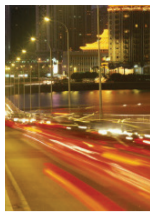




IFJ FINDS NO IMPROVEMENT IN LOCAL MEDIA FREEDOM

The International Federation of Journalists said that the media in Macau "received direct threats from the local government"

P3



MAINLAND MAN ACCUSED OF CARJACKING

Police has handed a 38-year-old mainland man over to the Public Prosecution Office (MP) after he was accused of carjacking

P5



TOKYO SEEKS HELP TO SAVE SURVIVING HOSTAGE

P13

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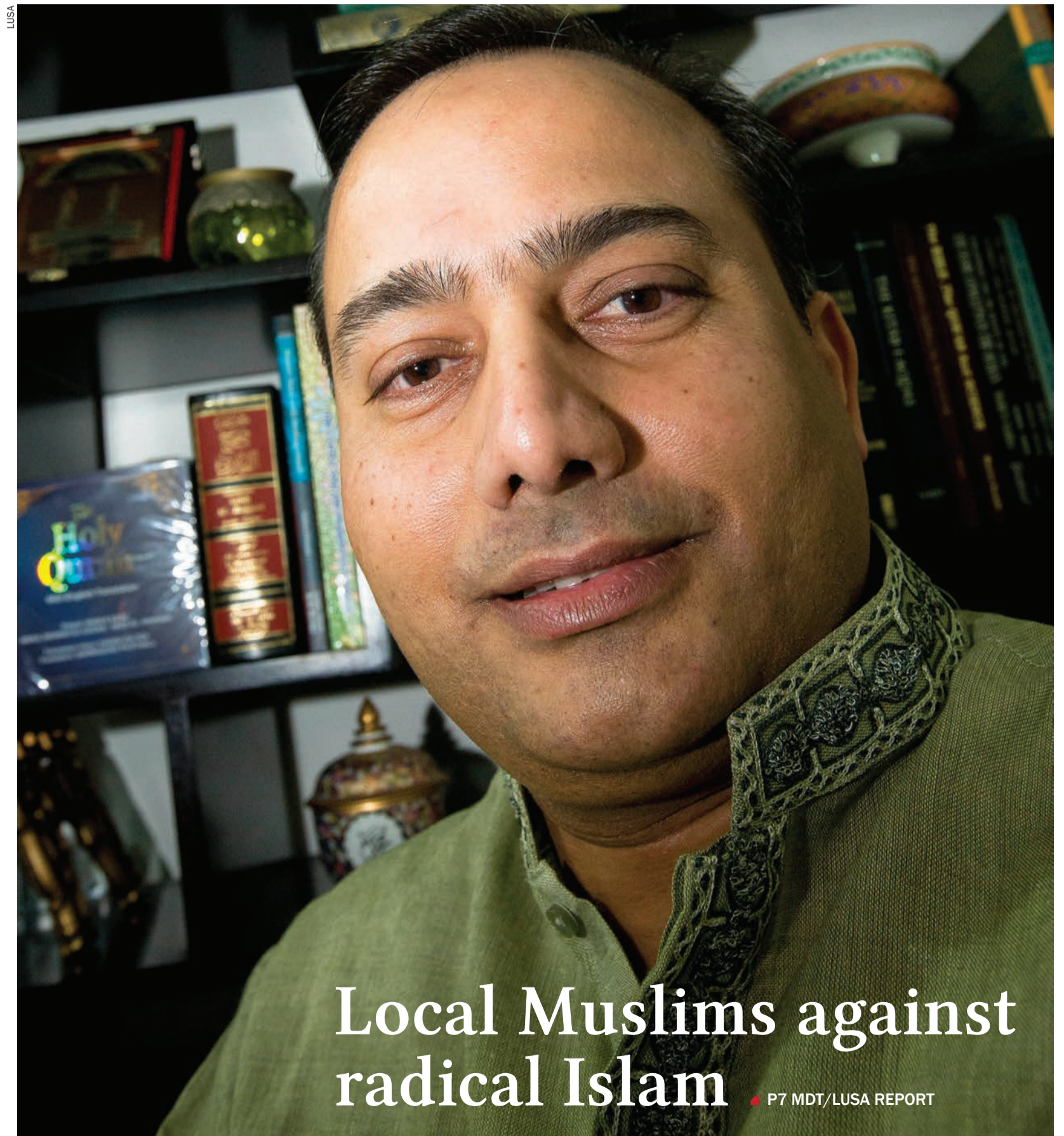
ARGENTINA A journalist credited with being the first to report the gunshot death of federal prosecutor Alberto Nisman has left Argentina because of fear for his safety. Damian Pachter of the English-language Buenos Aires Herald left the country Saturday, the local journalism group Foro de Periodismo Argentino said. The group said Pachter reported on Friday he was followed by unknown people and felt his safety was at risk.

INDIA Barack Obama presides over a grand display of Indian military hardware, marching bands, and elaborately dressed camels, becoming the first American leader to be honored as chief guest at India's annual Republic Day festivities. The parade was the centerpiece of Obama's three-day visit to India, which is aimed at strengthening a relationship between the world's largest democracies that has at times been fraught with tension and suspicion. More on p12

MALAYSIA Malaysia Airlines officials were struggling to restore the embattled carrier's website after it was hacked by a group proclaiming support for the Islamic State group. The airline's site was changed, at first with a message saying "404 - Plane Not Found" and that it was "Hacked by Cyber Caliphate," with a photo of one of the airline's Airbus A380 superjumbo jets. The browser tab for the website said "ISIS will prevail." More on p13

More on backpage

Money from Chinese fake bank funneled to Macau . P3



Local Muslims against radical Islam

P7 MDT/LUSA REPORT

Brazilian detained in alleged human trafficking case

PJ has detained a Brazilian woman who allegedly trafficked one of her female compatriots to Macau and coerced her into providing sex services to bar patrons. The victim, in her 20s, was allegedly told in Rio de Janeiro that she could earn as much as HKD400,000 each month if she worked as a waitress in a Macau bar. However, after she arrived in Macau, she was asked to wear revealing clothes and participate in an interview in a bar. The victim felt that the arrangement was not what she had agreed to and asked to return to Brazil. But she was intimidated and was told that her family in Brazil would be killed. The victim contacted the PJ and was rescued.

Man accused of raping ex-girlfriend and filming the process

A 35-year-old local taxi driver was alleged to have raped his ex-girlfriend at his apartment and filmed the process. The man allegedly has a gambling addiction and had asked his ex-girlfriend to lend him money. The woman broke up with him. Since the man knew that the victim often went to the building where the suspect lived, to find her friend who also lived there, he ambushed the victim on the staircase and abducted her to his apartment before raping her. He was also said to have recorded the crime with his mobile phone. But the victim resisted and snatched the phone from the suspect. She took the phone with her to the PJ and the authorities eventually detained the man.



PJ receives multiple computer fraud reports

João Pedro Lau

THE Judiciary Police (PJ) revealed that they have received reports on three separate cases of suspected computer fraud over the previous weekend, where one of the victims claimed to have lost up to MOP10,000.

The first victim approached the PJ on January 23 and claimed that he met a person over a mobile phone game the day before. The person told him that there was an Internet platform that allowed users to trade virtual goods and objects in the game.

The victim then logged into the platform and deposited TWD3,000 into his new account to buy a virtual object.

However, he found that the platform did not give him the object he purchased. It also asked the victim to put an extra TWD8,000 into a new account before refunding him the previous TWD3,000. The victim followed the instructions and was again told that he had entered a wrong bank account number, which led to his account in the platform being suspended. The victim was asked to pay another TWD28,000 to lift the suspension, which he followed.

However, the victim found that he still could not purchase any virtual objects or get his funds back. When he tried to contact the platform again, he was told to pay TWD36,000 to reopen the account, which

made him suspect that it may be fraudulent. He claimed to have lost TWD39,000 (around MOP11,000). PJ is still investigating the case.

The other two suspected fraud cases were reported on January 25. In the first case, the manager of a company claimed to the PJ that their company started emailing a French company in November last year to arrange a business agreement.

When the manager was about to make a bank transfer to cement the agreement, he received an email from the French company, claiming that their bank account was suspended, and asking the manager to transfer the money to another bank account.

However, the manager found that the email address was different from the usual one the company used in the past. They also felt suspicious about the email. Therefore, the manager contacted the French company through email and enquired about the issue.

The manager said that they received a reply that confirmed the French company had changed their bank account. But they still felt suspicious of the scenario and decided to call the company.

Through the phone call, the manager learnt that the French firm had sent no such emails, and later found that the company's email was hacked.

In the third case, the Facebook account of the victim was allegedly hacked and used to send fake messages, asking their Facebook friends to buy online game points for them. It is still not clear how many of their friends have suffered financial losses.

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João Pedro Lau

Report finds no improvement in local media freedom

THE International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) yesterday released its 2014 Annual Report on Press Freedom in China and Hong Kong. In its “Hong Kong and Macau” section, the report said that the media in Macau “received direct threats from the local government”. It mentioned an alleged self-censorship incident that took place on June 4 last year when TDM was said to have disciplined two anchors for their choice of clothing, together with controversy over the dismissal of scholars by local universities.

The report focused its attention on the situation in mainland China and Hong Kong while commenting that, “Macau’s press freedom situation was not much better than Hong Kong’s”.

“Press freedom in Macau did not improve. Journalists were arrested on spurious grounds and two outspoken scholars were ‘kicked out’ of their universities”, the report said.

It then detailed several controversial events that took place last year regarding media freedom, including an inci-

Furthermore, the report has described the Macau Health Bureau as ‘playing PR tricks’

dent surrounding two anchors from TDM who were alleged to have been “disciplined for making a subtle on-air protest in commemoration of the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing”. It also mentioned the departure of former TDM executive board president Leong Kam Chun, as well as several anonymous complaints to the Macau Journalists Association from TDM journalists who claimed that



PRESS FREEDOM IN HONG KONG ‘UNDER UNPRECEDENTED PRESSURE’

THE IFJ reported described 2014 as “a bumpy year for Hong Kong” and claimed that at least 39 reporters were “harassed, detained, assaulted or maliciously accused by Hong Kong police or anti-Occupy Movement demonstrators”. It also cited an article that said there are “several pairs of invisible black hands [that were] manipulating the media’s soul”.

The report mentioned incidents where alleged censorship occurred. For example, the Hong Kong broadcaster TVB was said to

have self-censored its news program by removing a script from a news bulletin that showed seven alleged police officers beating up one Occupy Movement protestor. The head of the news department later claimed that the script was “subjective” because it mentioned punching and kicking. Other incidents where alleged violations of press freedom occurred also included newspaper editors being assaulted and replaced, as well as a radio host having her contract terminated.

ensorship in the broadcaster’s news department was escalating.

Moreover, the IFJ suspected that the Macau police abandoned its political neutrality after it detained two journalists from the online pro-democratic media Macau Concealers when it was alleged to have illegally published the logo of the Judiciary Police (PJ). The logo was published during the unofficial civil referendum that was taking place and was

to show that one of the voters in the referendum was a PJ officer.

Furthermore, the report has described the Macau Health Bureau as “[playing] PR tricks” when the bureau sent one of its public relations staff to a press conference where a patient was going to detail a case of alleged medical negligence.

