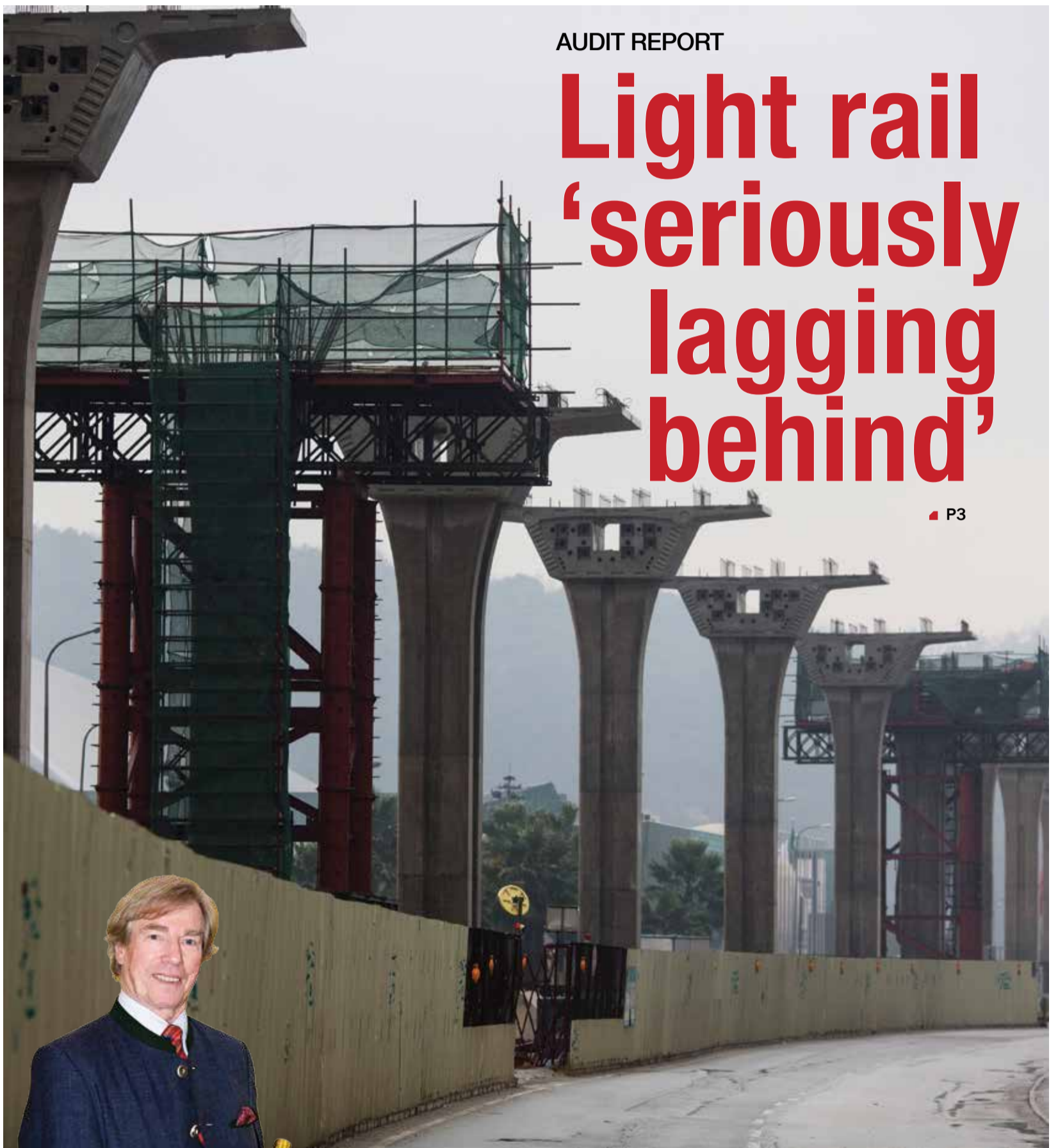
CHINA has requested that the Myanmar government protect the safety and legitimate rights of Chinese nationals who were arrested over illegal logging, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said yesterday. A total of 146 people, including 126 Chinese nationals, were arrested in raids on illegal logging that began Jan. 4 in Myanmar’s conflict-stricken northern Kachin State, according to state media reports.

CHINA Oscar-winning director Peter Jackson and actor Richard Armitage were in Beijing yesterday to promote “The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies”, the finale of the fantasy epic which will hit Chinese cinemas on Friday.

NORTH KOREA A prominent North Korean defector who fled a prison camp and became the face of international efforts to hold the country accountable for widespread human rights abuses has changed important parts of his life story. *More on p13*

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Light rail ‘seriously lagging behind’

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A "new normal" for the taxi industry

Dear Editor,

I refer to last week's Macau Daily Times article "PSP warns taxi industry to behave". Much has been made of the categories of prosecutions against taxi drivers so far this year, but most of the prosecutions fall under the category of "other". Actually the breakdown is irrelevant - almost all the prosecutions are effectively anti-fishing and the only thing that matters is the fact that prosecutions against taxi drivers in 2015 have increased tenfold over last year. There were 352 prosecutions in the first week of 2015 whereas the prosecutions averaged only 32 per week last year.

The most important line in the article was the statement of the head of the Public Security Police's traffic department, Mr Che Wai, that "police are only targeting a small group of taxi drivers rather than the whole industry". It is true police are being tough and prosecuting for any minor (or major) infraction they see, including stopping on yellow lines, but it seems police are only targeting taxis engaged in the destructive practice of "fishing". I hardly feel I need to put quote marks around the word "fishing" any more - everyone in Macau knows what fishing is. The taxi drivers (good and bad) know, the local passengers know, even some tourists know and the police most definitely know.

As long as the police operate to the letter of the law against fishing taxi drivers only, Macau Taxi Driver Mutual Association President Mr Tony Kuok has nothing to complain about. Simply ensure his member taxi drivers don't go fishing!

Mr Che said that the authorities have received many complaints from residents and tourists alike. A quick scan of the Macau Taxi Driver Shame Facebook group will soon verify Mr Che is correct.

It is crucial that the PSP continue this crackdown night and day for months to come so that taxi drivers in Macau learn there is a "new normal" in their industry. No more fishing, no more choosing customers, no more making Macau look corrupt and sinister. Just join the taxi line, pick up the passengers, take them wherever they want to go and charge them the meter fare - preferably with a smile! In other words, just do your job and obey the law like the rest of us.

I am extremely heartened to hear Mr Che say that the PSP will continue to tackle irregularities like excessive fare charging and the refusing of fares and that they would not ease up on the issue. It's also wonderful to hear him say that everybody is equal in the eyes of the law.

Of course the best result for Macau will be when the new legislation is finally passed allowing initiatives such as undercover taxi inspectors, the giving of witness evidence in the field, driver education and commendation programs and the introduction of modern technology such as GPS tracking, audio recording and e-taxi driver licenses. But until that day comes, the current tactics of the police are a fine substitute.

Congratulations to the Macau Government and congratulations to the Macau Police for taking this intelligent and pro-active stance. I cannot praise you enough.

Regards
Andrew W Scott
President, Macau Taxi Passengers Association



CRIME

Scammers impersonate telecom operators and police officials

João Pedro Lau

THE Judiciary Police (PJ) have received two reports where suspected scammers were alleged to have impersonated employees of telecommunication companies and law enforcement agents.

PJ information suggested that a 31-year-old woman approached them on January 16 at around 7 p.m. She said that her mobile phone received a voice message at 2.40 p.m. on that day, claiming that there were abnormalities found in her phone and that it would be disconnected within two hours. The message also suggested that she could talk to the relevant personnel if she had any enquiries.

The woman then followed the instruction and was directed to a Mandarin-speaking man. The man claimed that the woman's mobile number was used to register for a purchase in Wuhan, China, and warned her that her identity might have been stolen if she did not make this purchase. He then asked the woman to report the crime to the Wuhan authorities and claimed that he could transfer her call to the Wuhan Security Department.

The woman's call was transferred and she then spoke to another man who claimed to be a police officer in Wuhan. He said that somebody had used the woman's personal information to open an account in a bank and used the account in committing criminal activities. The man then demanded for the woman to provide all her personal information, including her household income and marital status to clarify the issue.

After giving the man all her information as requested, the woman was told to wait for further instructions. After her husband came home, the woman told him of the incident and the latter suspected that it might have been phone fraud. PJ said that the two have yet to suffer from any financial losses.

Another similar case was reported to the PJ on January 17 by a 45-year-old female accountant. She said that she received a recorded message claiming that her phone service would be suspended in two hours and asking her to dial 8 if she had any enquiries. After going through a similar ordeal to the 31-year-old victim and being



asked to transfer all her deposits to a bank account, the woman was about to make the transfer when she felt suspicious of the issue and decided to report it to the PJ.

In a separate case, the Public Security Police (PSP) detained three people on January 16 after they were alleged to be involved in money laundering. Information suggested that during an anti-crime operation in a shopping center downtown, officers found four suspicious people talking to each other near an ATM, with one of them holding more than 10 bankcards.

Officers alleged that after the person made the withdrawal, she handed all the cash and the bankcards to another man. The officers then approached the group and one of the four escaped.

After taking them back to the department for investigation, PSP found 47 UnionPay cards on them that belonged to five different mainland banks, as well

MYSTERIOUS MAN SERIOUSLY INJURED

THE PJ is still investigating into a man's identity and injury after he walked into the Conde de São Januário Central Hospital (CHCSJ) emergency department, blood-soaked, at around 2 a.m. on Sunday before falling into a coma. According to the PSP officer who was stationed at CHCSJ, the man was found walking into the emergency department by a security guard. He then sent the man into the department and found nobody accompanying him, nor any vehicles outside the entrance. The man could not tell the medical staffers what had happened before falling into a comatose state. After examination, it was found that he had suffered multiple fractures on his body, and serious injuries to his head and left arm. He regained consciousness yesterday and was not in a life-threatening condition. The PJ is still trying to find out his identity and is investigating into the incident.

as HKD33,000, MOP5,200 and RMB400.

Since they failed to explain the large number of bankcards in their possession, with their statements contradicting one another, PSP suspects that they used the bankcards and the ATM in Macau to help transfer illegal funds to the region in order to launder the money.

Korean sex-trafficking ring busted in Macau

LOCAL police authorities have, for the first time, cracked down on a sex trafficking ring that involves Korean nationals, and have detained a 30-year-old for allegedly running a prostitution service between April and November in 2014 in Macau. According to the Korean Times, ten Korean women and two other persons were also indicted without detention for prostitution and arranged prostitution services.

