

EXCLUSIVE
BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT
VENETIAN'S BECKHAM CAMPAIGN P2

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA Former NBA player Yao Ming, among leading Chinese sports figures to back Beijing's bid for the 2022 Winter Olympics, says the city's infrastructure and experience hosting the 2008 Summer Games makes it a prime candidate.

CHINA Deng Liqun, a former conservative propaganda chief known for his criticism of China's economic reforms, died Tuesday in Beijing of illnesses, according to the official Xinhua News Agency. He was 99.

TAIWAN Six inmates took the warden and several other people hostage at a prison in the southern Taiwanese port city of Kaohsiung yesterday, the official Central News Agency and other news reports said. The six inmates — convicted of burglary, murder and drug crimes — were believed to be armed, CNA said. Witnesses interviewed by private cable news station TVBS said gunshots were heard.

MALAYSIAN police detain a cartoonist and investigate two lawmakers for sedition over tweets and a cartoon condemning the judiciary for dismissing opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim's final appeal against a sodomy conviction. Anwar began a 5-year prison sentence Tuesday in a case widely seen as politically motivated to eliminate any threats to the ruling coalition. More on p12

THAILAND Police have arrested a man accused of masterminding a conspiracy to slander the country's monarchy on the Internet, in the latest move by the military-installed government to protect the palace's reputation.

VIETNAM A prominent Vietnamese blogger who is partially paralyzed and was jailed two months ago for posting articles that oppose the Communist Party said yesterday he was released from prison on medical parole.

More on backpage

Bid for radio taxi service set to open in 1st half of 2015 P3

SOUTH KOREA

Incheon Airport to lure Chinese with Singapore-style resort P6

COURTESY OF GRIMSHAW ARCHITECTS





A TV commercial shows the iconic celebrity at the integrated resort

A BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT 'NEVER SETTLE'

Ad campaign starring David Beckham kicks off tomorrow

DAVID Beckham has just sent a football soaring 60-feet through the air with one of his signature bending free kicks. Only he's not on a football pitch, nor is he wearing a football kit. He's dressed sharply in a suit and tie in The Venetian Macao's entryway colonnade. Despite the well-buffed marbled floor, he somehow magically commands his slick-bottomed leather oxfords to curve the ball perfectly by the reception area's landmark armillary sphere – one of the integrated resort's most popular photo-op locations.

The incredible kick is one of the more eye-catching scenes in the dramatic television commercial starring the global icon – and it's a shot so good it looks like it might have been done with the assistance of special effects. But it wasn't; it's 100 per cent Beckham and he nailed it in just a few takes.

The TV spot is the centerpiece of The Venetian Macao's newest advertising campaign, "Never Settle." It was filmed by renowned American director and photographer Anthony Mandler – an experienced and sought-after collaborator of Beckham's and other celebrities such as Rihanna, Jay Z and Beyoncé.

The commercial features Beckham experiencing the ongoing activities offered by the integrated resort – from the luxury of its suites to the entertainment of its gondola-ploughed canals.

According to Sands China's sources, his journey through the integrated resort is meant to exemplify The Venetian's "Never Settle" attitude "of delivering the most outstanding experiences for its guests and visitors in hotel accommodation, luxury shopping, fine dining and entertainment."

"The Venetian Macao has earned a solid reputation as a place where guests never have to settle for anything but the best – in luxurious accommodation, superstar entertainment, award-winning dining, world-class shopping, and engaging exhibitions," said Dave Horton, chief marketing officer of Las Vegas Sands Corp. "David Beckham's life is an inspirational example of the 'Never Settle' spirit, and that same spirit is embodied in everything The Venetian Macao delivers for thousands upon thousands of visitors every day."

Amazingly, the TV commercial was shot enti-

I am thrilled to be part of their story, which is so well brought to life and beautifully narrated

DAVID BECKHAM

rely in secret and without any publicity leaks – at a property that operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and sees upwards of 100,000 visitors daily during peak periods. So how did they do it?

Easy – well sort of easy, if you happen to be a night owl. Scenes featuring Beckham were only filmed between 2 a.m. and 6 a.m. in cordoned off areas, in order not to affect operations and the experience of visitors. To top it off, the monumental task of capturing over 18 hours of footage was completed in only 2 days – a very tight time frame for a professional production of this caliber.