It also talked about the incidents where Hong Kong journalists, reporters and participants in the Occupy

Movement were denied entry into Macau during the visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping. “The local government continued to use the ‘law’ to bar pro-democracy journalists, scholars, politicians and activists from entering the territory”, it said.

However, IFJ noted that civil organizations in Hong Kong and Macau were taking “significant actions in order to awaken citizens to their political rights”.

Money from Nanjing banking scam funneled to Macau

A woman engaging in a fake banking scam in the eastern city of Nanjing reportedly absconded to Macau with the clients’ money, as reported by the BBC. From February 2013 to October 2014, the fake bank conned nearly 200 savers out of about RMB200 million (USD32m).

Scammers intentionally decorated the fake bank’s interior like a state-owned commercial bank, with uniformed “clerks” working behind the counters handling “official” documents, a LED screen and an “official” website.



According to the Southern Metropolis Daily, the firm lured customers into depositing cash with high interest rates, but it was in fact a rural

collective that was supposed to provide agriculture information and had none of the accreditations required to operate as a bank or provide financial services.

Police said that the fake bank had been promising savers interest rates of 2 percent per week and high interest subsidies. The fraudulently received deposits were used to invest in real estate and loans, where the scammers pocketed the difference.

Residents in Nanjing generally didn’t have much to deposit, thus the scammers turned to the nearby city of Hangzhou

and publicized the fake bank through intermediaries via the Wechat social networking platform. As it was common for local banks there to offer customers additional interest subsidies, many businessmen were deceived by the fake bank and each made a deposit of over RMB100,000.

A businessman who handed over RMB12million in 2014 grew suspicious when he wasn’t paid the promised interest on his money, and went to the police after the bank refused to return his savings. On Chinese social media, the fact that the fake

bank was able to operate for so long has left the public incredulous.

The Nanjing authorities have arrested five people over the scam, including a female manager who fled to Macau with the customers’ money. The woman was reportedly persuaded by Nanjing police to return to the city and surrendered herself to the authorities at the end of last month. Currently, the Nanjing police are chasing the remaining two deputies who are at large, as well as tracking down the whereabouts of over RMB 100 billion in missing capital. **BY**

MUSIC

National Swedish orchestra to play at Cultural Center

THE Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra (GSO) will play at the Macau Cultural Center's Grand Auditorium on April 3. Macau will be the first city on the orchestra's China tour.

As Sweden's national orchestra since 1997, the GSO has performed worldwide, particularly establishing itself as a musical force during the tenure of Estonian maestro Neeme Järvi between 1982 and 2004.

Having played in world-class venues and renowned music festivals from Europe and the USA to the far east, the Gothenburg Symphony was dubbed by British newspaper The Guardian as "one of the world's most formidable orchestras."

The ensemble has received various awards following recording sessions for Deutsche Grammophon and BIS, including the complete symphonies of Sibelius, Nielsen and Tchaikovsky. Significant operatic pieces by Rachmaninov and Prokofiev have also been



American-Japanese conductor Kent Nagano

lasting "Violin Concerto in E minor," performed by violin virtuoso Ray Chen, winner of the renowned Queen Elisabeth competition and the youngest star to ever perform for the Swedish Royal family and the Nobel Laureates. The program also includes Jean Sibelius' blazing Symphony No. 2 and Beast Sampler, a refreshing and brand-new piece by Sweden's greatest living composer Anders Hillborg.

As in previous concerts, the performance will be an opportunity for educational events which will aim to generate greater artistic awareness. CCM has invited music critic Chow Fan Fu to introduce GSO musicians and the concert's repertoire in a pre-performance talk. Hosted in Cantonese, the free session will take place at CCM's conference room, one hour before the concert.

Tickets at various prices and discounts will be available at the Macau Cultural Center box office and Macao Ticke-

recorded, receiving immense praise.

Under the direction of renowned American-Japanese conductor Kent Nagano, GSO's debut in Macao will bring us Mendelssohn's ever-

Former Coimbra students establish local association

A group of residents is establishing a new association comprising graduates of the Portuguese University of Coimbra (UC) living in Macau. The group aims to relive traditions and support cultural and artistic activities here.

"It's an association [aimed] at bringing together all those that – in one way or another – are connected to Coimbra; some because they were born there and others because they have studied there and [think of] the city as theirs," said José Rocha Dinis, publisher of newspaper Tribuna de Macau.

The University of Coimbra is one of the oldest higher education institutions in Europe, dating back to 1290. The city is regarded as a premier destination for many Portuguese students who are seeking to further their studies.

Besides uniting former students and those who were born or grew up there, the association also aims to strengthen ties between former students li-

ving in Macau.

Furthermore, the association will also promote social, cultural, artistic, and sports activities in Macau, while also providing support for people from Coimbra or former UC students who have decided to move to the city, helping them fit in.

"It may seem like it's not much, but there are many things that could be done within this area. The input of those who were born or studied in Coimbra can help further the links between Macau and Coimbra," Mr Dinis added.

He further added said that the idea of establishing a UC students' association in Macau actually dates back to 2013, after former students gathered for a dinner. The idea began taking shape at another dinner last year.

"Now it's time to set up a meeting again. [It] is scheduled for February 7, so that we can officially launch this association, which has a lot of work ahead," he revealed.

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MACAU authorities and the central government are looking to further promote supplementary agreements signed under the Mainland and Macau Closer Economic Partnership (CEPA), Radio Macau reported.

Chief Executive Chui Sai On is heading a mission in Beijing aimed at discussing further cooperation with the mainland, particularly with neighboring regions in the Pearl River Delta.

In a meeting held at the Ministry of Commerce yesterday, both parties agreed on further promoting CEPA and its advantages among entrepreneurs. They believe this will help Macau diversify its economy.

Moreover, they hope to further cooperate in the area of

Local and central gov'ts looking to further promote CEPA



Chui Sai On met Minister Gao Hucheng yesterday in Beijing

Traditional Chinese Medicine, namely through the Guangdong-Macau Cooperation Industrial Park.

Beijing authorities say that traditional Chinese medicine is part of their plans and Macau is no exception. They believe traditional Chinese medicine could help Macau's economy rely on other sectors, rather than remaining mainly dependent on gaming revenue.

In a meeting with the Chinese

minister and the vice-minister of commerce, Chui Sai On also discussed the relations between Macau and the Portuguese-speaking countries. The Government Information Bureau said that both parties aim to take further advantage of Forum Macau (Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries), which will hold its fifth ministerial meeting next year.

Mainland man handed to MP for alleged carjacking

THE Public Security Police (PSP) has handed a 38-year-old mainland man over to the Public Prosecution Office (MP) after he was accused of carjacking on Sunday night.

Information suggested that the incident took place at around 9 p.m.

near the Macau Tower when the victim, a local female driver, was sitting in the backseat of her car, tidying the seats. The suspect allegedly got into the car and immediately started driving it away.

The victim, still in the backseat, demanded that the man stop the vehicle,

but was ignored. The man allegedly drove past several areas on the Macau Peninsula, including the Macau Tower, Sai Van and Ilha Verde. In the meantime, the victim opened the window and screamed for help. Multiple witnesses contacted the police regarding the issue.

After about 20 minutes, the victim also called the police and provided the authorities with the location of the vehicle. It took another 10 minutes for PSP officers to intercept the car outside the Hotel Royal and apprehend the suspect.

PSP said that the man

passed an alcohol test and did not harm the victim during the whole carjacking process. They also claimed that the man's psychological condition seemed normal during interrogation. "However, when we asked him why he would act like this, [the victim] claimed that

he had no idea," a PSP spokesperson said. "The suspect has also told us that the purpose of his entering into Macau is to gamble, and claimed that he did gamble and had not slept for a period of time."

PSP has called on residents to keep their cars locked during driving and after parking them, in order to prevent incidents such as these. **JPL**

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Muslim family in Macau on a 'jihad' against radical Islam

ADNAN Nasim and Nausheen Gull talk about the Charlie Hebdo attack over breakfast and dinner at their home in Macau. "What kind of Islam is this? It's not the one we follow," Nasim noted.

Over tea and traditional delicacies, the Pakistani family discusses the attack that killed 12 staff of French satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo. 17-year-old Ali, the couple's son, said simply, "All we can do is reject those radical ideas."

Adnan Nasim - who moved to Macau 28 years ago to pursue university studies and now works for the University of Macau - believes that there's a need to discuss and further clarify this issue.

"We talk immensely about this at home. I have a son; it's my responsibility to teach him that this is not the proper way to react," he stressed.

Every time one kills or causes damage in the name of Islam, Nausheen Gull, who's a teacher, says she feels frustrated because "this is a religion of peace."

"We feel sad because we think this is a wrong interpretation of our religion," she said. Nausheen gives an example: the use of the word 'jihad,' which is now being linked to armed struggle and terrorist groups.

"When we leave home every day to go to work and be able to educate our children, that's the 'jihad,'" Nausheen said. "It's a 'jihad' to be a good person," Ali clarified.

Nasim added: "There are two types of 'jihad'. The main meaning conveys this message of being a good person above all; another meaning is related to fighting for the good of society. But I do not see how this is good for society."

He collects several versions of The Qur'an published in different countries. As the holy book of Islam has been used

LUSA/CARMO CORREIA



according to different interpretations, he prefers that their children read the book directly instead of hearing experts talk about the 'jihad.'

Nasim acknowledges that nowadays Muslims feel offended easily, but he understands why. "For me it's easy not to be offended. But we need to recall that there were 300 attacks in France against mosques or other Muslim places. These people had nothing to do with those attacks," he stressed.

When it comes to Charlie Hebdo's cartoons, which have portrayed Prophet Muhammad several times, Nasim does not place much

importance on it. "Writing the name of the Prophet does not mean it's the Prophet himself. It's just a drawing. If I were in France I would simply ignore it. But there are people who take this very seriously, and for them it's a form of humiliation," he reiterated.

"I love freedom of expression, not least because Muslims would not be able to live in Europe without it," he continued.

Nausheen holds a different opinion and argues that it should be limited. "I teach children the importance of respecting the beliefs of others. We try not to say things that might be offensive to

others and I think Muslims deserve that same kind of respect."

She clarified that it's not a matter of restricting the law but a matter of civility. "The Prophet never spoke of violence. I still condemn the attack but if I saw that cartoon in Macau, I would try to explain to the person who drew it that for me it is offensive," she stated.

Nausheen and Nasim find Macau quite an open place, where they are able to practice their religion without any criticism or obstacles being raised, as has happened lately in other countries.

They follow the religion's

main precepts, such as praying five times a day; not eating pork; not drinking alcohol; eating only 'halal' (the Muslim way of cutting) meat. They skip the noon prayer while they're working but try to compensate once they get home. The couple says they do not face any hurdles daily and feel welcomed here.

"People are nice and curious. If we go out for dinner with friends, everyone eats soup, which always has meat. They think it's strange we don't eat it, but they understand. Macau is a good place to be a Muslim," said Nasim.

"We feel blessed. There's a lot happening in our country, so when we go there we feel scared, we feel uncomfortable because we never know where the bullets may come from. We feel relieved when we return to Macau," he remarked.