It is reported that the women, in their 20s to 30s, arrived in Macau as tourists and stayed at a luxurious apartment, which was arranged by the detained suspect, for between ten and 30 days. The suspect also hired other brokers to show the women's photos to potential clients on mobile phones, and each client was alleged to pay between MOP6,300 and MOP15,500 for sex services.

The police are currently looking for two suspects who are at large, and are reportedly investigating into whether there are other prostitution groups operating in Macau.

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João Pedro Lau

Audit report predicts massive LRT budget blowout

IN the “Third Special Audit Report on the First Phase of the Light Rail Transit System” published yesterday, the Commission of Audit (CA) revealed that the Light Rapid Transit (LRT) budget will substantially surpass the Transportation Infrastructure Office (GIT)’s 2013 internal estimation of MOP14.27 billion. The report has also criticized GIT for the lack of supervision over the construction, which has led to a “severe delay” in the LRT Taipa section of more than 300 days.

The initial cost of the LRT first phase – both the Macau and Taipa sections – was estimated by the GIT to be MOP7.5 billion in October 2009. In 2011, the estimation skyrocketed to MOP11 billion. However, the estimation in 2011 only reflected the static investment. After including the contingency provision and the provision for changes in valuation, the budget then further soared to MOP14.2 billion in September 2012.

“Due to the increase in construction costs, especially the rising prices of steel and concrete, although there are no substantial changes to the Taipa section (...) the valuation [of the section] still rose significantly from MOP1.5 billion in 2009 to MOP2.62 billion in 2011, before going up further to MOP3.34 billion in 2012. It is worth noting that since the route of the LRT Macau section is still awaiting adjustment, the estimated date of operation will be postponed further. If the growth rate of the construction cost is close to that of previous years, the cost for the first phase [of the LRT project] will certainly exceed far beyond MOP14.2 billion,” the report suggested.

The CA also pointed out that GIT has not updated the LRT first-phase budget forecast since September 2012. GIT claimed that there was yet to be a confirmed plan for the Macau section and a budget forecast update “does not mean much.” However, the commission headed by Ho Veng Hon believes that without the financial data, the authorities cannot make decisions, and the public cannot carry out discussions on the different proposed routes

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for the Macau section based on the affordability to taxpayers and the economic benefits. “Also, if [GIT] did not provide a rough estimation during the discussion and decision-making stage, because it wants to avoid multiple adjustments to the forecast in the future, and if the office only publishes the cost after a proposal or design is chosen, this will be a practice that puts the cart before the horse,” it criticized.

Furthermore, the report revealed that until December 2013, GIT’s internal documents showed that the estimated date of LRT operation was delayed to September 9, 2017, a “severe delay” of 883 days from the estimated 2014 operating date that was stated in the original plan in October 2009.

“Even if the CA excludes the Macau section and only focuses on the Taipa section, which has not seen any significant

changes, it still found that the construction progress is seriously lagging behind. The construction of the four segments in the Taipa section started between February and September 2012 and should be finished before June 2015 according to the contracts. However, the actual progress of these segments’ construction has not even reached half the planned progress, with three of them experiencing a delay of between 250 days and 336 days,” the report stated.

The commission suggested that the major reasons behind the delay were the lack of human resources and mechanical equipment. In fact, according to the data provided by the GIT, there is a considerable gap between the workers required and the workers actually deployed in the construction of some areas. For example, the CA found that there was always a shortage

of labor in the C370 Taipa Border Segment throughout the year 2013. While the contractor promised to provide between 655 and 789 workers in the first half of 2013, there were at most only 168 people working in one of the months.

In terms of the equipment, the commission found that a contractor had initially promised to boost its equipment input to make up for the delay. Although the contractors kept promising the GIT that they would increase the manpower and equipment input, the data showed that the situation never improved.

Moreover, CA found that GIT failed to handle the construction delay in accordance with the law. The law allows GIT to stipulate that contractors must submit a new working plan within 15 days of when delays occur. The commission report said that although there are apparent delays in the construction of the Taipa section, the GIT had, between May and June 2013, officially requested that the four segments contractors file new working plans to catch up to schedule; those plans were still in the amendment process in June 2014, a year after the request was issued. The office also failed to utilize its legal rights to produce the new working plans itself

and instruct the contractors to implement them. “It can be seen from this that GIT has adopted an attitude of procrastination when facing severe delays or when the progress is out of control,” the CA report said.

The audit report also pointed out that although the government can still ask the contractors to compensate for the delay in the future, GIT will have to prepare and provide a considerable amount of information and documents to prove the losses it has sustained. The government may even need to take the contractors to court if they refuse to compensate it. “Most importantly, even if the government is successful in seeking compensation, it is still not enough to cover the losses suffered by the residents and the government,” the report said.

As a result, CA recommended for the GIT to include compensatory liquidated damage in the contracts, in order to simplify the compensation-seeking process and to pressure the contractors into finishing construction on time.

GIT reacted to the Audit report via a statement issued yesterday night, where it stated that in the two previous reports 14 problematic issues were identified and “12 of them were improved by GIT.”

PROJECT ‘SERIOUSLY LAGGING BEHIND’

	PLANNED PROGRESS		ACTUAL PROGRESS	
		IN 2013		IN 2013
TAIPA SECTION SEGMENTS				
C350 Taipa city centre segment		63.5%		26.8%
C360 Cotai segment		77.8%		17.4%
C370 Taipa border segment		75.1%		19.3%
C385 Depot segment		72%		2.0%

SOURCE: AUDIT COMMISSION

Sonia Chan apologizes for IACM error

The Official Gazette mistakenly published last week that the suspended Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) official Lei Wai Nong has "extended his appointment for two more years as director of the Printing Bureau." Lei Wai Nong was accused of malfeasance in an irregular cemetery grave-granting process, but was later ruled innocent by the courts last June. According to the Secretary for Administration and Justice, Sonia Chan, Lei is still under suspension, as the judicial process is not over yet. The secretary apologized to the public, saying that the error might have been made due to IACM workers being overburdened. The IACM director, Alex Wong, clarified yesterday that the notification was an error and would be corrected shortly.

CE meets UN University rector



Chief Executive Chui Sai On exchanged views with the United Nations University (UNU) rector, David Malone, concerning Macau's higher education

development during his visit to the city yesterday. The rector expressed gratitude to the MSAR for providing good facilities to the UNU International Institute for Software Technology, a research training center based in Macau, and introduced the institute's newly appointed director. He also praised the MSAR government for its strategic vision, and recognized its concept of "advancing in economy and education at the same time." The rector will visit the University of Macau's new campus in Hengqin today, which, in Chui's opinion, "represents a new concept of Macau's educational development."

SJM to review management procedures after sex ring bust

THE bust of a large prostitution ring at the Hotel Lisboa serves as a reminder to the operator that security and senior management staff need to review their duties and management, says casino operator SJM's executive director, Angela Leong.

Regarding the arrest of Hotel Lisboa's executive director, Alan Ho, in the recent prostitution ring bust, Leong told reporters on the sidelines of a company event yes-



Angela Leong

terday that the hotel hallway of Hotel Lisboa – where sex workers used to linger – "is not a jurisdiction of the Sociedade de Jogos de Macau (SJM)."

"After something like this happening, legal proceedings have been undertaken, so I don't have a particular comment on this matter," she stressed. "But I believe that it reminds our security and senior management staff to review how we can each do a better job at fulfilling our responsibilities, along with [reviewing] the entire management, in the future."

Leong avoided reporters' further inquiries after presi-

ding over the company's charity event, which was held to mark the eighth anniversary of its other casino complex, Grand Lisboa.

The company donated MOP80,000 each to two local non-profit organizations, namely the Fuhong Society of Macau and the Macau Special Olympics, and displayed a giant hotel logo made up of 6,888 handmade soaps, which was produced by the two charities. **BY**

Extradition treaty between SARs to encompass past cases

THE planned extradition treaty between Macau and Hong Kong may apply not only to current fugitives but also to cases predating the agreement, according to a source quoted by the South China Morning Post.

Under the treaty, fugitives who take refuge in one city to avoid punishment in the other will be repatriated. Furthermore, the source revealed

that the law would be applicable retroactively, even if no specific retroactive clause is written into it.

Backdating the enforcement of the treaty could let Macau finally mete out justice to two Hong Kong tycoons, Joseph Lau Luen-hung and Steven Lo Kit-sing. The pair were each sentenced by Macau's courts to five years and three months in prison over bribing the former Secretary for

Transport and Public Works, Ao Man Long, to secure land for a luxury property project.

Nevertheless, the source indicated that the agreement has yet to be finalized in a way that would fit both jurisdictions, which is a task of "significant difficulty" due to the difference in the two SARs' legal systems, as well as the complexity created by legal texts in the Chinese language.

Just as the treaty between the two SARs is still pending, so is a fugitive transfer pact with the mainland. The source said that HK was unlikely to establish one in the near future.

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Junket operator looks abroad as graft war stymies VIPs

Stephanie Wong

DAVID Group, a Macau junket operator that serves higher-spending casino customers, is expanding into other Asian countries as China's anti-corruption campaign deters VIPs from visiting the world's largest gambling hub.

David Group is shutting three of its seven rooms that cater to high rollers at casinos in Macau, it said in a Jan. 17 statement. The company, which runs rooms at casinos including those operated by Sands China Ltd. and Wynn Macau Ltd., is taking the action as part of changes prompted by an industry downturn, Frank Ng, the company's director of corporate communications, said in a phone interview.

"We're adjusting our business strategy; this is a general trend in the industry," Ng said. "We're hibernating. Once we wake up, we can restart." The company can reopen the rooms when the market conditions improve, he



said.

David Group joined other junket operators including Sun-city Group and Hengsheng Group in expanding to markets beyond Macau as the city's casinos last year suffered their first annual decline in revenue amid Chinese President Xi Jinping's continuing battle on corruption. The overseas plan is also part of the company's strategy to follow the government's guidelines to develop the city into a global tourism destination, Ng said.

SJM Holdings Ltd. led declines in casino shares, dropping 5.5

percent at the close of trading in Hong Kong to the lowest level since October 2011. MGM China Holdings Ltd. declined 4 percent, Sands China Ltd. slumped 3.8 percent, while Galaxy Entertainment Group Ltd. fell by 3.4 percent. The benchmark Hang Seng Index declined 1.5 percent.