Beckham said: "I have collaborated with Sands since 2013 on a wide range of projects ranging from charity fundraising to inspiring children and brand endorsement. This is a company that embodies the value to 'Never Settle.' For those reasons, I love the Sands properties. I have visited many times, and I am thrilled to be part of their story, which is so well brought to life and beautifully narrated."

To help tell the story, there were 50 artists, including six drummers, involved in the production, plus over 100 extras. The Venetian Macao also mobilized almost 300 people from its convention and exhibition, food and beverage, visual media, security, facilities and hotel operations teams to be part of the production. Including the director and his film crew, there were over 400

people involved in the filming.

Among them were the integrated resort's signature "Streetmosphere" artists, who usually only perform individually – rarely gathering together for a combined performance. However, viewers of the TV spot can see artists of 20 different nationalities coming together and performing in one shot – a feat that required 20 hours of rehearsal in total.

The campaign, which took one full year of planning, was conceptualized by AR New York, which selected Mandler as the visual storyteller of the campaign. "It's always a journey working with David Beckham," said Mandler. "We initially met on an ad campaign 12 years ago and have worked together consistently across all of his brands since then. But most importantly, we've built a friendship that

allows for a level of trust and camaraderie in all that we do. He always brings the highest level of presence and energy to a project. The Sands campaign was a perfect example of him pushing the limits with one goal in mind – making sure the final work is both original and impactful."

"I really respect the cinematic vision of the [Sands] properties," Mandler added. "They grab you from first sight, and take you on a clear and well-thought-out journey. Naturally they're each unique, based on the culture that surrounds them... At every turn, there's something more dramatic, more exuberant and more beautiful."

The "Never Settle" campaign goes live in Macau and Greater China tomorrow – in print, on television, and in outdoor advertising, as well as on digital and social media platforms.

The TV commercial can be viewed starting tomorrow on TDM in Macau, on TVB Jade and TVB Pearl in Hong Kong, and on Star TV, Channel V, and major media channels in mainland China, including cinema screens, out-of-home TV screens, and on trains. **Staff reporter**

VENETIAN EXPLAINS PRESS EVENT POSTPONEMENT

THE VENETIAN Macao reacted to media reports published yesterday, namely by the South China Morning Post, claiming that "the launch of a high-profile global advertising campaign for Macau's biggest casino operator which was due to star David Beckham has been scrapped just 48-hours before its planned roll-out." According to The Venetian, the postponement of today's press launch event for the "Never Settle" campaign is due "to the technical complexity in adapt-

ing this internationally produced, high-quality TV commercial to various media platforms at our properties." The issue "could potentially have led to a press preview experience that would not have met The Venetian's high standards of quality if the event were to have taken place on Feb. 12 as originally planned. However, it is important to note that the campaign itself is still launching as planned on Feb. 13 in Macau and Greater China," the gaming operator adds.

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DIRECTOR AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com
MANAGING EDITOR Paulo Barbosa paulo.barbosa@macaudailytimes.com
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS Eric Sautedé, Leanda Lee, Severo Portela
CHINA & FOREIGN EDITOR Vanessa Moore vanessa@macaudailytimes.com
DESIGN EDITOR João Jorge Magalhães magalhaes@macaudailytimes.com | NEWSROOM AND CONTRIBUTORS Albano Martins, António Espadinha Soares, Brook Yang, Catarina Pinto, Cyril Law, Emille Tran, Grace Yu, Irene Sam, Jacky I.F. Cheong, Jenny Philips, João Pedro Lau, Joseph Cheung, Juliet Risdon, Keith Ip, Renato Marques (photographer), Richard Whitfield, Robert Carroll (Hong Kong correspondent), Rodrigo de Matos (cartoonist), Ruan Du Toit Bester, Sandra Norte (designer), Sum Choi, Viviana Segui | ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS JML Property, MacauHR, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars | NEWS AGENCIES Associated Press, Bloomberg, Lusa News Agency, MacauHub, MacauNews, Xinhua | SECRETARY Yang Dongxiao amy@macaudailytimes.com

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ADMINISTRATOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com
SECRETARY Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com
ADDRESS Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR Telephones: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84
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Radio taxi license to open for bidding within months

THE bidding procedure for the radio taxi operation license that will replace the former "yellow taxis" (on-call only) will be launched within the first half of 2015. The Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, also hinted that there will be tougher actions taken to curb the growth of private vehicles.