They believe that the solution to the mutual mistrust between Muslims and other communities lies in communication. "We need to open up our praying spaces; we need to educate people [about our religion]. And we need to guarantee that our children follow the type of Islam that does not hurt people," he reiterated.

Ali, who goes to the Macau Anglican College, shares a similar opinion: "Muslims need to open up to other people. If they see we are normal people they will know it's a matter of [how] people [think] and not a matter of a religion." **MDT/Lusa**

A growing local Muslim community

ISLAMIC associations in Macau and Hong Kong believe that there's a growing Muslim community in the region - mainly due to an increase in the number of migrant workers coming from Indonesia. There are currently 10,000 Muslims living in Macau.

"It's increasing. There are more and more people going to the mosque on Friday," said imam Uthman Yang, who is part of the Islamic Union of Hong Kong but comes to Macau often to conduct religious rituals.

The city's mosque has been leaderless for one and a half years since the previous imam died.

The Islamic Association of Macau was created in 1980 but now finds challenges in getting funding, and survives thanks to the support of the Islamic Union of

Hong Kong, which provides them with HKD200,000 annually for the maintenance of the mosque.

"We are two different organizations but we are grateful to Macau and so we are contributing," said Rahmatullah Mohamed Omar, secretary-general of the Islamic Union of Hong Kong. In the neighboring SAR there are about 300,000 Muslims.

Throughout the Second World War, many Muslims moved to Macau as Portugal remained neutral during the conflict. Omar was one of them: "I lived in Macau for four years as we requested asylum here. I was very young, [about] two or three years old."

"We were very well treated and we are so grateful. Thus, we now try to help Muslims here in Macau as much as we

can," he added.

The two associations are hoping to generate more funds, not only through a canteen they're thinking of opening at the new Islamic Center - which is still awaiting approval from respective authorities - but also through certifying 'halal' restaurants. 'Halal' means the food is prepared under Islamic traditions, which also implies that animals should be killed according to the religion's rules.

Macau currently has five certified restaurants, two being Chinese and three Indian. "There's a growing number of Muslims visiting Macau and they look for 'halal', so there's a growing number of restaurants asking for information on certification," said Ali Mahomed, spokesperson of the Islamic Association of Macau.

Motorola unveils 3 smart phones for return to China

Joe McDonald
Business Writer, Beijing

MOTOROLA unveiled three smartphone models yesterday for its return to China following a two-year absence from the most populous mobile phone market.

Motorola was a mobile phone pioneer in China but pulled out in 2013 after its acquisition by Google Inc. Computer maker Lenovo Group bought Motorola last year as part of its effort to become a global competitor in wireless devices.

"This is a day of rebirth," said Liu Jun, Lenovo's executive vice president, onstage at a Beijing conference center to unveil models for China.

In a crowded market, Motorola is trying to set itself apart by allowing buyers of its flagship Moto X to customize their phones.

Buyers can pick colors, features and exterior materials that include leather and wood, said Rick Osterloh, president of Motorola. The 16 gigabyte version will start at 3,299 yuan (USD540).

The Moto X Pro will have a more powerful processor, bigger screen and other features. The third model, the Moto G, will start at 1,299 yuan (\$212) for an 8GB model, competing with low-priced Chinese brands including rising star Xiaomi. All three models will run Google's Android opera-



Rick Osterloh, Motorola's president and chief operating officer, unveils the latest Motorola smartphones in Beijing

ting system.

The company also unveiled an earpiece, the Moto Hint, to go on sale later.

Mobile phone sales in China rose 24.4 percent to 112 million handsets, including 103 million smartphones, in the second quarter of last year, according to Analysys International, a research firm in Beijing.

The \$2.9 billion purchase of Motorola Mobility was one of a flurry of acquisitions by Lenovo, which wants to grow faster outside its traditional personal computer business. The company also bought IBM Corp.'s low-end server busi-

ness for \$2.1 billion.

Motorola and Lenovo say their combined sales would make them the world's No. 3 smartphone producer behind Apple Inc. and Samsung Electronics Co.

As it tries to re-establish itself in China, Motorola faces intense competition from Apple and Samsung as well as ambitious local brands that include Xiaomi, Huawei and Vivo. Xiaomi, known for ultra-low-price handsets that cost as little as 699 yuan (\$114), passed Samsung last year as the country's most popular smartphone brand by number of units sold. AP

Shanghai scraps growth target with 'new normal' focus on quality

SHANGHAI city became the first of China's 31 provinces and municipalities to not set a 2015 growth target, underscoring the shift away from unfettered expansion.

The financial center's municipal government said its economy should "rise steadily, improve structure, enhance quality and efficiency" this year, according to its annual work report released Sunday. Out of 10 other regions that have so far announced 2015 growth targets, nine have cut them.

Premier Li Keqiang and central bank Governor Zhou Xiaochuan last week emphasized a focus on sustainable growth when meeting global business leaders and policy makers at Davos. President Xi Jinping last year began referring to the "new normal" of a more moderate expansion.

"We believe that Chinese authorities will tolerate a relatively slower growth in the coming year," economists led by Liu Li-Gang at Australia & New Zealand Banking Group Ltd. in Hong Kong wrote in a report. "More importantly, China will focus on improving the quality of economic growth."

He expects the govern-

ment will pay more attention to social welfare, income gains commensurate to gross domestic product growth, and quality employment generation.

Ten out of the 11 provinces and municipalities that have announced 2014 growth figures missed targets last year, with Tibet the exception. The mountainous region set a goal of 12 percent this year, the same as last year and the highest so far.

Shanghai's regional GDP rose 7 percent in 2014 from a year earlier, lower than its initial goal of 7.5 percent and slower than the nation's 7.4 percent expansion.

"As part of its reforms the government isn't focusing on GDP alone," said Hua Changchun, China economist at Nomura Holdings Inc. in Hong Kong. "The central government will increasingly focus on other factors, including the environment and debt" when assessing local officials' performance, he said.

Hua expects a national target will still be announced in March at the National People's Congress, which will be lower than last year's goal of about 7.5 percent. Bloomberg



Pedestrians walk past Arturo Di Modica's 'The Bund Financial Bull' sculpture on the Bund at night in Shanghai

corporate bits

BODHI SPA - SWEET ROMANTIC BLISS



Bodhi Spa is currently offering couples its Sweet Romantic Bliss package. The 120-minute treatment includes a luxurious milk bath ritual and a Bodhi-

Signature Massage to add a little extra luxury to couples' lives for Valentine's Day.

The offer is available until 28th February 2015.

MGM MACAU CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS

This Chinese New Year, MGM is offering wide array of festive celebrations: festive dining, the Red Sandalwood Art Exhibition of Old Beijing City Gates, specialty pastries offered at Grande Praça's Chinese New Year Market, plus an elegant water ballet at the 8.3-meter-tall Water-Sky Aquarium.

Imperial Court is offering an array of Chinese New Year specialty dishes such as Wok Fried Scaly Hedgehog Mushroom with Fillet Chicken and Duck Liver and Braised Whole South African Abalone with Sea Cucumber in Oyster Sauce. The restaurant also offers the Imperial Court Chinese Lunar New Year Grand Set (for a table of 12 persons) and Imperial

Court Chinese Lunar New Year Gourmet Set (for a minimum of two persons).

Apart from the festive menus, MGM Macau also has an array of homemade Chinese New Year puddings such as the traditional Chinese New Year Pudding, Taro Pudding, Turnip Pudding and the new flavor Hashima, Red Date and Water Chestnut Pudding.

Furthermore, the Red Sandalwood Art Exhibition of Old Beijing City Gates is exhibiting the miniature landscape of Yongding Gate and the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests in the Temple of Heaven, which are made of red sandalwood, also known as the "Imperial wood" in Chinese history.

MGM's Grande Praça is alrea-



dy dressed up for the Chinese New Year with enormous jade and gold coins hovering over the Water-Sky Aquarium, which are synonymous with fortune and prosperity. From January 6 to March 15, wander from stall

to stall with you friends and family to savor various East-meets-West specialty pastries such as Beijing style sugar coated fruit skewers, Beijing traditional pastry, doughnuts, specialty ice-cream and sorbet.

DUE to the fall in oil revenues, Angola needs to recalculate its public accounts – and rethink the economic model by enhancing diversification – but has a “cushion” in the form of oil supply contracts to China.

Due to long-term supply contracts, which mainly began to be established in 2002, China is now the largest buyer of oil from Angola, absorbing about half of the West African country’s oil exports in 2013.

The Africa Intelligence Monitor, citing senior Angolan officials, reported that the sharp fall in the price of oil is worrying the authorities, but internally they also point to a number of mitigating factors that allow some leeway for managing the situation.

These factors include the sale of oil futures to China and the way in which the price is set in Angola’s favour in turbulent times in the market, according to the same source.

Another argument is that the country has significant foreign exchange reserves and a great capacity for accessing credit to address specific problems that may occur.

Last week, Angola secured funding of US\$500 million, from Goldman Sachs and the UK’s Gemcorp Capital, after having securing a loan in December of US\$2 billion from China for the oil sector.

Also according to the Africa Intelligence Monitor, the Angolan authorities are bet-

Oil exports to China are ‘cushion’ for drop in Angola’s revenues



ting on the price crisis being short-lived.

In his New Year message, President José Eduardo dos Santos hinted of some con-

cerns about the impact on the budget plan and the economy.

On the economic front, the situation has made efforts for economic diversification even

more pressing, including development of sectors such as agriculture and industry involving key partners such as China, Brazil and Portugal.

According to the Economist Intelligence Unit, the current situation will accelerate economic diversification, and there are signs of hope especially in industry, which accounts for less than 10 percent of GDP, but is booming, largely due to the new, more protectionist, tariff system.

New industrial zones, the biggest of which in Viana, on the outskirts of Luanda, “tend to generate more jobs, including unskilled jobs, and their development” can help Angola to reduce its dependence on imported goods,” the EIU said in a recent study on the impact of a drop in oil revenues.

The government has shown it is very interested in attracting foreign investment and is offering highly favourable tax benefits to investors.

According to the EIU, if Angola improves its energy supply and eliminates red tape, it will be in a “strong position” to develop its regional exports, mainly because of the recently rebuilt railway lines.

It may even make sense, finally, for Angola to join the free trade area of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the EIU said. **MDT/Macauhub**

MOZAMBIQUE

Triton Minerals project requires investment of USD110 million

A project for graphite and vanadium exploration drafted by Triton Minerals in Mozambique requires an investment of USD110 million, the Australian company said as it prepares to move forward with a pre-feasibility study.

After getting the first results of geological and economic evaluation of the deposit in Nicanda in the last quarter, Triton Minerals re-stated the “big potential” of the North Balama project, one of the three projects it leads in the province of Cabo Delgado (northern Mozambique).

In a summary of activities in Mozambique in 2014 sent to Macauhub, the company points out that data shows Nicanda



has the largest combined deposit of graphite and vanadium in the world, containing 1.457 billion tons at an average con-

centration of 10.7 percent of graphitic carbon, along with 3.93 million tons at an average concentration of 0.27 per-

cent vanadium pentoxide.