Nomura analysts led by Stella Xing wrote about the company's plan to close VIP rooms. David Group is one of the city's 10 biggest operators, with a 3-5 percent market share, she said, citing unidentified people at industry information provider MGG. Ng declined to comment on the market-share figure in the Jan. 15 interview or to disclose the company's casino revenue.

The Chinese government's clampdown on corruption and extravagance has cut David's high-end clients' spending on gambling tables, he said. The group expects the casino industry to recover from the fourth quarter as more resorts open, boosting customer traffic and revenue, Ng said.

David Group, which also runs a travel company, owns private jets and luxury cars such as Mercedes-Benz to take rich Chinese gamblers to Macau and around the former Portuguese colony.

The stricter traveling rules in Macau have diverted more gamblers away from the territory and caused them to go to places with easier access, Ng said.

David Group is taking more wealthy customers to Asian centers with more relaxed visa approval process, such as Manila, Vietnam and South Korea, Ng said. The company plans to enter the Australian market by the end of the year and later to expand to Europe, he said, without providing a timeframe.

David takes its VIPs shopping and sightseeing, and allows them to gamble at its private rooms in local casinos, he said.



As part of its marketing strategies to draw gamblers, David Group publishes a lifestyle magazine in China to promote its brand. It also owns a film production company. **MDT/Bloomberg**



STATISTICS

Casino revenue down 2.5 percent in 2014

TOTAL casino revenue in 2014 fell by 2.52 percent year-on-year to MOP352.7 billion, according to official data released yesterday by the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ). Another MOP1.2 billion in revenue has resulted from sports betting, betting on horse and dog racing, and lottery. Regarding betting in casinos, the game that generated the most revenue was baccarat VIP, with MOP212.5 billion. Revenue generated by baccarat played in mass tables amounted to MOP106.5 billion, growing 16.2 percent year-on-year. The DICJ figures clearly indicate a downward trend in the VIP sector and growth in the mass market sector. **MDT/Lusa**

AD

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	Sports Club
	
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PRICE LEOPOLD IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Royal Bavarian beer to step into Macau market

Brook Yang

GERMAN brewer “The World of Neuschwansteiner” is eyeing Macau and the mainland market beyond it to promote its new premium beer products. Named after a Bavarian royal castle, the beer is said to embody the authenticity of the royal family, according to the Prince Leopold of Bavaria who recently visited Macau on a commercial tour.

“What’s special is the identification, because the ‘Neuschwansteiner’ beer is named after our castle that my great, great uncle King Ludwig II built in Bavaria. And the beer is brewed in Bavaria, so the identification is 100 percent from me and my name stands for quality,” explained Prince Leopold, who represents the Neushwansterin Castle and is heir to the throne of the royal family that ruled Bavaria for 800 years until 1918.

“I’m here as a brand ambassador of ‘Neuschwansteiner’,

we’ve been to Hong Kong which is the first place we went to China, and now we are here in Macau to try to launch the beer in Macau,” Leopold told the Times in an exclusive in-

The beer is named after our castle that my great, great uncle King Ludwig II built in Bavaria

PRINCE LEOPOLD OF BAVARIA

terview during his stay at the Venetian.

Along on the commercial tour was the lifestyle brand’s CEO Mr Christain Seitz, who specified that the product’s target market is the “social

elite, cosmopolitans and international travellers.”

“The big challenge is not entering Macau, the big challenge is because we follow the target group, and they show up not in one country but several places, the most exclusive places. So what we have to do is at the same time give the brand a home which is Germany and Austria, then Monaco, and then we go to Dubai, Hong Kong and Macau,” he told the Times.

“HK and Macau could count as an opinion market for mainland China. So we follow a story: firstly show up here, then go to the mainland. For the whole of Asia, it’s exclusive now here [HK and Macau],” he added.

To promote “Neuschwansteiner” premium beer in conventional markets in Europe and further afield into other parts of the world, Prince Leopold acknowledged that his identity has played a special role.

“The name – Prince of Bavaria – helps a lot, because it opens doors and you meet people normally you don’t meet. Especially Bavaria in all of Germany, our family’s very much been accepted by the local people and also out of Bavaria. I’m quite a known person, so when I go around, people recognize me and talk to me,” he said.

Brewing and drinking beer has been an old tradition in his home state that can be dated to the early 14th century. Naturally, through promoting the beer, the Prince said he’s also promoting the culture and royal heritage he’s so proud of.

“I love beer, for long time I’ve been a beer drinker. I’m convinced that the product has so much potential. I like to bring the culture, long history in Bavaria, where we say we started drinking beer from our mother’s milk,” he explained.

Preserved in a champagne bottle, “Neuschwansteiner” beer is able to attract “people who are used to drinking quality wine or champagne” simply by its appearance. Bottles decorated with Swarovski crystals are also planned to be launched to attract more female consumers.

“We only know beer in a bottle in this shape and a beer that’s been drunk at Oktoberfest in a tent or beer garden,” he said, drawing with hand gestures. “I have been showing the [Neuschwansteiner] bottle



Prince Leopold of Bavaria



to friends and relatives, when they saw it they were surprised because a normal beer bottle is a different kind of shape. And when they started to drink it they were convinced.”

“What makes it so special is that you bring normal beer to a higher level. It’s very unique. You drink it in a champagne glass and the taste of the beer is just fantastic,” he stressed.

“It’s interesting that at a cocktail reception where you put the most expensive glass of champagne, one third of guests would prefer to drink our beer. It is like that at all the events we are doing,” added Mr Seitz.

Mr Seitz further suggested that the product is “an elegant drink” and takes a cultural approach to reach potential customers.

“We want to give elegance to the drinker, to the host, to serve it, to be proud,” he stressed. “The difference here is it’s not simply a beverage, it’s not a product, it’s full of cultural heritage; this is so important.”

“Since we have opened the castle and museum, fifteen million visitors have been both inside the castle and showed pictures they took to their relatives and friends. So we reached about two to three hundred million people that are emotionally touched by Castle Neushwansterin and by King Ludwig II. When people

see this [beer] and drink it, they have something to tell: ‘I was there’ or ‘I want to go there.’ So it’s a totally different approach to reach this group,” he said.

Not only the identification, the brewing process of “Neuschwansteiner” beer is also said to be unique, which combines the Bavarian brewing tradition with the brand’s innovation.

“First, the natural purification of the water as it filters through the rocky strata of the Alps; second the beer is pressed through an amber filter during the brewing process. This leads to its high quality and purity. Lastly, it is the ice freezing finishing process, which drives the alcohol content up to 6 percent,” explained the brewer.

According to Prince Leopold, the iconic Disneyland castle is designed based on the Neuschwanstein Castle, whereas the Castle and its builder, King Ludwig II of Bavaria, tend to be known more widely than Bavaria.

“We have a lot of Chinese people coming to the Castle; why don’t we do it the other way around and bring people from Germany and Europe to Macau? I think we can help each other,” he said, adding that more cultural exchange between Macau and Germany is expected.

Elaine Kurtenbach
Business Writer, Tokyo

China shares dive as regulators clamp down on margin trading

CHINESE shares plunged about 8 percent yesterday after the country's securities regulator imposed margin trading curbs on several major brokerages, a sign authorities are worried about the market's big gains. Other markets in Asia and Europe were mostly higher.

KEEPING SCORE: The Shanghai Composite Index dived 7.7 percent to close at 3,116.35, giving investors a wild ride after a year of surging prices despite slowing economic growth; at its nadir, the index was down 8.3 percent. For the past three months, the index is still up 32 percent. Its dive rubbed off on Hong Kong where the Hang Seng was off 1.5 percent at 23,738.49. In Europe, Germany's DAX rose 0.6 percent to 10,225.72 and Britain's FTSE 100 added 0.4 percent to 6,574.95. France's CAC-40 edged 0.1 percent higher to 4,382.02. Wall Street is closed for a public holiday.

CHINA CURBS: The China Securities Regulatory Commission imposed curbs late Friday on margin financing, or borrowing to purchase stocks, following an investigation of the industry. The three affected brokerages, Citic Securities Co., Haitong Securities Co. and Guotai Junan, were forbidden to lend money and shares to new customers for three months after they allegedly were caught extending margin trading contracts in violation of the rules. The Shanghai Composite has soared almost 60 percent in the past year. Investors fear regulators believe prices have risen too much recently and might impose more curbs.

THE QUOTE: Dickie Wong, executive director of research at Kingston Securities in Hong Kong, said regulators



An investor holds his head as he monitors stock prices at a brokerage house in Fuyang in central China's Anhui province yesterday

want to tamp down some of the riskier financing practices underpinning the mainland Chinese stock market's astonishing surge. With the rally "overdone," regulators want to "simply give pause" to the brokerages, he said. "The recent bull market is mainly driven by margin financing." Mainland Chinese regulators allowed margin financing and short selling only in recent years and Wong said many mainland investors may still be unaware of the risks involved.

A SIGN OF BIGGER PROBLEMS: It shows problems on several levels. Sto-

The China Securities Regulatory Commission imposed curbs late Friday on margin financing, or borrowing to purchase stocks

ck markets should allow investors to discover the fundamental value of companies, and although all markets are prone to under- and overshooting due to herd psychology, China's market is particularly off-course. That's partly because it is dominated by opaque state-ow-

ned companies. In their relatively short history, China's stock markets have fluctuated in ways that bear no relation to economic reality. Its latest problem is that debt has fueled the recent rise in stock prices. There are also signs of debt-related stress in other parts of China's eco-

nomy including property, which is undergoing a painful government-instigated slowdown. One developer, Kaisa Group, recently missed a USD23 million interest payment on a bond abroad, alarming investors.

MORE CHINA, ECB: Investors are awaiting China's economic growth data due today, which is likely to show a further slowdown in the fourth quarter, and are also anticipating possible stimulus moves by the European Central Bank. Markets generally settled down after volatility provoked by the Swiss central bank's shock decision Thursday to unteather the Swiss franc from the euro. Japan's central bank is not expected to make any major moves in a policy meeting that wraps up Wednesday.

ASIA SCORECARD: Japan's Nikkei 225 rose 0.9 percent to 17,014.29 after a government report showed rising consumer confidence. South Korea's Kospi gained 0.8 percent to 1,902.62. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 rose 0.2 percent to 5,309.10. Shares were also higher in Taiwan, New Zealand and Southeast Asia.

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude was down 66 cents at USD48.03 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract jumped \$2.44 on Friday to settle at \$48.69. Brent crude, a benchmark for international oils, fell 57 cents to \$49.61 a barrel in London. **AP**

corporate bits

Mandarin Oriental, Macau is celebrating Chinese New Year with its gourmet menus, themed afternoon tea, festive cocktails, hampers and family-friendly activities that are designed to provide an auspicious and delicious start to the Year of the Sheep.