Mr Rosário said, after attending a Legislative Assembly meeting, that the government will provide between 100 and 150 on-call-only radio taxi licenses for bidding. However, those taxis will have to operate under companies such as the former yellow taxi operator Vang Lek Radio Taxi.

He also revealed that 230 regular taxi licenses will expire in the



PHOTO ARCHIVE
The "yellow taxis" will be replaced

next two years. The authorities are planning to provide a total of 330 regular taxi licenses for bidding in the same period. The secretary said that the government will strive to maintain the total amount of taxis on the road each day at between 1,200 and 1,300,

which he said is slightly more than it used to be.

Transport Bureau director Wong Wan said that the government will use a new concession model for the future radio taxi operator. This will allow the authorities to apply clauses that cover services requests and penalties, including the termination of the license, into the contract. The director also said that he is hopeful that the amendment to the taxi regulations can be finished within the year.

Furthermore, the secretary agreed that it is very important to resolve the traffic problems in Macau and pointed out what the public has to sacrifice in the process. He said that the government is planning on revising

the General Policy on Traffic and Land Transportation in Macau (2010-2020), published in 2011. Mr Rosário said that the authorities may increase the transportation costs for private-car owners in order to control the growth of the number of private cars. He has asked the public to make a choice in what it is going to sacrifice.

"In terms of [improving] the traffic, it is impossible to satisfy all parties, no matter what options [the government proposes]. I think [the traffic issue] is a serious problem and society has to make some choices. But there are pros and cons in every choice (...) bearing in mind that maintaining the current situation is also an option," he said. **JPL**

NEGOTIATIONS WITH LOCAL BUS OPERATORS

SECRETARY RAIMUNDO

do Rosário has mentioned that the negotiations with local bus operators TCM and Transmac to replace their current concession contract, which was heavily criticized by the Commission Against Corruption, have led to talk of a new contract similar to that signed with New Era. While Mr Rosário said that the discussions with TCM are going well, the secretary claimed that the talks with Transmac are not progressing as smoothly.

Over 600 people prosecuted for smoking in prohibited areas

A total of 646 people have been accused of breaching the Tobacco Prevention and Control Law by smoking in prohibited areas throughout Macau in January, the Health Bureau revealed this week. A total of 24,799 people have been accused of breaching the tobacco legislation since it came into force.

The Health Bureau said in a statement that officers had conducted 709,983 inspections at different areas and places in the city since the law came into force on January 31, 2012.

A great portion of offenders in January were male (92.1 percent) and Macau residents (63.6 percent).

Regarding the areas in which authorities have recorded more infractions, Internet cafés (18 percent) and games arcades (16.9 percent) are at



the top of the list, followed by parks and leisure areas, where 94 cases were recorded (14.6 percent).

Figures released by the Health Bureau show that only 68.7 percent of the offenders (444) have paid their fines since the beginning of January.

The Health Bureau and the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ) joined efforts to conduct a total of 37 inspections to casinos. 34 individuals were caught breaching the law. 33 offenders were male, while there was only one female offender. Twenty-four people

accused of smoking in prohibited areas were tourists and 10 were Macau residents.

In January, DICJ received a total of 374 telephone calls, 245 of which relate to information requests, 111 are complaints and 39 regard suggestions presented by citizens.

The Health Bureau explained that when residents make a complaint, DICJ will take note of it and act accordingly. Regardless of the situation, only the offender will be prosecuted.

The bureau announced last month that it is aiming to implement a full smoking ban in Macau's casinos. This would mean that smoking would be prohibited not only on mass gaming floors, but also within VIP rooms. Current smoking lounges would also be forced to close if the bill is approved.

Rule-breaching affordable housing residents face eviction

THE Housing Bureau (IH) has revealed that it has found more than ten affordable housing units in the Edificio Cheng Chong to be unoccupied by the units' applicants. The Bureau said that it would investigate the cases, and offenders will potentially have their contracts with the IH terminated.

The IH has visited 296 affordable housing units in Edificio Cheng Chong as of February 3. During the visits, officials found that the occupants of 12 apartments did not match those who had applied for those units. The bureau said that they would investigate the cases further.