Triton Minerals said that the deposit had an operating life of 29

years, and it expects the project to require total investment of US\$110 million, of which US\$65.2 million just for installation of the production unit, whose processing capacity is 1.8 million tons per year.

Triton expects initial operation to be in early 2017 and in the first months of this year to carry out a pre-feasibility study, looking to supplement those carried out to date and thus to demonstrate the economic potential of the project and attract possible investors.

At the same time, the mining company will conduct further studies to assess the economic benefit of different processing methods, taking into account the results of a metallurgical analysis of the graphite taken from Nicanda, which suggests a high potential for graphite production with high level of purity (99 percent).

This concentration

would allow the company to produce expandable graphite, used in insulating foams, mattresses or rubber products, powdered graphite in photovoltaic units or high temperature furnaces, spherical graphite in lithium ion batteries, or as raw material for the steel industry.

Of the top 20 investors that make up the shareholder structure of the company, Citicorp Nominees Pty Limited, of Citigroup, has the largest share (22.23 percent), followed by the non-executive chairman of Triton Minerals (3.22 percent), Alan Gordon Jenks and JP Morgan Nominees Australia Limited (3.04 percent).

In the three projects it has in Mozambique – Ancuabe, Balama Norte and Balama Sul – Triton Minerals has a majority holding of 80 percent, with the remaining 20 percent in the hands of Grafex Ltd.

MDT/Macauhub

Death threats and dawn raids: Welcome to the anti-graft drive



A Chinese policeman patrols Tiananmen Square as China's leaders arrive for the country's annual congress NPC, the National People's Congress, in Beijing

FROZEN Chinese bank accounts. Top executives taken in for questioning. Reports of death threats and pre-dawn clashes between armed body guards and police in Beijing.

That's the fallout from a corporate feud playing out in Chinese press and social media for the past two months.

On one side is Peking University Founder Group, a state-owned company that partnered with Credit Suisse Group AG in a separate securities joint venture whose chairman has disappeared. On the other side is a billionaire real estate developer and his company, Beijing Zenith Holdings Co.

The fight originates from a business dispute at their jointly owned Founder Securities Co., China's sixth-largest listed brokerage with a market value of USD12.4 billion. Founder acquired Zenith's China Minzu Securities Co. with stock, making the property firm into Founder Securities' second-largest shareholder. The relationship soured as the two sides squabbled over control

and terms, leading to lawsuits and arbitration.

The mutual recriminations involve allegations of corruption, denied on both sides,

The anti-corruption campaign is the golden opportunity for companies, especially the state-run firms, to tarnish their business opponents or even political rivals

ZHANG MING
POLITICAL SCIENCE PROFESSOR AT
RENMIN UNIVERSITY

and reported links to powerful political backers under investigation for wrongdoing. The case illustrates how President Xi Jinping's anti-corruption crusade is spilling over into business disputes. The Communist Party warned last month that political cliques and their corrupt business ties wouldn't be tolerated.

"The anti-corruption campaign is the golden opportunity for companies, especially the state-run firms, to tarnish their business opponents or even political rivals," said Zhang Ming, political science professor at Renmin University in Beijing. "The anti-graft fight in China is not yet institutionalized, but is a system based on public reporting. So it's really easy to be used by the public as a weapon to target anyone they want."

Founder Group's four top executives were ordered by officials to cooperate with an investigation, its chairman stepped down and 17 of its accounts with 1.8 billion yuan were frozen by court order, the company disclosed in fi-

lings to the Shanghai Stock Exchange.

Founder Securities shares have declined about 19 percent since Dec. 8, when Zenith said it had made a report to authorities accusing Founder Group management of wrongdoing. Even so, Founder has more than doubled in the past six months because of China's stock market boom.

The joint chairman of Founder Securities and its venture with Credit Suisse, Lei Jie, can't be contacted, the brokerage said in a filing to the Shanghai exchange last week. Lei asked for sick leave on Jan. 12 and the firm hasn't been able to reach him since Jan. 19, with "a certain impact on the company's internal operations," it said.

Founder's acquisition of Minzu caused it to say it wanted to exit the venture with Credit Suisse, which it has yet to do. Spokesmen at Credit Suisse have repeatedly declined to comment on the venture or the dispute.

Zenith's founder, Miles Kwok, also known as Guo

Wengui, was taken in by authorities to assist the police, according to Tencent news, a major portal in China, citing an anonymous source. Zenith's Beijing-based deputy general manager, Lv Tao, denied the report as well as Founder's allegations against Zenith in a phone interview before his phone was switched off as of Jan. 11. Kwok couldn't be reached for comment.

Kwok is famous for building a dragon-shaped, self-designated seven-star hotel overlooking Beijing's iconic Bird Nest Stadium. The Hurun Report estimated his wealth at \$2.6 billion, making him 74th-richest in China.

The dispute provides a possible window into how high-level political patronage in China, long helpful for doing business, can risk turning into liability.

Zenith has asserted that Founder is tied to retired President Hu Jintao's former aide Ling Jihua, who, according to the official Xinhua news agency, is being investigated for corruption. Chinese-language media outside China link Zenith to Ma Jian, one of the country's top spy masters that the Communist Party said is being probed for "serious law and discipline violations."

Ma couldn't be reached for comment, and a fax sent to the Communist Party's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, which said it's investigating him, didn't receive a reply. Ling Jihua also couldn't be reached, and a fax sent to the United Front Work Department, where Ling was minister before his removal, wasn't answered. Chen Xu, a Founder spokesman, said he was "not clear" about his company's alleged political connections.

"The case suggests that there are bitter interagency rivalries within key sectors of the economy," said Andrew Wedeman, a professor of political science at Georgia State University who studies corruption in China. "The reality is that government agencies continue to own and operate profit-seeking businesses and use their administrative powers to help their businesses earn fat and fast profits." **Bloomberg**

CHINA'S management of its prisons was thrown into the spotlight after a news website report detailing how an inmate extorted money and sex from women he met via mobile phone prompted national attention.

The Paper, affiliated with Shanghai-based Oriental Morning Post, reported Jan. 20 that the

Prisons under scrutiny after inmate extorts sex from women

inmate at Nehe Prison in northern China won three women's trust and persuaded them to visit him. He then threatened to post nude photos of them online unless

they gave him money and sex. Authorities in Heilongjiang province, where the prison is located, confirmed the report Jan. 22 and said the incident exposed is-

suues with prison supervision.

China's Twitter-like Weibo microblogging service has recorded almost 50 million discussions about the topic as

of yesterday, when it was also ranked the most-popular issue being commented on by its users. The People's Daily, the official newspaper of the Communist Party, said

on its Weibo account that the incident at Nehe Prison showed the need to improve prison supervision.

China had 681 prisons with 1.64 million inmates as of April 2012, according to a report by the official Xinhua News Agency. The government hasn't published more up-to-date data. **Bloomberg**

Louise Watt, Beijing

Leaders show listening ear on trash but not politics

TO help sell the public on the need for one of the world's largest trash incinerators in the mountains in west Beijing, Communist Party officials bused in hundreds of people for special tours. They held talks with residents and handed out questionnaires.

State-owned steel producer Shougang Group said they only started building the Lujiashan incinerator, which opened in November, after a survey showed 92 percent of respondents said they were in favor — a result that some residents suspect was manipulated by authorities.

Still, the attempts to curry public support aren't exactly what you might expect in Communist China, where authorities have in the past simply built key pieces of infrastructure wherever they wanted. Conveying a greater willingness to listen on some issues such as the environment appears to be an attempt to keep public unhappiness in check and maintain the party's grip on power even as it continues to squash political dissent and censor the media.

Authorities are trying to balance public dissatisfaction with the need to support China's rapid development.

Coping with growing amounts of trash, for instance, is a huge challenge. Beijing had set a target of building nine incinerators by 2015. But the Lujiashan plant is only the fourth completed, partly because of what city officials attribute to "Not In My Backyard" sentiment among the generally more educated residents of the capital.

"We have to build more waste disposal facilities," said Zhang Xiaoguang, director of Beijing's environmental management office of solid waste. "But at the same time we have to take public opinion into consideration."

Such sensitivity to public opinion has been seen in other parts of the country, particularly in wealthier cities, where a burgeoning middle class is demanding a better quality of life.

In September, the Communist Party branch in Guangdong province's Boluo county promised not to decide on the location of a planned waste incinerator without public approval after thousands of residents held demonstrations over two weekends, sometimes clashing with police.

That followed other concessions from provincial governments pledging to postpone the construction of or relocate chemical factories after public protests.

Critics argue that the restraint is for appearances only and that authorities simply carry on with plans once the protests fade. But experts see

AP PHOTO



A security guard walks past the Lujiashan incinerator in the Mentougou district of Beijing

a political motive.

"If they (the government) are seen as totally insensitive even to economic and environmental demands, then more people will be holding demonstrations and so forth and this will exacerbate the problem of instability," said Willy Lam, a political analyst at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

The mandate appears to be coming from the very top.

After an important meeting of the Communist Party's Central Committee in late 2013, the official Xinhua News agency published a list of 10 things showing government responsiveness. They included allowing couples to have more than one child, reforming the residence registration system to permit more farmers to become city residents and scaling back the number of university entrance exams.

And last year, Premier Li Keqiang declared "war" on pollution amid growing public alarm about health consequences.

Plant managers say they are still trying to win over residents by inviting them on tours where they can walk along the incinerator's shiny floors to see large metal claws lifting week-old fermented waste from the bottom of a 25-meter-high container. They pass framed photos of other incinerators

in countries such as Austria, plus charts showing that Lujiashan's emission standards are more stringent than those of the European Union.

Zhang Futian, party secretary with responsibility for the incinerator, said plant managers give visitors reports on its air emissions and water recycling system to deal with residents' "misunderstandings."

We "chat with them and they understand. But of course if we don't do well with the gas emissions and water discharge there will be big problems," Zhang said from the plant's master control room where large red characters on a wall spelled out the slogan, "Establish a positive environment-friendly public image."

Residents reached by phone said they opposed the incinerator.

"I climb the nearby mountains every morning and I can always see a large cloud of smoke coming out of the chimney," said a resident who would only give his surname, Song. "As for 92 percent of residents approving it, that's just impossible and the entire process was manipulated by the authorities."

A woman living in a nearby village who refused to give her name said she puts up with stinking water leaking from the garbage trucks and noise

day and night from the incinerator despite living about 3 kilometers away. "No one has ever approached me to ask me my opinion about building the incinerator," she said.

In recent years, Beijing's

Conveying a greater willingness to listen on some issues such as the environment appears to be an attempt to keep public unhappiness in check and maintain the party's grip on power

municipal government has consulted the public on increases in gas, electricity and transportation costs. The city recently proposed two options for how to increase bus and

subway fares, and invited 10 members of the public into a 25-member panel to consult on the issue.

While one analyst said that such public consultations are aimed at lending legitimacy to official decisions, authorities are inclined to deal with people's non-political appeals quickly to alleviate social problems.

"If people are boiling with resentment, their governing status will be less secure," said Zhang Lifan, an independent political observer in Beijing.

The attempts to show sensitivity to the public comes as the Communist Party under President Xi Jinping has intensified efforts to stamp out any potential organized opposition to its rule, tightening restrictions on rights advocates and religious organizations. Authorities have tightened controls over online expression and have increasingly used criminal prosecution to punish speech they do not tolerate.