The Lunar New Year will be ushered in at the hotel with roars of firecrackers and the traditional Chinese lion dance procession from 10:30am on 19 February 2015. A visit from the God of Wealth to distribute "Lai See" packets and demonstrations of Chinese arts and crafts at Vida Rica Restaurant and Bar during lunch-time from 19 to 21 February will also add to the holiday spirit.

At the hotel's signature Vida Rica Restaurant, ranked number one on TripAdvisor and a winner of the top award in Ma-

CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS AT MANDARIN ORIENTAL



cau's first Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme, diners can savor Chinese Executive Chef Lam's celebratory creations, served during lunch

from 1 February to 5 March. Also available are the Chinese New Year dim sum lunch and festive set menus, served from 12 February to 5 March.

CTM VOLUNTEER TEAM SHARES SEASONAL JOY WITH MACAU SPECIAL OLYMPICS

CTM is committed to offering support to underprivileged groups, according to a press release issued by the telecom operator. On Jan 17, CTM's Volunteer Team and Macau Special Olympics (MSO) jointly organized a gathering in celebration of the New Year.

The get-together was held at Pousada Marina Infante last Saturday. Participants included Eliza Chan, CTM's Director of Corporate Communications, Siu lu Hong, CEO of MSO, together with over 20 CTM Volunteer Team members and nearly 100 MSO members. During the occasion, an Outstanding Athletes Award Ceremony took place to recognize six MSO athletes for their excellent achievement in international sports competitions over the past year, so as to encourage and promote



their physical and mental development.

Aside from gourmet food, CTM Volunteer Team members Yeu-son Lao and Ronald Lam, to-

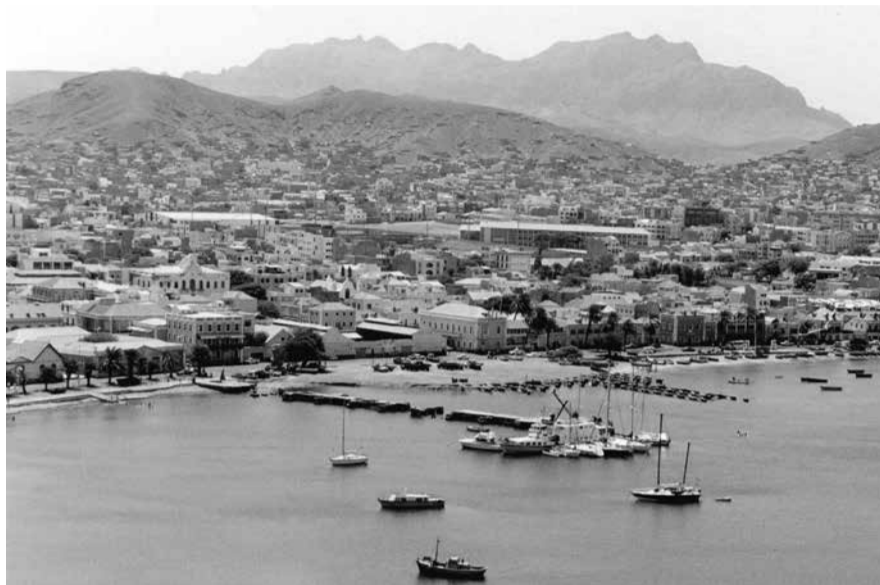
gether with MSO members presented a singing performance to all participants, while interactive games and lucky draw were also arranged.

Cape Verde's Growth Fund analyzed by World Bank

THE government of Cape Verde and the World Bank (WB) have started the process of restructuring the Growth and Competitiveness Fund (FCC) to offer the "best responses" to the needs of private companies in the archipelago, said pan-African news agency Panapress citing corporate sources in Praia.

The Windward Chamber of Commerce (Barlavento) said in a statement that the restructuring of FCC was one of 10 proposals submitted to Prime Minister José Maria Neves by the Association of Young Entrepreneurs (AJEC) in 2014, in order to improve the business environment for micro, small and medium enterprises in Cape Verde.

AJEC also asked the government to restructure the FCC in terms of objectives, beneficiaries, coverage areas, intervention tools and its management mode. The FCC is allowed to fund various activities that "help the company to take a leap" ranging from marketing and businesses plans to software, employee training and certification of companies and products in the agribusiness area.



The port city of Mindelo, Cape Verde

The maximum value of funding for micro-enterprises is 500,000 escudos (about USD5,200) and for small and medium enterprises the maximum is 1 million escudos (US\$10,400) and groups of companies can get 2.5 million escudos (about US\$26,000).

This fund is specifically designed to offset the problems Cape Verdean entrepreneurs face due

to the market structure in which they operate, to increase the competitiveness of the private sector and promote development of the financial sector.

Management of the FCC was assigned to the Cape Verde Chambers of Commerce based on a Memorandum of Understanding signed by business associations and the government. **MDT/Macauhub**

Angola authorized to export fishery products to the EU

ANGOLA has been included in the list of countries authorised to export all fishery products to the European Union (EU), the minister of Fisheries, Victoria de Barros Neto said in Luanda.

In an interview with Angolan news agency Angop, the minister also said this was made possible after "various stages of refurbishment of chemistry and microbiology laboratories, staff training and audits."

Adding that 2014 was a positive for the fisheries sector, the minister said the country recorded fish production of 396,000 tons, including artisanal, semi-industrial, industrial, marine and continental fishing.

"There are 253 licensed fishing vessels that contribute to this success, along with the involvement of 108 national companies," said Barros Neto. The main base ports are Luanda, Benguela, Namibe, Kwanza Sul and Cabinda, and Luanda generally accounts for the largest number of vessels.

The provinces of Benguela and Namibe are important in trawling, with 29 vessels, and 23 seine vessels were also registered in 2014. **MDT/Macauhub**



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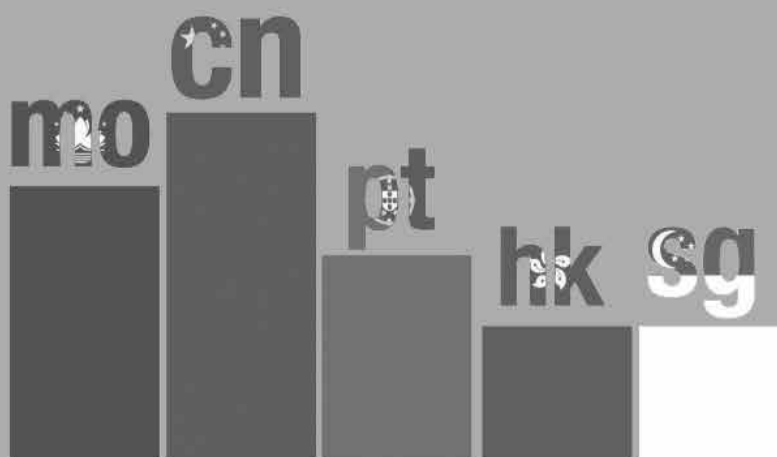
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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

Huading awards back at The Venetian



Actor Kim Soo Hyun and actress Han Ye Seul arrive on the red carpet for the 15th Huading Awards



Chris Hemsworth



Dicky Cheung



Leehom Wang



Anthony Wong (left)



Edward Tracy, President and Chief Executive Officer of Sands China Ltd. presents the Best International Film Actor Award to Chris Hemsworth at The Venetian Theatre Sunday during the 15th Huading Awards



Raymond Lam



Charmaine Sheh



Donnie Yen



Naomi Watts

ian Macao



Kate Tsui



Naomi Watts



Han Ye Seul and Kim Soo-Hyun



Super Junior



Michael Mann



Rino Nakasone-Razalan



Kristy Yang Gong Ru



Huang Sheng Yi

CAMERA FLASHES and the excited screams of fans filled the Venetian Macao as China's prestigious Huading Awards returned to Macau on Sunday. Widely recognized as China's version of the Oscars, the Awards' honorees in film, television, dance, theater and music are all determined by people's choice.

As the 15th Huading Awards Global Entertainment Celebrities Satisfaction Survey Release Ceremony revisited the Venetian Theatre, with a red carpet event held in the casino resort's main lobby, thousands of fans competed with a media scrum to capture the moment of seeing their favorite stars in the flesh. More than 50 celebrities from Asia and around the world were in attendance at the awards ceremony, which was also broadcast online to an audience of millions. A total of eight Global Awards were

presented. The Peking Opera master Mei Baojiu received the Lifetime Achievement Award; the "Thor" actor Chris Hemsworth was awarded the Global Best Actor in Motion Pictures and Naomi Watts the Best Global Best Actress in Motion Pictures; Michael Mann received the Global Best Director Award; and Korean actor Kim Soo-Hyun was voted the Global Best Actor in a TV Series. Japanese dancer Rino Nakasone-Razalan was chosen as the Global Best Dance Actress, and Wang Leehom the Global Best Singer. Korean group Super Junior was selected the Global Best Idol Group. Meanwhile in the Awards' Chinese sector, a total of nine awards were given out, including Best Host, Best Traditional Opera Actor, Best Dancer, Best Singer, Best Director, Best TV Actors and Best Film Actors. The Huading Awards was established in 2007 by Beijing-based Global Ta-

lents Media Group and has been held in cities such as Los Angeles, Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong. In the seven years since its inception, it has

The Huading Awards was established in 2007 by Beijing-based Global Talents Media Group and has been held in cities such as Los Angeles, Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong

become one of the most influential Chinese award ceremonies, elevating the Chinese film industry and giving the rest of the world the opportunity to get to know this new key player in the global film market.

"The Venetian Macao is very proud to once again sponsor the Huading Awards after our successful collaboration on the 10th awards ceremony in 2013," said Edward Tracy, President and Chief Executive Officer of Sands China Ltd.

"The Huading Awards is a clear example of Sands China's multi-tiered entertainment strategy in action with high-profile celebrity events helping raise Macau's global profile as a top entertainment destination. Meanwhile, we are in line with the government's vision to diversify the entertainment landscape of Macau and strengthen Macau's position as a world center of leisure and tourism," he stated. BY

HONG KONG

Army creates cadets modeled after PLA, China Daily says

Tan Hwee Ann

HONG Kong inaugurated a student cadet group that will practice Chinese army foot drills and wear similar uniforms, as almost three months of pro-democracy protests led to increased scrutiny of the city's youths.