IH pointed out that, according to the Affordable Housing Law, if a promissory buyer of an affordable housing unit allows others to live in it, with or without benefiting from it, they can be fined for the action or have their promissory contract terminated, effectively evicting them from the premises.

In fact, the bureau visited 693 affordable housing units in several public housing projects in 2014, and found that six of the promissory buyers did not use their apartments for residential purposes. The authority has already issued fine notices to two such buyers.

Moreover, IH said in a statement yesterday that it has visited 1,858 families living in social housing units, and has found 128 cases of rule violations. The bureau issued warning letters in 42 cases and launched eviction procedures in 41. There were also 42 cases where the occupants voluntarily surrendered their apartments after being advised by the IH.

However, not all cases involved misuse of apartments. Some social housing residents received warning letters due to their undertaking unauthorized construction works or causing environmental hazards.

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AD

Ho Chio Meng coordinates legal studies committee

The deputy-Prosecutor General Ho Chio Meng has been appointed as coordinator of the recently established Committee on Criminal and Legal Studies, the government revealed through its Official Gazette (BO). He will lead the new body for two years. The Committee, which runs under a project team basis, is supervised by the Prosecutor General of the Public Prosecutions Office. The Committee's major roles include monitoring the development of legal and judicial reforms on criminal matters; proposing related suggestions and revisions; conducting research projects on social and legal aspects and to continuously improve the criminal law system. In addition, it will also be conducting research projects on criminal procedural policies. The Committee is also responsible for submitting an annual report to the Prosecutor General concerning work implementation. The Public Prosecutions Office will be bearing the costs of establishing and maintaining the body, the Government Information Bureau said in a statement.

EDUCATION

IPM launches research on language and cultural identity

João Pedro Lau

A project entitled the "Macau public's attitude on language and cultural identity under a multicultural and multilingual background" was announced this week in a press conference organized by the Macau Polytechnic Institute (IPM).

Plans for the research project include collecting more than 1,000 interviews from Macau's public servants, tertiary students and the general public. Researchers are seeking to understand respondents' attitudes toward different languages, and to analyze their rationale behind using particular languages in specific settings.

Dr Zhang Yan, a researcher from the Beijing Language and Culture University and leader of the research project, said that the project is expected to enrich relevant theories, and expand the scope of research in the field. The project could also provide data for predictions of Macau's future linguistic landscape.



Zhang Yan

"Our hypothesis is that there are two factors determining the choice of language. One is the emotional factor and the other is the rational factor. An emotional factor means that a person chooses to use a particular language based on his identi-

fying with the language; while a rational factor means that the choice is made based on economic reasoning. For example, a person may consider that they are able to find a better job or earn more through speaking that language," Dr Zhang explained on the sidelines of the press conference.

The researcher has pointed to a decline in Portuguese speakers among the Macanese business community. She suspects that this is largely due to the fact that English is more popular than Portuguese in Macau, making it less economically beneficial to master the language.

Zhang said that she would like to interview some members of the Macanese community to understand why they might still choose Portuguese as their first language. She believes that the reasons provided by these interviewees can help to promote Portuguese in Macau in the future.

Despite an ostensible decli-

ne in the use of Portuguese among the Macanese community, Zhang has noticed the beginnings of a revival of Portuguese in Macau, with an increasing amount of people paying the language more importance. "Although some Macanese have given up using Portuguese as their first language, there are people from other groups who have realized the importance of Portuguese," she said.

Meanwhile, the executive director and secretary-general of the IPM Language and Culture Research Centre of Macau, Professor Zhou Jian, argues that Macau residents and the government must be forward-thinking in terms of language education. Instead of focusing on languages that are popularly used nowadays, people should also learn languages that are seen as less relevant, in order to prepare for future needs. He also agreed that language promotion will be more effective if the government sets concrete goals and targets to measure achievements. Nevertheless, he warned that the public may not want to follow the direction of the government.

The project's researchers will finish collecting questionnaires at the end of March, and are expected to submit a report in August.

AD

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MACAU Legend Development CEO, David Chow, urged the government to open up the market by allowing more gaming concessionaires to operate in Macau.

On the sidelines of the inauguration ceremony of the Harbourview Hotel at Fisherman's Wharf, Mr Chow stressed, "When the government is reviewing the renewal of casino concessions, it should encourage the development of local businesses and allow companies that have contributed to the development of Macau, such as those operating satellite casinos, to receive a gaming license," he stated, as quoted by Chinese TDM.