"They have adopted draconian methods to suppress political dissent," Lam said. "So I think they realize that if they also adopt draconian and extra heavy handed methods regarding other demands from the population ... they will really become enemies of the people." AP

INDIA

Obama, Modi declare era of 'new trust' in relations

Julie Pace
White House Correspondent
New Delhi

PRESIDENT Barack Obama and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday declared an era of "new trust" in the often fraught relationship between their nations as the U.S. leader opened a three-day visit to New Delhi.

Standing side by side at the stately Hyderabad House, Obama and Modi cited progress toward putting in place a landmark civil nuclear agreement, as well as advances on climate change and defense ties.

But from the start, the day was more about putting their personal bond on display. Modi broke with protocol and wrapped Obama in an enthusiastic hug after Obama got off Air Force One.

Obama later told reporters that Modi's "strong personal commitment to the U.S.-India relationship gives us an opportunity to further energize these efforts."

Modi was as effusive. He called Obama by his first name and said "the chemistry that has brought Barack and me closer has also brought Washington and Delhi closer."

The centerpiece of Obama's visit was yesterday's annual Republic Day festivities, which got underway on a foggy, rain-soaked morning in New Delhi. The crowd erupted in cheers as Obama, along with first lady Michelle Obama, emerged from his armored black limousine and took his seat next to Modi on a viewing stand overlooking the parade route.

Republic Day marks the anniversary of India's democratic



U.S. President Barack Obama and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi wave to the media before a meeting in New Delhi

constitution going into force. The parade, which weaves its way past the imposing India Gate monument and a memorial to the unknown soldier, is part Soviet-style display of India's military hardware, part Macy's Thanksgiving Day-type parade with floats highlighting India's cultural diversity.

Obama's presence would have been unlikely only a few years ago.

Relations between the U.S. and India hit a low in 2013 after an Indian diplomat was arrested and strip-searched in New York over allegations that she lied on visa forms to bring her maid to the U.S. while paying the woman a pittance. The official's treatment caused outrage in New Delhi, and India retaliated against U.S. diplomats.

The U.S. and India also were at an impasse over implemen-

ting the civil nuclear agreement signed in 2008. The U.S. insisted on tracking fissile material it supplied to India. Also, Washington was frustrated by Indian legal liability provisions that have discouraged U.S. companies from capitalizing on new energy development in India because of concerns about their legal responsibilities in the event of a nuclear power plant accident

On Sunday, Obama said he and Modi had reached a "breakthrough understanding" on those areas of disagreements. Details on an accord were sparse.

Ben Rhodes, Obama's deputy national security adviser, said only that India "moved sufficiently on these issues to give us assurances that the issues are resolved." U.S. Ambassador Richard Verma said the agreement would not require new legislation.

The U.S. and India also agreed to extend a 10-year defense partnership deal and cooperate on the phasedown of hydrofluorocarbons, the greenhouse gases used for refrigeration and air conditioning.

Modi broke with protocol and wrapped Obama in an enthusiastic hug

Still, that was hardly the kind of sweeping climate change agreement the U.S. ultimately has in mind with India. The White House is hoping that the surprise deal with China late last year setting ambitious targets for cutting greenhouse gas emissions will influence India and others.

Modi, however, rejected comparisons with China. "India is an independent country, and there is no pressure on us from any country or any person," he told reporters Sunday.

Taking some of the luster off the trip, Obama does plan to cut his time in India slightly short. Following a speech this morning, he will travel to Saudi Arabia to pay respects to the royal family following the death of King Abdullah.

To make the trip to Riyadh, Obama scrapped plans to visit India's famed white marble Taj Mahal. **AP**

AT least 43 Philippine police commandos were killed in a fierce battle with Muslim guerrillas after launching an assault in which they may have killed one of southeast Asia's most-wanted terrorists, officials said yesterday.

A police Special Action Force member remained missing while 11 others were wounded in the daylong clashes Sunday in a far-flung village of Mamasapano town in Maguindanao province in the biggest single-day combat loss for the Philippine government in recent memory, officials said.

PHILIPPINES

Toll of Filipino commandos killed in rebel clash rises to 43

Interior Secretary Mar Roxas called the commandos "fallen heroes" who sacrificed their lives to try to capture Malaysian bombing suspect Zulkifli bin Hir, or Marwan. The top terror suspect may have been killed by the commandos, he said.

Another top terror suspect, Filipino bomb-maker Abdul Basit Usman, managed to escape,

according to Roxas.

After attacking Marwan, the police commandos came under fire from hardline Muslim insurgents in the marshy village of Tukanlipao while some strayed elsewhere and got entangled in a firefight with insurgents belonging to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the main Muslim rebel group, which last year

signed a new peace deal with the government, national police Deputy Director General Leonardo Espina said.

Under the truce, government forces are required to coordinate anti-terror assaults and other law enforcement operations with the Moro rebels to prevent accidental fighting. But the approximately 100 po-

lice commandos did not notify the rebels before they arrived in the dark, Moro rebel leader Mohagher Iqbal said.

"If somebody barges into your house, what will you do?" Iqbal said by telephone.

He said the 11,000-strong Moro group would file a protest over the action of the police commandos, but added the incident

was not likely to undermine the peace process, a view shared by Philippine officials.

"The peace process will not be affected because we're not dealing against the MILF here," Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin said, referring to the Liberation Front.

The United States has offered up to \$5 million for Marwan's capture and \$1 million for Usman. Both have been blamed by U.S. and Philippine authorities for deadly bomb attacks and providing bomb-making training to al-Qaida-linked militants in the country's south. **AP**

Kelvin Chan
Business Writer, Hong Kong

HACKING

Malaysia Air site infiltrated by group claiming support for IS

THE website of Malaysia Airlines was hacked yesterday by a group that proclaimed support for the militant Islamic State group and also vowed to release data stolen from the site.

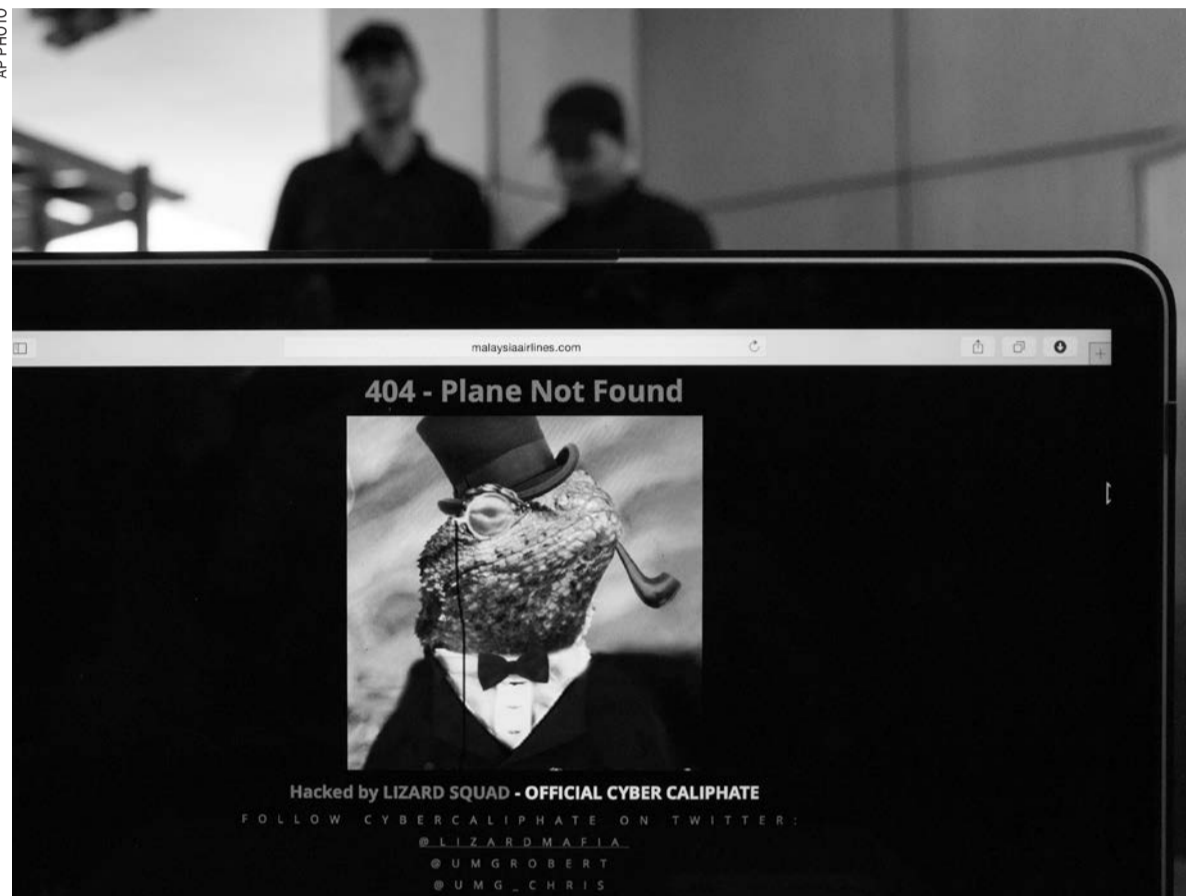
The airline's site was down for at least seven hours, replaced by a message from the hacker group, before the company brought it back online by mid-afternoon in Malaysia.

The hackers at first changed the site to display a message saying "404 - Plane Not Found" and that it was "Hacked by Cyber Caliphate," with a photo of one of the airline's Airbus A380 superjumbo jets. The browser tab for the website said "ISIS will prevail."

Malaysia Airlines is struggling to recover from twin disasters last year, including the disappearance of Flight 370, which authorities believed crashed 1,800 kilometers off Australia's west coast, and the downing of Flight 17 over Ukraine.

The hackers later replaced the jet with a picture of a lizard in a top hat, monocle and tuxedo smoking a pipe. The Islamic State reference was removed and the claim of responsibility changed to "Lizard Squad - Official Cyber Caliphate," with a link to the group's Twitter account.

The airline said in a statement that it was a "temporary glitch" that didn't affect passenger bookings and that the breach had been reported to Malaysia's transport ministry and Internet security agency.



Workers stand behind a computer which shows the hacked website of Malaysia Airlines, at a cafe in Petaling Jaya outside Kuala Lumpur

It said user data "remains secured."

The group, however, tweeted that it was "going to dump some loot found on malaysiaairlines.com servers soon," and posted a link to a screenshot of what appeared to be a passenger flight

booking from the airline's internal email system.

The particular booking was made by Malaysian Amy Keh, who said she had made it in October for her mother and two relatives to travel from Kuala Lumpur to Taiwan in March.

"I am a bit worried about their security. Now the whole world knows that they will be going to Taipei," said Keh, who logged on yesterday to check the itinerary. She said the website looked different and called the airline, which told her of the hacking. Howe-

■ The hackers changed the site to display a message saying '404 - Plane Not Found'

ver, she only found out when contacted by The Associated Press that the travel information was posted online.

The Lizard Squad group last year claimed it was behind attacks on Sony's online PlayStation network and Microsoft's Xbox site.