Dozens of students from universities and secondary schools joined the Hong Kong Army Cadets group at a ceremony yesterday in the Ngong Shuen Chau Naval Base in the city, the state-run China Daily reported yesterday.

"The new voluntary uniformed youth group aims to promote civic awareness, a sense of responsibility and rights as Chinese citizens, and personal qualities such as perseverance, self-discipline and leadership among youngsters," the newspaper said.

The newly created cadet group highlights China's rising concern with Hong Kong students, who led the unprecedented protests last quarter seeking to remove Chinese limits on the city's election. Hong Kong Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying last



week criticized a university publication in his annual policy address for advocating self-determination, and said young

people need to be guided better. Leung's wife, Regina, is the cadet group's commander, while former Hong Kong Chief

Executive Tung Chee-hwa is its honorary chairman, the China Daily reported. The oath-taking ceremony was also attended by

Zhang Xiaoming, the director of China's liaison office in the city.

Other than pledging to care for others and to build Hong Kong, the students also agreed to serve the country, the newspaper said.

The uniform worn by the cadets is a brighter shade of the green summer uniform of the People's Liberation Army Ground Force, China Daily reported.

The creation of the cadet group doesn't mean the People's Liberation Army is interfering in Hong Kong affairs, the city's Secretary for Home Affairs Tsang Tak-sing told reporters yesterday.

When asked if the pledge to serve the nation is a form of indoctrination, Tsang said uniform groups normally have pledges and the PLA is just providing some training.

Only a few media outlets were invited to cover the event, the South China Morning Post reported yesterday. Anyone older than six years old can apply to join the group, it said.

As many as 100,000 people took to the streets last year, occupying swathes of the city as they demanded China removes a requirement to screen candidates for Hong Kong's first chief executive election in 2017. The 11 week-protests, led by university students, were the biggest challenge to Chinese sovereignty of the city since its return from British colonial rule in 1997. **Bloomberg**

GRIEF over a famous singer's death turned into a dispute on how the press should cover celebrity deaths after many accused media outlets of crossing the line.

Yao Beina, who sang on the "Frozen" soundtrack "Let it go," died from breast cancer on Friday afternoon. She was 33. Yao's career skyrocketed after she attended the Voice of China in 2013 and her death shocked many fans.

But the three reporters from Shenzhen Evening News who broke the story were accused of dressing up as medical staff and sneaking into the operation room to take pictures of deceased Yao as doctors removed her corneas for transplant.

Yao's agent, Bo Ning, demanded the Shenzhen newspaper apologize while Zhang Liang from Huayi Brothers Music Corp, Yao's employer, described the reporters as "inhumane."

Cao Lin, a commentator from China Youth Daily, said via his microblog

FOCUS

Reporting methods of singer's death trigger debate online

that the paper was taking "a paparazzi approach to obtain scoop news."

The paper apologized Sunday in a statement posted on its official Weibo account admitting that reporters had taken pictures but said photos were deleted when Yao's family made objections.

Such criticism towards the paper swiftly expanded to more media outlets amid online discussions on the proper way for journalists to cover celebrity life.

People's Daily, the Communist Party's flagship newspaper, published a commentary calling on reporters to have a better sense of "responsibility."

"Journalists should not be bent solely for readership or click-rates," said the commentary. "Influence always comes

hand in hand with social responsibilities."

A doctor from the same hospital also posted an article comparing journalists to "the vultures" who "just waited for the death of her."

"At that time, her relatives were overwhelmed with sorrow, her doctors were trying everything they could to save her and she herself was also battling with death. While some reporters were just waiting to feed others' curiosity," said the article.

But some professionals disagree. Liu Peng, chief editor of The Journalist Monthly, said it is all right for journalists to wait at the hospital as long as they do not disturb the doctors and hurt the feelings of the family. "After all, reporters were not just waiting for the death,



Yao Beina

they were also waiting for the patient to get better."

Chen Bo, a journalist who has interviewed several distraught families, defended the profession and wrote in another article that "it is not fair for

Yao Beina, who had her corneas donated, if all media outlets shunned reporting her death."

The irony for a journalist is that, the more bad news he reports, the worse it appears to be,

wrote Chen.

The singer's death also caused a divide over how common people should treat the death of celebrities.

Yang Jinlin, a TV anchor from Phoenix Television, lamented on Weibo that the death of Yao generated a bigger splash on social networks than that of Zhang Wannian, a former senior Chinese military leader.

Yang said General Zhang had led the Chinese army to defend the country, "but his passing away is less significant than a female singer."

Yang's opinion also triggered a debate as some say in peace time, it can be understood that a singer enjoys more popularity than a military figure because she has a broader fan base.

However some said they learned more about General Zhang through media reports. "You can praise Zhang's greatness, but you should not debate Yao's profession as a singer," said Weibo user "Aj_BenBen." **Xinhua**

Youkyung Lee
Business Writer, Seoul

SOUTH KOREA

Former Korean Air exec pleads not guilty in nut rage case

THE former Korean Air executive famous for an inflight tantrum over macadamia nuts pleaded not guilty yesterday to violating aviation safety law and three other charges.

Lawyers for Cho Hyun-ah did not dispute the major elements of the prosecutor's account of events on Dec. 5 when Cho's behavior resulted in a Korean Air jet returning to the gate. Instead, they are focusing on a technical rebuttal of the aviation law charge.

Cho spent most of the first day of her trial yesterday with her head lowered and hair covering her face. She declined to make any comments when invited to by the judge.

Cho, who is the daughter of Korean Air's chairman, achieved worldwide notoriety by kicking a senior crew member off the Dec. 5 flight after being offered macadamia nuts in a

bag, instead of on a dish. At the time, she was head of cabin service at the airline.

Her behavior caused an uproar in South Korea and the airline's defense of her and its attempt to blame a crew member prompted more criticism. The incident touched a nerve in a country where the economy is dominated by family-run conglomerates known as chaebol that often act above the law.

Cho has been in police custody since Dec. 30 and could face up to 15 years in prison if found guilty of all four charges against her.

AP PHOTO



Former Korean Air Lines Co. executive Cho Hyun-ah

Prosecutors accused her of forcing a flight to change its route, which was the most serious charge with a maximum prison sentence of 10 years. The three other charges Cho faces are the use of violence against flight crew, hindering a government probe and forcing the flight's purser off the plane.

Cho's attorney Yu Seung-nam told the court that the Dec. 5 flight had moved only 17 meters from the gate at New York's John F. Kennedy airport before it returned, which did not amount to a forced change of an aviation route. **AP**

NORTH KOREA

Camp survivor may end rights crusade after lying



North Korean defector Shin Dong-hyuk

Sam Kim

ANorth Korean prison camp survivor whose testimony helped spark UN condemnation of the Kim Jong Un regime says he may end his human rights campaign after revealing he lied about some details in a best-selling book about his life.

"This particular past of mine that I so badly wanted to cover up can no longer be hidden, nor do I want it to be," Shin Dong Hyuk, 32, wrote on his Facebook page. "At this point I may or may not be able to continue in my work and efforts in trying

to eliminate the political prison camps and bring justice to the oppressed - the same goes for my entire fight altogether against the North Korean regime."

Shin told friends an account of his life that was "substantially" different from what former Washington Post journalist Blaine Harden heard from him for his book, "Escape from Camp 14," the author said on his website.

Shin told Harden it was Camp 18, not Camp 14, where he witnessed the executions of his mother and brother after he told authorities of their plans

to escape, the Washington Post reported. Shin also retracted his earlier comment that he was tortured at 13 for trying to escape, saying it happened when he was 20.

South Korea estimates North Korea may be housing about 150,000 people in its network of prison camps. North Korea, which denies operating any such camps, has ratcheted up its diplomatic campaign in recent months to fend off allegations of human-rights violations against the regime.

Shin calls himself "the only known person born in a North Korean prison camp that escaped and survived to tell the tale" on his Facebook page. His testimony is included in a United Nations Commission of Inquiry report, which led a UN human-rights committee to vote in November to hold the regime accountable for crimes against humanity. The North threatened a fourth nuclear test in response.

In October North Korea released a video of Shin's father claiming that his son had never been in a labor camp. Shin said that his father was taken hostage by the North Korean regime and coerced into making the video. **Bloomberg**

INDONESIA

Drug executions trigger recalls of Brazilian, Dutch envoys

Raymond Colitt, Arnaldo Galvao and Karen Eeuwens

INDONESIA executed six people for drug trafficking, ignoring a plea for clemency from Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff and prompting the Latin American nation and the Netherlands to recall their ambassadors.

Rousseff received confirmation that Marco Archer was killed soon after midnight Jakarta time on Jan. 18, Brazil's presidency said in an e-mailed statement. The decision to execute Archer "gravely affects relations" between the two countries, the presidency said. The Netherlands' government also condemned the execution of Dutch citizen Ang Kiem Soei by Indonesia.

While Brazil has expressed its "dissatisfaction," a crisis between the two countries is unlikely as the South American country has no issues with Indonesia, said Marcos Azambuja, a former ambassador and currently a member of the Brazilian Center for International Relations, a think tank of diplomats and professors.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo refused Rousseff's personal appeal by telephone to spare Archer and Rodrigo Gularte, another Brazilian facing "imminent" execution for drug trafficking, according to a statement published Jan. 16 by Brazil's presidential press office in Brasilia. Archer is the first Brazilian to be executed by a foreign government, according to newspaper Folha de Sao Paulo.

"Wars against drug mafia can't be half-hearted, because drugs have ruined the lives of both the users and family of the users," said Widodo, known as Jokowi, on his Facebook page Sunday. "The

state must be present and directly fight against drugs syndicates."

Jokowi told Rousseff he couldn't commute the sentence because all judicial proceedings had followed Indonesian law and the Brazilian citizens had been granted due process, according to the statement. The decision "will generate commotion in Brazil and have a negative repercussion for bilateral relations," Rousseff told Jokowi.

Dutch Foreign Minister Bert Koenders said in an e-mailed statement the executions of Ang Kiem Soei and five others was "tragic." "My sympathies go out to their families, for whom this brings a dramatic end to years of uncertainty," he said.

Koenders said the Dutch government used all possible means to try to stop it and he has recalled the ambassador in Indonesia to the Netherlands for consultations. **Bloomberg**

INDONESIA: DIPLOMATIC APPEALS WON'T STOP EXECUTIONS

INDONESIA IS sticking to its policy of executing drug offenders, including foreigners, and says the withdrawal of the Dutch and Brazil ambassadors will not disturb its diplomatic ties with those countries. Foreign Ministry Spokesman Arrmanatha Nasir repeated yesterday that the country is dealing with a drug emergency. The nation of 250 million people has extremely strict drug laws and often executes smugglers. More than 138 people are on death row, mostly for drug crimes. About a third of them are foreigners.