Mr Chow pointed out that the mass market and VIP room businesses within these satellite casinos must pay three to five percent of their revenue to the gaming concessionaire under which they operate. "So, if they get a license, it would help develop and foster fair competition," he acknowledged.

The billionaire hinted that Macau Legend, which operates casino venues under SJM Holdings Ltd., would meet the necessary requirements to become a gaming concessionaire if the government decided to open the market to other operators.

David Chow urges gov't to open up gaming market



David Chow

cessionaires must pay part of their casino profit to the main operator. "The central government and the Macau government have to understand (...) if these people [companies] have a chance, why not [grant them a concession]? I think everybody should get the chance to negotiate. Why do we have to pay profit?" he asked, as quoted by TDM's Portuguese channel.

Macau Legend Development inaugurated the first venue as part of the Fisherman's Wharf redevelopment project yesterday. The Harbourview Hotel is now officially up and running offering 389 rooms and 55 suites.

Its design is inspired by 18th century Prague, according to a press release. With 68,300 square meters of space, the four-star hotel is located near the Babylon and Flaming casinos, which are now connected via footbridges. The facilities also include a bar, multiple restaurants, a gym, an indoor

swimming pool, and retail stores situated on the ground level. In addition, Chow Tai Fook Jewelry, Godiva Chocolatier and Tung Fong Hung (traditional Chinese medicine products) have also opened stores there.

With the opening of Harbourview Hotel, Macau Legend is able to expand its gaming offering, as it was granted 35 additional gaming tables by the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau in October last year.

Hans-Peter Betz, general manager of the hotel, told reporters that the opening of the venue "means great business for the Fisherman's Wharf." He reiterated that the company is stepping up its efforts to diversify its offering, as it plans to build two more hotels, a shopping arcade, and other entertainment venues. "I would say we are a very good competitor to casinos in Taipa," he added.

Mr David Chow revealed that the company is confident it will

receive permission from the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) to start the construction of a new hotel at Fisherman's Wharf soon. He's predicting that it will be ready between March and June next year.

"Both the central government and the MSAR government have stressed the importance that Macau should promote the diversification of its economy and accelerate the development of leisure tourism, convention and exhibition businesses. Harbourview Hotel and the Macau Fisherman's Wharf redevelopment project are positive contributions toward this [goal]," he expressed in a press release.

Macau Legend already owns and operates two hotels, the Landmark Macau and Rocks Hotel. In the pipeline are two premium five-star hotels, the Legend Palace Hotel and the Legendale Hotel, with their completion forecasted for 2016 and 2017 respectively. CP/JPL

AD

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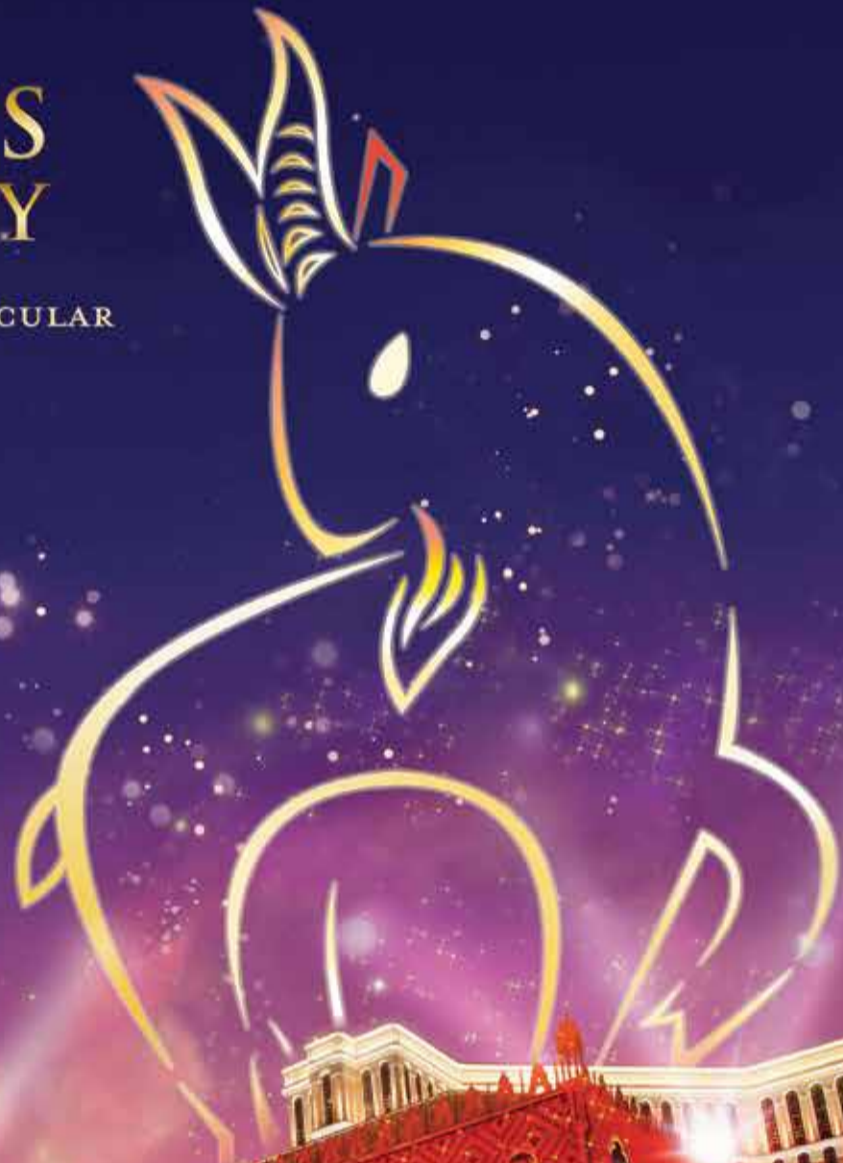
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FINANCE