In August, it also tweeted to American Airlines that there might be explosives on a plane carrying the president of Sony Online Entertainment, which makes video games, forcing the flight to be diverted.

Explaining how the hack had occurred, Malaysia Airlines said its domain name system was "compromised" and users were redirected to the hacker group's website. The domain name system translates web addresses typed into browsers into the numbers that computers use to identify and connect with each other on the Internet. **AP**

JAPAN

Tokyo seeks Jordan's help on gaining hostage's release

Elaine Kurtenbach, Tokyo

JAPAN sought help from Jordan and other countries yesterday in its race to save a hostage held by the extremist Islamic State group, with no signs of progress on securing his release.

The chief government spokesman refused direct comment on the contents of talks with Jordan, where a Japanese envoy is coordinating regional efforts to save hostage Kenji Goto.

The Islamic State group said in an online video on Jan. 20 that it had two Japanese hostages and would kill them within 72 hours unless it paid USD200 million.

Over the weekend, a



An anti-Prime Minister Shinzo Abe protester attends a rally with a sign in front of Abe's official residence in Tokyo on Sunday

new, unverified video showed a still photo of Goto, a 47-year-old journalist, holding a picture of what appears to be the body of fellow hostage Haruna Yukawa. It included a recording of a voice claiming to be Goto, saying his captors

want a prisoner exchange instead of ransom.

Asked if the latest demand, which brings Jordan into the picture, makes the situation more complex, Yoshihide Suga avoided a straight answer. But he said, "Naturally, Jordan has

its own thoughts."

"The government is doing its utmost as the situation is still developing," he told reporters. "We are seeking cooperation from every possible party toward a release (of the remaining hostage)."

Japanese officials have indicated they are treating the video released over the weekend as authentic and thus accepting the likelihood that Yukawa, a 42-year-old adventurer captured in Syria last summer, was killed.

"It was an extremely dastardly act," Suga said.

In Amman, Yasuhide Nakayama, the Japanese deputy foreign minister in charge of the crisis, emerged from meetings

with no fresh progress to report.

"Due to the nature of is problem, please understand why I cannot disclose information such as with whom I had meetings," he said.

Nakayama vowed to "absolutely not give up until the end."

The Associated Press could not verify the contents of the weekend video message, which differed from earlier videos released by the Islamic State group, which now holds a third of both Syria and Iraq.

News of the likely killing of Yukawa drew international condemnation, and outrage in Japan. Goto is thought to have been seized in late October after

going there to try to rescue him.

Some in Japan are critical of the two men for taking such risks. Some Japanese also are criticizing Prime Minister Shinzo Abe for pursuing a more assertive foreign policy, saying it may have contributed to the crisis.

Abe has pushed to expand the role for Japan's troops — one that has remained strictly confined to self-defense under the pacifist constitution adopted after the nation's defeat in World War II.

While on a visit to the Middle East earlier this month, Abe announced \$200 million in humanitarian aid to the nations fighting the militants. **AP**

GREECE

Syriza to form gov't after election victory

Derek Gatopoulos, Athens

GREECE'S Syriza party gained the key backing needed to form a government yesterday, creating a surprise alliance with a small right-wing party that signals possible confrontation over the country's bailout.

Although the alliance between two ideologically opposed parties who share only their opposition to the bailout was a surprise, it nevertheless boosted stock markets across Europe that had fallen on news of the uncertain election results and fear of a second election. Stocks had fallen as much as 4 percent in Athens yesterday morning.

The right-wing Independent Greeks party said it would back Syriza leader Alexis Tsipras to be the next prime minister, after he fell just short of the majority needed to govern alone following Sunday's poll.

"From this moment, the country has a government. Independent Greeks give a vote of confidence to Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras," Independent Greeks leader Panos Kammenos said — without clarifying whether he would join a coalition with Tsipras or give support to a minority

government.

Tsipras has promised to renegotiate Greece's massive bailout agreements, but has vowed not to take any unilateral action against lenders from other eurozone countries.

With 99.8 percent of the vote counted, Syriza had 149 seats in the 300-member parliament with 36.3 percent of the vote. The ruling conservative coalition was on 27.8 percent, and the extreme right Golden Dawn party in third place with 6.28 percent.

Tsipras' choice to negotiate with the Independent Greeks — a party aligned in Europe with the UK Independence Party — rather than the centrist Potami caused concern that he could take a tough line in negotiations with rescue lenders.

Syriza's financial planning official, Giorgos Stathakis, confirmed yesterday that the new government had no plans to meet with negotiators from the "troika" of the European Central Bank, the European Commission and the International Monetary Fund and would instead seek talks directly with governments.

Greek voters swung to the once-marginal left-wing party after five years of punishing austerity measures deman-

ded under 240 billion euro (USD268 billions) bailout deals threw hundreds of thousands of people out of work and left nearly a third of the country without state health insurance.

Thousands of supporters turned out to watch the 40-year-old Tsipras speak in central Athens after his opponents conceded.

"The Greek people have written history," he said, to cheers. "Greece is leaving behind catastrophic austerity, fear and autocratic government."

Outside the party's campaign tent in central Athens, supporters hugged each other and danced in celebration.

"It's like we've been born again and finally feel some hope," said Litsa Zarkada, a fired government cleaning worker. "We were thrown into the street just before we could take our pension. We have been through so much.

The new government faces an immediate cash shortage, with a dwindling primary surplus, upcoming loan repayments, and limits on the money it can raise using treasury bill auctions.

Megan Greene, chief economist at Manulife Asset Management, said the government will be unable to afford to run



Leader of the Syriza left-wing party Alexis Tsipras waves to his supporters outside Athens University Headquarters

its day-to-day operations and pay back debt that falls due in March in the absence of additional cash from international creditors.

"Syriza and its creditors are stuck in a Gordian Knot, and both sides will need to cave on something. Neither Greece nor its creditors want Greece to default or exit the euro-

zone, so a compromise will probably be found," Greene told the AP.

The new alliance, she said, "suggests the new government will engage in dangerous brinkmanship with Greece's creditors as it tries to negotiate funding to stave off utter bankruptcy over the next few months." AP

EGYPT

Officials say 2 Mubarak sons freed from prison

Hamza Hendawi, Cairo

THE two sons of ousted Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak were released from prison yesterday, nearly four years after they were first arrested along with their father, authorities said.

Security officials said the two, wealthy businessman Alaa and Mubarak's one-time heir apparent Gamal, walked free from Torah Prison in a southern Cairo suburb shortly after daybreak and headed to their respective homes in the capital's upscale Heliopolis suburb.

The two, along with their father, still face a retrial on corruption charges. Separately, the two sons also face trial on insider



The two sons of ex-President Hosni Mubarak, Gamal, left, and Alaa Mubarak, right

trading charges. They had been acquitted of other charges.

Mubarak, 86 and ailing, stepped down in February 2011 in the face of a popu-

lar uprising. He and his two sons were arrested in April that year. Mubarak remains at a military hospital in a southern suburb of Cairo although there

are no longer any legal grounds for his detention.

The security officials spoke on condition of anonymity as they weren't authorized to speak to journalists.

The release of the two had been expected since a Cairo court ordered their release on bail Thursday.

The Mubarak sons were sentenced to four years in prison on charges of using in-state funds to renovate family residences. Their father got three years in the case. The sentences were overturned earlier this month.

Mubarak was sentenced to life in prison in 2012 for failing to prevent the killing of some 900 protesters during the 18-day uprising against his rule. That verdict also was

overturned on appeal. He was retried but the case was dismissed last month on a technicality.

Mubarak's sons walked free a day after deadly clashes between anti-government protesters and police marked the fourth anniversary of the uprising that ended their father's 29-year rule. That violence Sunday left at least 23 people dead, including three men authorities said died planting bombs and three police officers, and wounded 97, the Health Ministry reported.

The two, particularly Gamal, are viewed by many Egyptians as among the pillars of an authoritarian and corrupt administration that struck an alliance with mega-wealthy bu-

sinessmen at the expense of the nation's poor and disadvantaged.

Mubarak was widely believed to have been grooming Gamal to succeed him. The two consistently denied that, but the perceived succession plan, along with corruption, police brutality and poverty, were among the main causes of the 2011 uprising.

The release of the two sons could spark further protests and would certainly fuel the notion among the secular and liberal activists behind the 2011 uprising that the Mubarak regime has been making a comeback since President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, a general-turned-politician, took office in June. AP

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what's ON



HAND PAINTED PORCELAIN – FROM HEAVEN TO EARTH: EAST-WEST RITUALS BY ARLINDA FROTA
TIME: 2pm-7pm (closed on Sundays)
UNTIL: February 7, 2015
VENUE: Creative Macau, G/F Macau Cultural Centre Building, Xian Xing Hai Avenue
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2875 3282

19TH AND 20TH CENTURY PORTRAIT OIL PAINTINGS – MAM COLLECTION
TIME: 10am-7pm
 (Closed on Mondays, No admission after 6:30 pm)
UNTIL: December 31, 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

RETURN TO THE ORIGIN – RESTORING MAM COLLECTION
TIME: 10am-7pm
 (Closed on Mondays, no admission after 6:30 pm)
UNTIL: March 8, 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

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

STARTING POINT – DENIS MURRELL AND HIS YOUNG ARTIST'S PAINTINGS
TIME: 10am-7pm (Mondays to Fridays)
 3pm-7pm (Saturdays, closed on Sundays and public holidays)
UNTIL: January 30, 2015
VENUE: Rui Cunha Foundation Gallery, Avenida da Praia Grande, n° 749, r/c
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2892 3288

Offbeat

ZOO OFFERS SCORPION ADOPTIONS FOR VALENTINE'S DAY SINGLES

Feeling the sting of rejection? The San Francisco Zoo is offering the chance to "adopt" a hissing cockroach or giant scorpion in honor of that special ex-someone for Valentine's Day.

The zoo is highlighting two of its less desirable inhabitants through the adopt-an-animal program that usually raises money for the care of more cuddly-looking creatures, such as penguins and pandas.

"These invertebrates are aggressive, active, and alarmingly nocturnal. Much like your low-life ex, they are usually found in and around low-elevation valleys where they dig elaborate burrows or 'caves,'" the zoo says on its promotion page for the desert scorpion. "Also just like you-know-who, when a suitable victim wanders by, the scorpion grabs the doomed creature with its pinchers and stings the prey ... Charming."

For USD50 and up, donors can adopt a scorpion and have the zoo send a certificate and stuffed stinger to the person who inspired the adoption. The cockroach valentine that the zoo says represents "the detritus of your love life" costs \$25.

"With a little luck, this generous donation will release your bad love life karma so that you never have to encounter a cockroach again," the zoo said.

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

22 JAN - 28 JAN



BLACKHAT
ROOM 1
2.15, 4.45, 7.15, 9.45 pm
Director: Michael Mann
Starring: Chris Hemsworth, Viola Davis, Wei Tang
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 133min



INTO THE WOODS
ROOM 2
2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm
Director: Robert Marshall
Starring: James Corden, Emily Blunt, Meryl Streep
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 125min



AMERICAN SNIPER
ROOM 3
2.15, 4.45, 7.15, 9.45 pm
Director: Clint Eastwood
Starring: Bradley Cooper, Sienna Miller, Kyle Gallner
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 132min

MACAU TOWER

24 JAN - 4 FEB

BLACKHAT
2.30, 4.30, 7.00, 9.30 pm
Director: Michael Mann
Starring: Chris Hemsworth, Viola Davis, Wei Tang
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 133min

this day in history



1984 MICHAEL JACKSON BURNED IN PEPSI AD

Michael Jackson has received hospital treatment for serious burns to his head after his hair caught light during a freak filming accident.