INEQUALITY

Oxfam: Richest 1 percent sees share of global wealth jump



Oxfam International says the richest 1 percent of the population will own more than half the world's wealth by 2016. In a report released yesterday as the World Economic Forum begins in Davos, Switzerland, Oxfam says the world's richest people saw their share of global wealth jump to 48 percent last year from 44 percent in 2009. The organization is warning that rising inequality is holding back the fight against global poverty. Winnie Byanyima, Oxfam's executive director, says while world leaders ranging from President Barack Obama to International Monetary Fund chief Christine Lagarde have talked about tackling the world's extreme economic inequality, "we are still waiting for many of them to walk the walk." Byanyima says despite inequality being on the global agenda, the gap is widening fast.

EU appeals Hamas court ruling taking group off terror list



EU Counter-Terrorism chief Gilles de Kerkhove, left, and European Union High Representative Federica Mogherini

The European Union foreign policy chief says the bloc is launching an appeal against last month's EU court ruling that ordered the Palestinian group Hamas removed from its terror list for technical reasons. Federica Mogherini said yesterday the council of ministers will challenge some of the court's findings and consider future action to avoid similar annulments. Hamas was put on the EU terrorist list as part of broader measures to fight terrorism in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks and its funds were frozen. Hamas has long contested the classification. An EU high court on Dec. 17 said the reason for listing it was based too much on media and Internet reports, and not enough on acts examined by competent authorities.

ARGENTINA

Special prosecutor found fatally shot at his home

Almudena Calatrava, Buenos Aires

A special prosecutor who had accused Argentinian President Cristina Fernandez of ordering impunity for Iranian suspects in the South American country's worst terrorist attack was found shot dead, authorities said yesterday.

Alberto Nisman, who was set to testify yesterday in a closed-door hearing, was found in the bathroom of his Buenos Aires apartment late Sunday, federal prosecutor Viviana Fein told Telam, Argentina's official news agency.

"We can confirm that it was a gunshot wound, .22 caliber," she said, adding that it was too early in the investigation to know what had happened.

Nisman had been appointed 10 years ago by Fernandez's late husband, then President Nestor Kirchner, to investigate the 1994 bombing of the Argentine-Israeli Mutual Association in Buenos Aires, which killed 85 people and injured more than 200. In 2013, Argentina and Iran reached an agreement to investigate the attack, which remains unsolved.

That year, Nisman released an indictment accusing Iran and Hezbollah of organizing the blast. Iran denies any involvement.



Alberto Nisman

Last week, Nisman accused Fernandez and other senior Argentine officials of agreeing not to punish at least two former Iranian officials in the case. He asked a judge to call Fernandez

and others, including Foreign Minister Hector Timerman, for questioning.

"The president and her foreign minister took the criminal decision to fabricate Iran's

innocence to sate Argentina's commercial, political and geopolitical interests," Nisman said last week.

Government officials called the prosecutor's allegations ludicrous.

A federal judge had begun the process of deciding whether to hear the complaint and whether anyone should be summoned for questioning.

Late Sunday, federal police agents in charge of Nisman's protection alerted their superiors that he wasn't answering phone calls, according to a statement from the Health Ministry. When he also didn't answer the door, they decided to alert family members, according to the statement.

When Nisman's mother wasn't able to open the door because a key was in the lock on the other side, a locksmith was called to open it, the ministry said. A .22 caliber handgun and a shell casing were found next to Nisman's body.

Israel's foreign ministry expressed "deep sorrow" over Nisman's death.

"Nisman, a courageous, venerable jurist who fought intrepidly for justice, acted with determination to expose the identities of the terrorists and their dispatchers," a ministry statement said. AP

YEMEN

President negotiates ceasefire to end Sana'a fighting

Shaji Mathew

YEMEN'S President Abdurabuh Mansur Hadi has negotiated a cease-fire to end fighting in the capital, Sana'a, as rebel Shiite Houthis battled soldiers near Yemen's presidential palace and elsewhere across the capital yesterday, seizing control of the country's state-run media in a move an official called "a step toward a coup."

The fighting near the palace marks the biggest challenge yet to the government of President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi by the Houthis. Hadi will meet with political advisers and Houthi representatives to defuse the crisis, said an aide to the president, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to speak to the press. Fighting had erupted earlier yesterday after the Houthis set up a checkpoint near the presidential compound, Al-Masdar news website reported.

Houthi rebels seized Sana'a last year after advancing from their northern base and forced the president to form a new government. Their surge has prompted al-Qaeda and Sunni tribal fighters to step up attacks against the Shiite group, raising the prospect of the state's collapse along sectarian



Houthi Shiite Yemenis raise their fists during clashes near the presidential palace in Sanaa

lines and alarming neighboring Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter.

Tensions surged in the capital after Houthi fighters kidnapped Ahmed Bin Mubarak, the director of the president's office, on Jan. 17. He and three people with him were snatched by fighters who set up a checkpoint, a government official, asking not to be identified because of the issue's

sensitivity, said at the time.

Since taking Sana'a, the Houthi fighters have sought to consolidate their grip by embedding supporters in security forces and keeping key ministries and the central bank under guard. They have also taken control of Yemen's second-largest port on the Red Sea and a crossing post on the Saudi border. Bloomberg/AP

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what's ON



THE PROMOTION PROJECT OF MACAU ARTISTS,
"ART EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS
BY WONG KUONG CHOI"

TIME: 10am-6pm

UNTIL: January 22, 2015

VENUE: Kam Pek Community Centre,
483 Avenida de Almeida Ribeiro, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2872 7066

"SEE AND TOUCH"

- TOUCHABLE ARTS EXHIBITION

TIME: 12pm-7pm (Closed on public holidays)

UNTIL: March 31, 2015

VENUE: Artistry of Wind Box Community
Development Association / Rua Tomas Vieira 3A
R/C

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 6685 9215

MAKE YOUR OWN LEGEND

- PAINTINGS BY JOEY HO CHONG I

TIME: 10am-7pm

(Closed on Mondays, No admission after 6:30 pm)

UNTIL: January 25, 2015

VENUE: Macau Museum of Art,
Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE

ADMISSION: MOP5

(Free on Sundays and public holidays)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

"DISCOVERING SOLID IDEAS:

EXHIBITION OF COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHIC
WORK BY DERRY SIO & HIS STUDENTS"

TIME: 12pm-10pm

(Mondays to Fridays, Closed on public holidays)

UNTIL: January 25, 2015

VENUE: Educational Restaurant and Team Building,
IFT

ENQUIRES: 2856 1252

RED SANDALWOOD ART EXHIBITION
OF OLD BEIJING CITY GATES

TIME: 12pm-9pm (Tuesdays to Sundays, open on
Mondays that fall on a public holiday)

UNTIL: March 22, 2015

VENUE: Level 2 MGM Art Space

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8802 8888

WATER AURORA

TIME: 24 hours daily

VENUE: MGM Macau, Av. Dr. Sun Yat Sen, NAPE

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8802 8888

Offbeat

IRAN: SURPRISED SUBWAY RIDERS BRUSH SHOULDERS WITH PRESIDENT



Rush-hour passengers in the busy subway of Iran's capital have brushed shoulders with a surprising commuter — President Hassan Rouhani.

Rouhani, along with Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and others in his government, took the subway and other mass transit in Tehran to work yesterday. It was part of their effort to mark "National Clean Air Day."

Rouhani spoke to male and female passengers on the subway, as well as waved to surprised commuters. He also had time to hug and talk to a young boy on his trip to work.

Greater Tehran has a population of 12 million people and suffers from a score of urban problems, such as heavy pollution.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
17:35	Brazil Avenue (Repeated)
18:30	TDM Sports (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Interview
21:45	Happy Endings S2
22:10	Brazil Avenue
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

cinema

CINETEATRO

15 JAN - 21 JAN



INTO THE WOODS

ROOM 1

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: Robert Marshall

Starring: James Corden, Emily Blunt, Meryl Dtreep

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 125min



CLOUDS OF SILS MARIA

ROOM 2

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: Olivier Assayas

Starring: Juliette Binoche, Kristen Stewart, Chloe

Grace Moretz

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 124min

WOMEN WHO FLIRT

ROOM 3

2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Pang Ho-Cheung

Starring: Zhou Xun, Huang Xiao Ming

Language: Mandarin (English/Cantonese)

Duration: 97min

MACAU TOWER

01 JAN - 21 JAN



TAKEN 3

2.30, 4.30, 7.00, 9.30 pm

Director: Olivier Megaton

Starring: Liam Neeson, Forest Whitaker, Framke

Janssen

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 109min

this day in history



1961 JOHN F KENNEDY SWORN IN AS US PRESIDENT

The Democrat John F Kennedy has been sworn in as the youngest ever elected president of the United States.

The 43-year-old Roman Catholic was inaugurated as the 35th president on a snow-covered Capitol Hill in Washington. He takes over from the oldest president in American history, General Dwight Eisenhower, who is bowing out aged 70.

The president's Republican rival, Richard Nixon, who came a close second in the race for the White House, also attended the inauguration ceremony.

Millions watched the swearing-in of the new president on television. He chose to wear formal dress, including a top hat, for the occasion.

President Kennedy began his speech by addressing "my fellow citizens" - the term first used by President George Washington but rejected by later presidents in favour of the less formal "my fellow Americans".

His ten-minute address appealed to Americans to unite in the fight against the common enemy of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself.

For the people of the world struggling against the "bonds of misery", the president pledged, "our best efforts to help them help themselves".

He continued: "If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich."

He also appealed to the Soviet Union to begin a new quest for peace.

"Let both sides for the first time, formulate serious and precise proposals for the inspection and control of arms and bring the absolute power to destroy other nations under the absolute control of all nations," he said.

President Kennedy closed his speech with the words: "Ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country. My fellow citizens of the world, ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man."

His words were greeted with rousing applause.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

President Kennedy was a Harvard graduate and a war hero. He became a Democratic Congressman in 1946 and a senator in 1952. He married Jacqueline Bouvier in 1953.

He ran against Richard Nixon for the White House. In September 1960 millions watched the pair battle it out in a series of television debates.

Shortly after his election, he supported a Cuban rebel attempt to overthrow the communist regime of Fidel Castro in Cuba.