Puerto Rico governor seeks new value-added tax

Danica Coto, San Juan

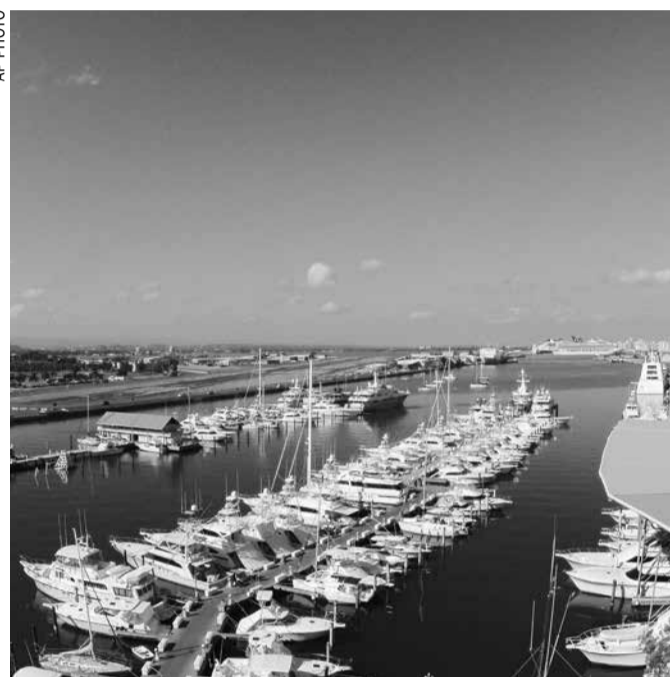
Puerto Rico's governor was introducing legislation yesterday calling for a new 16 percent value-added tax as part of a tax overhaul intended to boost government revenue in the U.S. territory mired in a deep economic recession.

Gov. Alejandro Garcia Padilla provided only limited details on the plan during a brief message that aired Tuesday night. He did not disclose the amount of the value-added tax, but an official who was not authorized to speak publicly on the matter said it would be 16 percent.

"We currently have a tax system that penalizes work and productivity while encouraging evasion," Garcia said. "It is inefficient and unfair."

Income tax revenues are the government's main source of income, and Garcia noted that many professionals including doctors, lawyers and engineers report a net income of some USD16,500. The government is estimated to take in about 56 percent of tax revenues that it should be collecting, losing some \$800 million annually.

If approved, Garcia's measure would eliminate the territory's sales-and-use tax and a gross receipts tax in favor of a value-added tax. He said some items, such as certain types



Pleasure boats fill the San Juan Bay Marina, in San Juan, Puerto Rico

of food, prescription medicine and public education, would not be taxed.