The 25-year-old entertainer was singing his hit "Billie Jean" for a Pepsi Cola commercial in Los Angeles when the special effects went wrong.

Three thousand fans saw a firework display erupt behind the superstar, showering him in sparks and setting light to his hair.

Some studio audience members said he was so calm, they thought the incident was part of the act.

The singer is reported to have covered his burning hair with his jacket as his brothers and stage hands rushed to help.

One member of the audience, Virginia Watson, witnessed the accident.

"He was wonderful. He reassured people even as he was being taken away on a stretcher", she said.

Michael Jackson was taken to hospital where he was treated for second degree burns.

Plastic surgeon Steven Hoeffin said Jackson, who was voted America's entertainer of the year, could need surgery to his head.

"He is in discomfort", said the doctor. "It will take a few weeks to determine the hair loss."

The superstar is earning a reputed £7m for the series of Pepsi Cola adverts which also feature his four famous brothers. It is part of a huge sponsorship deal the singer agreed last year.

The multimillionaire's album "Thriller" has just entered the Guinness book of records as the best selling LP of all time.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Jackson was at the pinnacle of his career around the time of his accident. He won eight Grammy awards in 1984 but then stories about his bizarre lifestyle began to circulate.

The performer's image was dealt a severe blow when he was accused of abusing Jordy Chandler at his Neverland ranch in 1993. Jackson settled the case out of court with an estimated \$20m payment to the Chandler family.

In the same year, Jackson married Lisa-Marie Presley but they divorced 19 months later.

Four years later, the superstar married nurse Debbie Rowe.

They had a son and daughter together then divorced in 1999.

Michael's third child was born to a mystery mother in 2002. He caused a media stir months later, when he dangled the baby off the third floor balcony of a Berlin Hotel in an effort to show the child off to fans.

In November 2003, he was arrested and charged with child abuse after British journalist Martin Bashir had made a documentary in which Jackson admitted sharing his bed with children.

Dubbed the trial of the century, it lasted four months and ended in June 2005 when Michael Jackson was cleared of all charges.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
It's time to try a new activity — even if you're satisfied with what you've got. Your fiery energy is craving action, so get out there and find something new to you to try on for size. It may be the next big thing!

Taurus
April 20-May 20
You've got a lot of choices facing you, and you need to sort them out before they get away from you. Fortunately, you've got some great energy to parse them all out, so get busy!

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21
You've got to deal with someone who thinks you owe them — but you barely know them! It's one of those days when you may be better off just giving in, as this could be a fruitful relationship eventually.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
This isn't a good time to let your emotions get the better of you — it's important that you keep a lid on them, actually! Your energy may feel too weak to take care of the job, but it's more than possible.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You have a great time taking care of your business today — so ramp it up and see what comes of it! You almost certainly learn something new and interesting before the day ends.

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22
Your true sense of purpose is blossoming today — so make sure that you're dealing with people who are really on your side. It's easier than ever for you to make meaningful choices.

Libra
Sep.23-Oct. 22
You need to focus on people today — and not just those you consider family. It's a great time to expand your business network or to find new ways to make connections. Life is getting better!

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
When was the last time you went jogging or hit the gym? Now is the perfect time to recommit yourself to exercise or any other healthy habit — or to break an old, unhealthy one.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
A kid needs your help — but they are sure to help you in return in some small way. You may feel a spiritual boost from giving them what they need. Teach them and they will learn to help others!

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Your inclination is to worry about things you can't control, but today is more about action than about stewing in your own juices. Try to push yourself to do something — it could be anything!

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
A big new idea is coming your way — and you need to prepare for it! The thing is, the rest of the world might not be ready for it, but you can get to work on your own while they play catch-up.

Pisces
Feb.19-Mar. 20
Something is hidden from view, and it might be really frustrating trying to figure it out. Don't push things too far though — clarity is almost certainly not coming until at least tomorrow.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

				1	3	7	6		
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5			9						
	3	8		4					
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Easy+

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Hard

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						4		2	
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6									
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	5	4							
									1

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-4	5	smoggy/overcast
Harbin	-16	-10	cloudy
Tianjin	-1	4	cloudy/overcast
Urumqi	-13	-10	flurry
Xi'an	-2	5	smoggy
Lhasa	-6	11	clear/cloudy
Chengdu	8	14	cloudy
Chongqing	12	14	overcast
Kunming	3	20	clear
Nanjing	6	12	overcast
Shanghai	8	12	drizzle/overcast
Wuhan	4	10	drizzle
Hangzhou	8	12	drizzle/overcast
Taipei	16	22	overcast/drizzle
Guangzhou	15	25	cloudy
Hong Kong	17	21	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-9	-6	flurry
Frankfurt	1	3	drizzle
Paris	1	5	overcast/drizzle
London	4	8	drizzle
New York	-4	3	cloudy/drizzle

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Froth; 6- Central points; 10- CPR specialist; 13- Put to rest; 14- Till bills; 15- Perceive as fact; 16- Mother-of-pearl; 17- Home of the Bruins; 18- The very ___!; 19- Editor's mark; 20- Erin; 22- Familiarize; 24- Official count of population; 28- Writer; 31- Actress Berry; 32- Style; 34- Salt Lake City player; 36- Breathe hard; 37- East ender?; 38- Unity; 41- Univ. aides; 42- Sly look; 44- Tic ___ Dough; 45- Domesticates; 47- Causing goose bumps; 49- Night flight; 51- Title of reverence for God; 53- Close up again; 56- Ray of sunlight; 59- General ___ chicken; 61- Hook's helper; 64- Linguist Chomsky; 65- Device with 88 keys; 66- Some DVD players; 67- "Born Free" lion; 68- English architect Jones; 69- Small island; 70- Phooey!; 71- Heron, usually white;

DOWN: 1- Without; 2- Aristotle's teacher; 3- Stomach woe; 4- Pertaining to Mars; 5- Spud bud; 6- Next after the third; 7- A single time; 8- Red or white, in the blood; 9- Designer Mizrahi; 10- Finish; 11- "The Simpsons" bartender; 12- Defunct airline; 15- Abduct; 20- Purpose; 21- O.T. book; 23- Monetary unit of Spain; 25- Roofing stone; 26- Arm bones; 27- Hardens; 29- Prevention dose; 30- Road with a no.; 32- Avarice; 33- Diciembre follower; 35- Regard; 37- Zeno's home; 39- Musical ability; 40- Claims; 43- Salon jobs; 46- Assembly; 48- It's bottled in Cannes; 50- Stage plays; 52- Type of sanctum; 54- Light ___; 55- Rope used to guide a horse; 57- Gaucho's weapon; 58- 3:00; 60- Chimney residue; 61- Madrid Mrs.; 62- AT&T rival; 63- Absorb, as a cost; 65- Chart shape

Yesterday's solution

A	L	O	S	T	O	N	I	M	E	L	P			
R	E	N	E	W	A	N	C	E	T	A	R	E	A	
N	O	T	W	I	T	H	S	T	A	N	D	I	N	G
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B	A	C	T	E	R	I	O	S	T	A	S	N	I	S
O	T	T	A	W	A	R	I	D	S	N	E	E		
L	A	I	N	E	S	O	S	U	B	D	E	R		
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E	N	D	S	E	G	G	Y	E	L	I	O	T		

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69					70			71			

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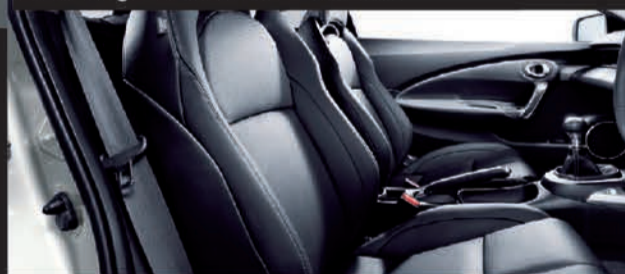
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TENNIS

Serena Williams to meet Cibulkova in Aussie Open quarters

John Pye
Sports Writer, Melbourne

MOTIVATED by a Grand Slam loss that stung her more than most, Serena Williams dug deep for a 2-6, 6-3, 6-2 comeback win over Garbine Muguruza yesterday to reach the Australian Open quarterfinals.

The top-ranked Williams was pushed for 2 1/2 sets by No. 24-seeded Muguruza, who matched her in the heavy-hitting stakes, and who had conceded only four games to her in a second-round upset last year at the French Open.

"She made me play a lot better. I had to play the best match of the tournament or else I was going to be out," Williams said. "She was just hitting winners like left and right. Every shot I hit, she basically hit a winner on. So I had to change my approach."

The five-time Australian Open winner next faces Dominika Cibulkova, who reproduced the kind of tennis that took her to the final here last year as she beat two-time champion Victoria Azarenka 6-2, 3-6, 6-3.

Defending champion Stan Wawrinka beat Guillermo Garcia-Lopez 7-6 (2), 6-4, 4-6, 7-6 (8) to move into the men's quarterfinals, where he'll play U.S. Open finalist Kei Nishikori. No. 8 Milos Raonic advanced with a 6-4, 4-6, 6-3, 6-7 (7), 6-3 win over No. 12 Feliciano Lopez to reach the last eight in Australia for the



Serena Williams

first time.

Spurred on by hundreds of flag-waving Japanese supporters at Rod Laver Arena, No. 5-ranked Nishikori had little trouble in a 6-3, 6-3, 6-3 win over No. 9 David Ferrer, who reached the French Open final and Australian Open semis in 2013.

Nishikori's routine win was unlike the three-setter Williams endured, when she appeared to be laboring and had a serious cough. Williams struggled with her serve in the first set, winning only one of a dozen points on her second serve. She couldn't convert her six break-point chances,

while Muguruza broke her twice.

"She hits the ball really, really big, really, really hard," Williams said. "Someone in the crowd was like 'C'mon Serena use spin' and I was like 'OK.' There's coaches everywhere out here! Thank you."

Madison Keys advanced to her first Grand Slam quarterfinal with a 6-2, 6-4 win over good friend and fellow American Madison Brengle. She'll play the winner of the later fourth-round match between Venus Williams and Agnieszka Radwanska.

"It's a huge opportunity for me. I'm going to make the most of it," she said. "I want to be at the end

of the tournament holding the trophy up. That's my goal in the long run."

Williams hasn't advanced past the quarterfinals at Melbourne Park since winning her last title here in 2010. She went out in the fourth round last year, and followed that up with the 6-2, 6-2 loss to Muguruza at Roland Garros — her most lopsided loss at a major.

There was a lot to distract Williams in the first set. Six planes were doing coordinated loops and tricks in the sky over Rod Laver Arena, as part of the national holiday celebrations.

She had difficulty breathing at times, and coughed throughout.

"When I got down, I was thinking, 'What can I do now?'" Williams said. "Whatever happens, I thought, I've won this five times."