It was unsuccessful and led the Russians to install nuclear weapons on Cuba in 1962 triggering what became known as the Cuban missile crisis.

The crisis was narrowly averted. In August 1963, Kennedy negotiated the first nuclear test ban treaty with the Soviet Union in what was seen as a first step towards ending the Cold War. On 22 November 1963, President Kennedy was assassinated. He was shot in the head as he drove through Dallas, Texas on his way to a political festival.

YOUR STARS

Aries

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

You are facing a big impasse today — but you can deal with it! Your energy may feel all blocked up, but that just means you need to rely on other people or resources in order to keep moving.

Taurus

April 20-May 20

Don't worry about the details — things are getting a little weird, but that just means that you're on the right track. Your practical nature can make a success out of almost anything that comes your way today.

Gemini

May 21-Jun. 21

You are drawing on hidden resources today — strength you didn't even know you had! You can't count on it to last forever, but it should help you long enough to get past this rough patch.

Cancer

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Get started on a little project today — and then watch as it snowballs into something bigger and crazier than you could have anticipated! It's a good time to make a move in a new direction.

Leo

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Be wary of overindulgence today — things look better for you than they really are. Your energy is a little scattered, so it's all too easy for you to take on too much without thinking.

Virgo

Aug. 23-Sept. 22

Express yourself! Your innermost thoughts and feelings need an outlet, and that could mean that you've got to post an overshare on Facebook or just sit down with an old friend and spill your guts.

Libra

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

You are feeling somewhat more intense right now, so see if you can get some alone time to figure out what's really going on. You may be surprised by how simple it all is at its root.

Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

You can tell that things are hung in the middle, so it's up to you to push them one way or the other. It's a good time for you to rely on your instincts and accept that control doesn't always work out.

Sagittarius

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

You need to deal with quiet, mundane issues or tasks today. Don't let yourself get too bored, as you may find that your life spirals out of control if you get too distracted or stop paying attention.

Capricorn

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Don't worry about spoiling friends or family — go ahead and indulge them! On a day like today, people remember the little things you do for them long afterward, and you can use those warm fuzzies!

Aquarius

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Dig deeply into your past and see if you can figure out anything that may be relevant to today's big problem. You are sure to be surprised when you drift back and hit on a nearly exact parallel!

Pisces

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Someone says the sweetest thing to you at some point in the day — and you may feel nearly panicking from joy! It could be romantic, professional or almost anything else, so embrace it!

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

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

CHINA

Beijing	-5	5	clear/cloudy
Harbin	-22	-10	clear/cloudy
Tianjin	-1	5	cloudy/sleet
Urumqi	-11	-2	foggy
Xi'an	-1	10	cloudy/clear
Lhasa	-9	5	cloudy/clear
Chengdu	3	14	cloudy
Chongqing	9	14	overcast/cloudy
Kunming	0	13	drizzle/clear
Nanjing	2	10	cloudy/clear
Shanghai	4	10	cloudy/overcast
Wuhan	5	13	cloudy
Hangzhou	3	12	cloudy/overcast
Taipei	12	21	overcast
Guangzhou	7	20	clear/cloudy
Hong Kong	14	18	cloudy

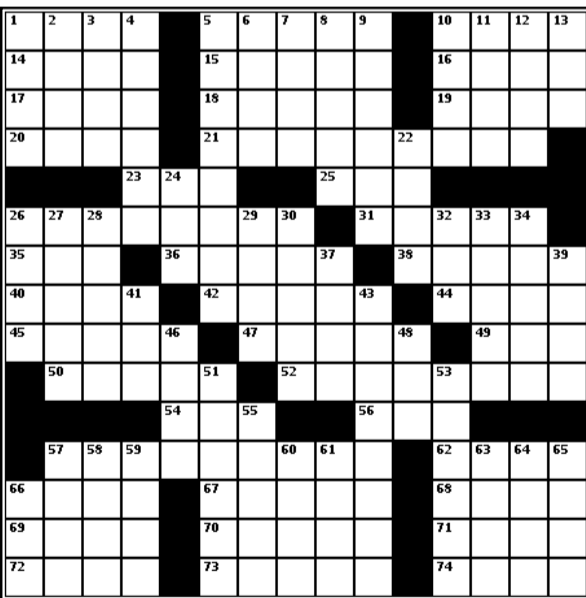
WORLD

Moscow	-8	-1	flurry
Frankfurt	-2	2	flurry/sleet
Paris	-3	2	flurry/drizzle
London	-2	2	overcast/sleet
New York	-3	5	clear/cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Swedish auto; 5- Undercover operation; 10- Cooking appliance; 14- Cockney greeting; 15- Mistake; 16- Defense grp. since 1949; 17- Somewhat; 18- Gaucho's rope; 19- Jazz flutist Herbie; 20- Long luxuriant hair; 21- Republic in N South America; 23- Moo goo ___ pan; 25- D.C. VIP; 26- Gone; 31- Tend a fire; 35- ___ carte; 36- Jazzy Chick; 38- Smells; 40- Lens holders; 42- Inflexible; 44- Consumes; 45- Stuffing for pillows; 47- Boat often made of birchbark, canvas, or fiberglass; 49- Permit; 50- Capital city of Yemen; 52- Eyeglasses with tinted lenses; 54- Towel word; 56- "...and seven years ___"; 57- Carry; 62- Denials; 66- Milk source; 67- Polynesian porch; 68- Lady's escort; 69- Kiln for drying hops; 70- Dicembre follower; 71- Prefix with skeleton; 72- Acceptable; 73- Philosopher Kierkegaard; 74- Parks on a bus;

DOWN: 1- Thin stratum; 2- Neighbor of Sask; 3- King of comedy; 4- A wineshop; 5- Attendant; 6- Corner; 7- Oil-rich Islamic theocracy neighboring Iraq; 8- Short letters; 9- Eats grass; 10- Treater's words; 11- South African river; 12- 2002 erupter; 13- Prefix with profit or fiction; 22- Golden Rule word; 24- Circle segment; 26- Like some chocolate; 27- Inventor Howe; 28- Argentine plain; 29- Actor Stoltz; 30- Impressionist Edgar; 32- Keats work; 33- Australian marsupial; 34- Some Art Deco works; 37- Hokkaido native; 39- Concordes, e.g.; 41- Part of the Holy Trinity; 43- Contribution; 46- Actress Madeline; 48- Cackleberry; 51- Bridal paths; 53- Lengthier; 55- Joe of "Hill Street Blues"; 57- Furniture wood; 58- Tabula ___; 59- ABA member; 60- Doozy; 61- Describes a gently cooked steak; 63- Vintner's prefix; 64- Finishes; 65- Greek portico; 66- Also;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
- Fire department 28 572 222
- PJ (Open line) 993
- PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
- PSP 28 573 333
- Customs 28 559 944
- S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
- Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
- Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
- IACM 28 387 333
- Tourism 28 333 000
- Airport 59 888 88
- Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
- Water Supply - Report 1990 992
- Telephone - Report 1000
- Electricity - Report 28 339 922
- Macau Daily Times 28 716 081



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Coloane Village
Investment Property Coloane
597 sq ft / HKD 5.671M
Rate: HKD 9,500/sq ft
Open Views
Ref: 14105422

One Oasis D and J Units
Coloane
2 Bedroom Apartment
Great Location
HKD 19,500 / 1,177 sq ft
Ref: 14100446

Hellen Garden, LOT 3
Coloane
1,663sq ft / HKD 11.308M
Rate: HKD 6,800/sq ft
Overlooks Hac Sa Beach
Ref: 14105420

Vai Nam Taipa
Taipa
2 Bedroom Apartment
Open Plan Living/Dining Area
HKD 12,000 / 715 sq ft
Ref: 14120457

Designer Apartment
Perfect weekend home Macau
679 sq ft / HKD 6.588M
Rate: HKD 9,702/sq ft
Overlooking St Pauls
Ref: 14105421

The Manhattan, Unit D Taipa
Taipa
4 Bedroom Apartment
Luxury Residence
HKD 36,000 / 2,488 sq ft
Ref: 15015429

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AP PHOTO



Iran's Reza Ghoochannejhad

FOOTBALL | ASIAN CUP

Iran beats UAE 1-0

Keuran Smith

SUBSTITUTE Reza Ghoochannejhad scored an injury-time goal to lift Iran to a 1-0 win over UAE and top spot in Group C at the Asian Cup yesterday.

Despite a free-flowing game, and a virtuoso performance by UAE playmaker Omar Abdulrahman, neither side could find a breakthrough until Ghoochannejhad's late strike helped Asia's top-ranked team avoid a likely quarterfinal showdown with Japan.

UAE appealed for offside when Ghoochannejhad pounced on a ball that had ricocheted off teammate Andranik

Teymourian and directed his header into the top corner from close range. However, television replays indicated the striker had just stayed onside.

"The spirit is great in our team, (the) chemistry is amazing," said Ghoochannejhad. "Right now everybody is happy but we have to focus on our upcoming games."

Iran will now face the runners-up of Group D, likely to be Iraq or Jordan, in the quarterfinal at Canberra on Friday, while the UAE will likely face Japan in Sydney.

UAE had already secured its quarterfinal place with wins over Qatar and Bahrain in its first two games, and was unlu-

cky to not get the draw it needed to top the group from Iran on goal difference.

"Sometimes you play good and you lose, but sometimes also you don't play good and you win," said UAE coach Madhi Ali. "We have to forget this game. We lost, but we did not lose the qualification, and now we have to concentrate on our game against Japan."

"We don't have any problem playing with Japan or any other team."

UAE's chief playmaker Abdulrahman created several chances in the best individual performance of the tournament so far as he frequently skipped past bemused Ira-

nian defenders and picked out teammates with his wide range of passing.

Both teams played with little caution as they looked for the crucial opening goal and UAE's Khamis Esmaeel almost delivered it with a powerful long-range strike that went just past the post with Iran goalkeeper Alireza Haghighi beaten in the fifth minute.

Iran quickly recovered from UAE's bright start and had a chance to take the lead in the 17th minute but defender Morteza Pouraliganji missed with his headed shot when it seemed easier to score.

Abdulrahman then produced a teasing run from the edge of the box and beat four Iranian defenders before the diminutive midfielder was tackled by Vahid Amiri as he honed in on goal.

Just before half-time Iran's Azmoun Sardar raced to the backpost to meet a corner

kick, which had been flicked on by Teymourian, and his goal-bound header hit the chest of a UAE defender and deflected wide.

The game stretched further in the second half with UAE's Ali Mabkhout missing a couple of good chances to add to his three tournament goals so far, including one in 14 seconds against Bahrain.

Iran grew increasingly desperate and coach Carlos Queiroz introduced stars Ashkan Dejagah and Ghoochannejhad late in the second half in search of a breakthrough.

With full time closing in former Charlton Athletic striker Ghoochannejhad popped up to clinch the win for Iran, despite the pleas of the UAE defense for offside.

At Sydney, Sayed Jafaar produced a stunning long-range strike in the 82nd minute to lift Bahrain to a 2-1 victory over Qatar for its first win of the tournament.

Earlier, Sayed Shubber had produced a smart turn and finish past a host of Qatari defenders to score in the 35th minute, before Hasan Al Haydos equalized for Qatar from a free kick in the second half.

It ended a disappointing tournament for 2014 Gulf Cup champions Qatar, which lost all three games to finish bottom of the group.

"When you miss chances, it is due to many things," said Qatar coach Djamel Belmadi. "It is partly luck, concentration and quality of the player."

"From my experiences as a player, when you create a lot of chances and do not score, you usually lose the game."

Today, Japan will top Group D if it avoids defeat against Jordan at Melbourne, while Iraq plays Palestine at Canberra also looking to confirm its quarterfinal spot. **AP**

SKIING

Kearney, Kingsbury win world dual mogul titles in Austria

AMERICAN freestyle skier Hannah Kearney won the world title in dual moguls, while Mikael Kingsbury of Canada earned the men's gold medal yesterday.

It was Kearney's 10th medal and fourth gold at a major championship. She won the world title in moguls in 2005 and two years ago, but it was her first triumph in dual moguls.

"I've never won the dual world championships, it means a lot to me," Kear-

ney said. "Ten years ago, I won my first world championship gold medal. To stay at the top for ten years, I've got to thank my trainers, my coaches, for helping me achieve that."

Kearney defeated Justine Dufour-Lapointe in the final by 29-6 points, a day after the Canadian beat Kearney in the moguls final.

"It's great to have a next day when you are a little bit disappointed," said the American, who has

won 43 World Cup events. "It was a bit faster today and I felt stronger with every run."

Yulia Galysheva of Kazakhstan edged defending champion Chloe Dufour-Lapointe of Canada 18-17 for the bronze medal. Chloe Dufour-Lapointe was beaten by her younger sister Justine in the semifinals.

Kingsbury defeated fellow Canadian Philippe Marquis 20-15 in the men's final for his first world dual mogul gold

after finishing runner-up twice.

Kingsbury bounced back from losing his moguls title Sunday, when he was upset in the final by Anthony Benna of France.

Marc-Antoine Gagnon made it a Canadian podium sweep by beating Sho Kashima of the United States in the small final.

The next medal events of the freestyle skiing and snowboard worlds are the slopestyle finals for both disciplines tomorrow. **AP**

AP PHOTO



Hannah Kearney from the U.S. competes to place second in the women's freestyle skiing single moguls final event at the Freestyle Ski and Snowboard World Championships in Kreischberg, Austria

opinion

Our Desk

João Pedro Lau



SURPRESA!

Last week, I asked my friends on Facebook what time I should start queuing outside the Portuguese Consulate to get my citizen card renewed so that I wouldn't need to make an appointment and wait for god knows how many months. "5 a.m.," one suggested; "No, better at 4. Last time, I was almost the last one, even though I went there at 4," another said. Well I guess that means I am stuck with the option of making an appointment and hoping that my passport will not expire before I get my new citizen card.

But a week later, as if the patron saint of ID renewals had granted my wish, the Portuguese Consulate announced that it had launched an online registration system that allows users to make appointments for ID renewals. It took me only five minutes to sign up and another 10 minutes to make the appointment for two weeks later. "Incredible" is not even close to how I would describe this experience.

If you did not use the services of the Portuguese Consulate in Macau before, you may not understand my surprise at this user-friendly registration system. For many Portuguese citizens in Macau, the consulate is infamous for its inefficiency and its staff's rather snobby attitude. I have heard from time to time that people would rather apply for an MSAR passport because they simply do not want to go through the ordeal. Now that the consulate has decided to provide a more efficient service, I wonder if it has also made improvements to the manners of its staff; this is a question for which I will find out the answer soon.

The "revolution" to the ID renewal procedure is one of many changes in the Portuguese consulate I have observed in these two years since the new consul-general, Vitor Sereno, came to town. Unlike his predecessors, Mr Sereno seems to be really keen on engaging with Macau society, and has been present at many community events. In my opinion, he is really doing his job of promoting and representing Portugal in Macau, and I hope that Lisbon is going to keep him in Macau longer so that he can improve the consulate even further.

Meanwhile, if there is one suggestion I can give to Mr Sereno, I would say that he should put more effort into connecting with those Portuguese citizens in Macau like me who are of non-Portuguese descent.

Although I am a Portuguese citizen, this identity for me is nothing more than an extra passport. I cannot speak Portuguese; I do not know any Portuguese cities other than Lisbon and Porto; and I cannot name the President and Prime Minister (I can swear in Portuguese and cook the traditional Macanese dish of Portuguese chicken though, if those help).

It used to be a non-issue for me, until I started enjoying some of the benefits of being a Portuguese passport holder, such as entering Europe without the need to queue for immigration. And then I started to think: if I am benefited by this identity, shouldn't I know more about it?

Therefore, I think it would be great if the consul-general is willing to work on connecting with people like me, highlighting this special identity and what it can bring to Portugal, China; and to us personally. For example, we can become commercial nexuses between Portugal and China, and thus supply the goods, services and technologies that the two countries need from each other, and help their economies, as well as that of Macau.

I hope that Mr Sereno will keep up his good work and continue to surprise us with more reforms.

THE BUZZ MERCEDES TO LAUNCH W06 ON 1ST DAY OF F1 WINTER TESTING

Mercedes will launch its new W06 car on the first day of pre-season winter testing in southern Spain next month, the team said in a statement yesterday.

Mercedes easily secured a drivers' and constructors' double last year, with British driver Lewis Hamilton finishing 67 points ahead of Germany's Nico Rosberg.

Rosberg will take the wheel on the first day of testing at the Jerez circuit on Feb. 1, and on

the third day. Two-time F1 champion Hamilton drives on the second and fourth days.

The Silver Arrows crushed the competition last season with the W05 finishing 296 points clear of Red Bull.

However, head of Mercedes-Benz Motorsport Toto Wolff expects tougher competition this year, saying "we are certain that our rivals will be competitive from the opening race in Melbourne."

Station	Air quality
Roadside	100-130 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	100-130 Moderate
Ambient	95-125 Moderate

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

JAPAN's leading opposition Democratic Party chose 61-year-old Harvard-trained former Deputy Prime Minister Katsuya Okada as its top leader. He faces the daunting challenge of uniting and rebuilding public trust in the Democratic Party, which has yet to recover from its electoral defeat by the Liberal Democrats in late 2012.

UKRAINE's president vows to reassert government control over eastern regions as the army unleashed a counter-offensive against Russian-backed separatist fighters vying for command over the airport in the city of Donetsk.

QATAR A Qatari man declared an enemy combatant by the Bush administration following the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks and imprisoned over links to al-Qaida returns home to the Gulf nation after quietly being released by U.S. authorities. Ali al-Marri was held without charge for nearly six years in a U.S. Navy brig in South Carolina before eventually pleading guilty and receiving a sentence of just over eight years behind bars.

CAMEROON-NIGERIA Boko Haram attacked a village in northern Cameroon early Sunday, killing three people and staging its largest kidnapping yet in the country, the information minister said, adding that some of the hostages were children. In a separate attack in Nigeria, a suicide bomber killed four people and injured 35 others in the northeast town of Potiskum, according to a Nigerian media outlet. The Cameroon attack occurred in Mabass village, in the Far North region, Issa Tchiroma Bakary said. He said 80 houses were destroyed and "between 30 and 50" people were believed to have been abducted.

BELGIUM The European Union yesterday called for an anti-terror alliance with Arab countries to boost cooperation and information-sharing in the wake of deadly attacks and arrests across Europe.

USA The new leader of the House of Representatives panel overseeing U.S. policy to Asia and the Pacific is a rarity in Congress. Congressman Matt Salmon is a deeply conservative Republican who shuns isolationism, favors closer ties with Asia and stands poised to praise as well as criticize China — and even do it in Mandarin.

MYANMAR

Street kids turn to sniffing glue to forget hunger



Street children who pick recyclable items from garbage dumps sniff glue as they walk in a street in Hlaing Tharyar, northwest of Yangon

Aye Aye Win, Hlaing Thar Yar

SWEATY hair matted to his pale, emaciated face, Thant Zin Oo starts his days early, winding through small alleyways outside Myanmar's biggest city Yangon and scavenging through garbage piled up behind shops and factories in search of something — anything — to sell.

Tucked under the 11-year-old's filthy, tattered shirt is a half-empty yellow glue tin.

"It gives me a sense of peace," he says, taking a break so he can draw the strong, noxious fumes into his young lungs. "I forget my hunger for a moment and dream of things that I cannot do in my real life."

Myanmar's long-time military rulers handed over

power to a nominally civilian government three years ago, leading to the lifting of Western sanctions and a burst of economic activity. More than 500 foreign businesses have invested USD50 billion. But as poor families move from rural areas to the big city in hopes of finding work, many find themselves struggling.

Without education or money to buy food — their families often squatting on land illegally seized by gangs — children are most vulnerable.

Many are left to fend for themselves, easily influenced by the bad habits of other street kids, from prostitution and gambling to drug abuse and gang-style extortion, said Aung Kyaw Myint, local leader of an

organization that provides help for homeless kids.

Every morning before sunrise, a growing number of street kids can be seen picking through garbage, climbing on the heaps of trash at city dumps, or sleeping on the sidewalk.

Rain or shine, Oo and his 15-year-old brother Ko Min are among them.

The boys say they earn \$2 to \$3 a day — around half of which goes to their parents and the other half to a small tin of glue they share between themselves.

Oo no longer imagines he will one day be a doctor. And Ko Min says even his more modest goal, being a soldier, now seems totally unrealistic.

He said, "When I sniff glue, I close my eyes and in my dreams I go to nightclubs and have fun." **AP**

When I sniff glue, I close my eyes and in my dreams I go to nightclubs and have fun

THANT KO MIN, 15

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

AP Photo/Muhammed Muheisen



Internally displaced Pakistani children from tribal areas attend their daily Madrassa, or Islamic school on the outskirts of Islamabad, Pakistan, yesterday.