She gradually picked up power in the second set, broke for a 5-3 lead and then fired three aces and a service winner to level it.

After missing break points on Muguruza's serve in the opening game of the third, Williams saved six break points and needed almost 13 minutes to hold.

Her confidence up, Williams broke for a 3-2 lead and dominated the rest of the match.

She'll need every bit of confidence against the 1.61-meter (5-foot-3) Cibulkova, who pounded 44 winners and broke former No. 1-ranked Azarenka's serve seven times. The No. 10-ranked Cibulkova lost the final here last year to the now-retired Li Na, and is back in that kind of form.

"I just walked onto the court and all great memories came to my mind," she said. "I thought 'I'm a great player and I can do it.'"

Azarenka, unseeded this year following an injury-interrupted 2014, won the Australian title in 2012 and '13 and reached the quarterfinals last year. She opened the tournament with a win over 2013 semifinalist Sloane Stephens and then defeated No. 8-seeded Caroline Wozniacki — the U.S. Open finalist last year. **AP**

ARSENAL, West Ham and Aston Villa redressed the balance for Premier League teams after a flow of upsets in the FA Cup, securing narrow wins over awkward lower-league opposition to advance to the fifth round on Sunday.

Chelsea and Manchester City were among five teams in the Premier League's top nine to be eliminated on Saturday on one of the most astonishing days in the famous competition's 144-year history.

The underdogs couldn't continue the shocks a day later, with Arsenal beating second-tier Brighton 3-2 after being set on its way by early goals from Theo Walcott and Mesut Ozil. Tomas Rosicky was the other scorer for Arsenal, which is looking to retain the trophy and, as

FOOTBALL

Arsenal, West Ham, Villa stem flow of upsets in FA Cup



Arsenal's Mesut Ozil, right, beats Brighton's Lewis Dunk to score a goal, during the English FA Cup 4th round soccer match between Brighton & Hove Albion and Arsenal, at the Amex Stadium, Brighton

the fifth-place team in the top flight, is the highest-ranked side guaranteed a

spot in the last 16. Senegal striker Diafra Sakho came off the ben-

ch and scored an 81st-minute header to earn West Ham a 1-0 victory at Bristol City, which is second in English football's third tier.

Villa had the toughest assignment against second-tier leader Bournemouth but came through with a 2-1 home win, with new signing Carles Gil — with his first goal since moving from Valencia — and Andreas Weimann scoring for the Premier League side.

The FA Cup was thrown wide open after Saturday's remarkable events,

when Premier League leader Chelsea squandered a two-goal lead to lose 4-2 to third-tier Bradford and English champion Manchester City was beaten 2-0 by second-tier Middlesbrough. The fourth-round surprises began Friday, with Manchester United held to a 0-0 draw by fourth-tier Cambridge.

Any sense of another upset at Brighton's Amex Stadium was snuffed out by the 24th minute, by which time Arsenal had sped into a 2-0 lead.

Walcott put Arsenal ahead in the second mi-

nute when he controlled a cross and drilled a low finish under the goalkeeper. Ozil, making his first start since October because of injury, then was found by a probing pass from Rosicky and placed a low finish into the corner.

"The results from yesterday maybe got us on our toes and we got off to a quick pace," Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger, "and I think that surprised Brighton."

Sloppy defending allowed Brighton to reduce the deficit through Chris O'Grady in the 50th but Rosicky restored Arsenal's two-goal lead by volleying in from the edge of the area. Sam Baldock lifted a neat finish over Arsenal goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny in the 75th to set up a tense finish. **AP**

opinion

Our Desk
Catarina Pinto



IN THE NAME OF FREEDOM

On January 7, as some hurried to wrap up a working day on this side of the planet, two men killed 12 people at satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo in France – allegedly over the publication's representation of the Prophet Muhammad through its cartoons.

The following days saw massive crowds taking to the streets in the name of freedom of speech. The rallies were held in name of liberties that a country like France treasures deeply. Millions attended rallies calling for unity, not only in Paris but in other European cities.

As a leap of faith, it was moving to see how people of different ages, races and nationalities came together in the name of freedom. They held their banners calling for unity as well as pencils serving as a symbol of freedom of the press.

But how united is this Europe in vowing to defend freedom of expression? How far can we go while making use of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights clause that stipulates freedom of expression as "the right of every individual to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers"?

Many among France's Muslim community condemned the attack, but that doesn't go to say that they agree with the satirical magazine's approach either.

"They [cartoonists] were warned but they kept on mocking the Prophet," an 18-year old French Muslim told BBC News, adding: "but you cannot kill for that. You cannot go against press freedom in France. Still, they will have to answer to God."

While many shouted through the Paris streets "Je suis Charlie" (I am Charlie), others felt compelled to take to the streets to say exactly the opposite. They are not Charlie, mainly because they refused to take part in a national movement they thought of as backing cartoonists who "insulted" the Prophet Muhammad.

Others in countries as far as Australia held rallies under the motto: "Je suis Muslim."

I don't see Charlie Hebdo's cartoons as particularly disrespectful towards the Muslim community or the Catholic community, which was also "targeted" in their drawings. But then again I am not Muslim, and understand that those who are might hold a different opinion.

The discussion around the degree of respectfulness of their cartoons and the subsequent attack is useless. Killing in the name of any god – or in any name for that matter – is a repellent and hideous act.

Hugh Schofield, BBC correspondent in Paris, wrote that millions of people in the city demonstrated because they were afraid: "People demonstrate for causes that they feel are under threat. Demonstrating reveals our insecurity." I couldn't agree more.

On top of fearing any threat to freedom of expression, I fear what I can't possibly understand. I fail to understand, for instance, the so-called "Pegida" movement. The Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the West has been staging weekly rallies in Germany – since its establishment in October aimed at creating an anti-immigrant movement – with a particular focus on Muslims.

In November last year, Poland saw a rally during its Independence Day turn violent – apparently thanks to nationalist demonstrators.

A documentary by The Guardian, published last week, followed a 19-year-old girl as she joined the far-right National Radical Camp. Rather scary images: a man shouts "Polish land only in Polish hands!" at the camp, young women and men are incited to shout "Hail the Greater Poland, Hail!" while wearing army-like uniforms, and they run up the mountain while shouting: "For the Nation!"

I can't help but fear any kind of exaggerated patriotism. It reminds me of a time I did not live in, a time I don't wish to see repeated.

THE BUZZ JEWISH GROUP URGES STEPS IN EUROPE TO COMBAT ANTI-SEMITISM

The president of the European Jewish Congress is urging governments to quickly adopt measures to stop the rising hatred of Jews on the continent.

Moshe Kantor was talking yesterday ahead of a two-day international meeting in Prague organized by his group that gathers speakers of parliaments, lawmakers, lawyers, experts and politicians to discuss the issue.

In an interview with the Associated Press, Kantor

says changes in EU legislation are needed, such as the establishment of a ministry for security, a special envoy for anti-Semitism and legislation for promoting tolerance.

After four French Jews were killed by Islamic extremists at a kosher market in Paris earlier this month, Kantor says the Jewish communities are frightened, and significantly increased security is needed to protect them.

US: Christie takes major step in possible White House run

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, a high-profile Republican, has taken his firmest step yet toward running for president, launching an organization that allows him to raise money for a potential 2016 campaign.

While not a formal entry into the race, opening the political action committee is the clearest sign yet that Christie will seek the Republican presidential nomination.

If he runs, Christie could find himself competing for support and donations with Mitt Romney and Jeb Bush – two favorites of the Republican establishment who have greater national profiles.

Bush, the son and brother of presidents, announced in December he was launching a similar organization. That kicked off an aggressive race to lock down donors and may have drawn 2012 Republican nominee Mitt Romney into the race.

"We believe there's a void right now in leadership throughout the country," Christie's chief political adviser Mike DuHaime told The Wall Street Journal, which first reported the news. "We aim to support candidates who are willing to take on tough problems and make tough decisions."

While the Republican race to succeed President Barack Obama is seen as wide open, Democrats are expected to heavily favor Hillary Rodham Clinton if she launches another presidential campaign.



New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie

Christie's creation of the political action committee 7/87/8 – called Leadership Matters for America – was widely expected. The former federal prosecutor has been in the Republican Party's presidential discussion since 2012, when he passed on the race and was later considered by Romney as a potential running mate.

But Christie also has challenges to overcome, including the still-pending federal investigation into accusations that former staff members and appointees created traffic jams as political payback against the Democratic mayor of a New York suburb by blocking access lanes to the heavily traveled George Washington Bridge into Manhattan.

He's also dogged by questions about the economy of New Jersey, including several recent downgrades of the state's credit rating and sluggish job growth. Christie is also viewed with distrust in certain conservative circles, while others question whether his brash persona and habit

of confrontation will play well outside his home state.

After overwhelmingly winning re-election in heavily Democratic New Jersey in 2013, Christie turned quickly toward laying the groundwork for a 2016 campaign. In the past several months, he has courted donors, convened briefing sessions on foreign policy and made repeated visits to early-voting states, including Iowa over the weekend.

Christie's campaign is likely to focus on many of the themes he's spent years developing in New Jersey, including a pitch that he can expand the Republican Party's tent by appealing to independent, women and minority voters, who helped him win re-election.

He recently completed a year of fundraising as chair of the Republican Governors Association. The group raised more than \$100 million and helped Republican candidates win a series of unexpected races, including the nominally Democratic states of Maryland and Illinois.

Serving as RGA chief gave Christie the opportunity to travel across the country and build relationships with donors and activists. He is also one of his party's most talented one-on-one politicians, reveling in the kind of interaction that voters in the crucial early voting states of Iowa and New Hampshire demand. **AP**

THE DECISIVE MOMENT



Selfie. A visitor takes a selfie with a seal in a water tunnel at the zoo in Gelsenkirchen, Germany, yesterday.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	55-75 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	60-80 Moderate
Ambient	40-60 Moderate

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

MALAYSIA Southeast Asia's biggest budget carrier AirAsia is scrapping fuel surcharges on tickets following the decline in global oil prices. AirAsia said the move also applies to flights under its long-haul arm AirAsia X.

YEMEN Barack Obama defends his counterterrorism strategy in tumultuous Yemen, saying efforts to root out a dangerous al-Qaida affiliate there would not be affected by the political vacuum in the country. The U.S. campaign against al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula is heavily dependent on using drone strikes to take out terror targets. Obama has held up that approach as a model for the military mission against the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria, which relies on airstrikes instead of U.S. ground troops.



SYRIA Kurdish fighters backed by intense U.S.-led airstrikes pushed the Islamic State group almost entirely out of the Syrian town of Kobani yesterday, marking a major loss for extremists whose hopes for easy victory dissolved into a bloody, costly siege that seems close to ending in defeat.

UKRAINE's president says intercepted radio and telephone conversations prove that Russia-backed separatists were responsible for firing the rockets that pounded the southeastern city of Mariupol and killed at least 30 people. The attack on Mariupol, a strategically situated port city that had been relatively quiet for months, alarmed the West and looked likely further to aggravate relations with Russia.



USA Miss Colombia Paulina Vega has been crowned Miss Universe, beating out first runner-up Miss USA Nia Sanchez and contestants from more than 80 other countries.