The overhaul also would provide tax breaks for more than 850,000 people, with income tax not applied to the first \$40,000 earned by individuals or \$80,000 for a couple. Currently, those making between \$26,000 and nearly \$43,000 pay \$980 plus 14 percent on income above \$26,000.

In addition, the overhaul would provide for those earning up to \$35,000 to be reimbursed three times a year for some purchase taxes paid. Those earning \$20,000 or less would be fully reimbursed.

"It will be easier to regulate this type of system because the responsibility

no longer falls on the shoulders of more than one million taxpayers, but rather on those who import goods," Garcia said, adding that some 220 companies import 75 percent of goods brought into Puerto Rico.

Opposition legislators complained that the governor's 10-minute speech did not provide many details of his plan, and they warned that a value-added tax would hurt the already struggling economy.

"The construction industry, the small to mid-sized businesses and professional services will be hit hard by this measure," Rep. Jennifer Gonzalez said.

A value-added tax is applied at every stage of a product's manufacture,

distribution and sale, while a sales tax is applied only when a product is sold.

Officials have said the tax overhaul could generate some \$700 million at a time when Puerto Rico's government is struggling to reduce \$73 billion in public debt in a stagnant economy with an unemployment rate hovering above 13 percent.

Garcia's plan was unveiled just a few days after a federal court threw new uncertainties into the government's efforts to get its debt under control. The court ruled Puerto Rico's recent debt-restructuring law unconstitutional. The law aimed to relieve pressure on debt-ridden public corporations by giving them a path to bankruptcy for the first time, an option that would give the agencies some leverage in negotiating with bondholders and unions.

Economist Charles Blitzer, a former World Bank and IMF official, said in a phone interview that while many countries have embraced value-added taxes, it is unclear how much money this will generate for Puerto Rico in the near term.

"Transitions to value-added tax generally take lots of preparation and time," he said. "And once they're in place, they don't normally yield the full expected yields for some time. It takes a while to build up." **AP**

GAMING

Las Vegas hotel implosion doesn't topple elevator shaft



An elevator shaft withstood a blast meant to implode a Las Vegas hotel, and crews yesterday (Macau time) were planning a little more work to finish the job.

Most of the 12-story Clarion casino-hotel crumbled in a pre-dawn demolition designed to clear the site off the Strip and near the Las Vegas Convention Center for new construction.

But despite the detonation of 2,000 kilograms of explosives, the elevator core just dropped about four stories and tilted a bit to one side.

It's leaning and still has a ways to go, said property owner and developer Lorenzo Doumani. One option being considered was a wrecking ball to finish toppling the tower.

The hotel was the 13th to gain implosion infamy in a town that explodes the old to make way for the new.

Doumani had hoped it would be a lucky number as he and his family counted down to the Clarion's final seconds at nearly 3 a.m., flanked by two showgirls and having listened to a pre-implosion soundtrack of Frank Sinatra.

The 200-room casino-hotel opened in 1970 as the Royal Inn and was called the Debbie Reynolds — for its one-time owner — as well as the Greek Isles and the Paddle Wheel.

What took seconds to destroy required several months of planning, said Anthony O. Schlecht, safety coordinator for Las Vegas-based Burke Construction. That extended to covering nearby pools, including at the neighboring Marriott hotel.

It's been a while since controlled explosives toppled a casino-hotel. Between 2004 and 2007, six Vegas properties were brought down, but in the eight years since, the only Strip-side implosions were the segment of the Tropicana and a parking structure. **AP**

corporate bits

CEM HOLDS "MACAU ENERGY SAVING CONTEST 2014" AWARD CEREMONY



CEM hosted the "Macau Energy Saving Contest 2014" and the Award Ceremony was held at the Macau Tower yesterday to acknowledge the contribution of residential customers and hotels to environmental protection. Organized by CEM and the Office for the Development of Energy Sector (GDSE) for the first time in 2009 with support from the Macau General Residents Association, Property Management

Business Association Macau and Macau Hoteliers & Innkeepers Association, the contest aims to promote energy efficiency and energy conservation among Macau residents and commercial customers, encouraging participants to share their experience in energy saving and learning the most effective ways of energy saving.

The champion of the Residential Group, Mr. Wong Oi Ming, reduced electricity consumption by as much as 65%. The champions of the Hotel Groups A, B and C were Victoria Hotel, Hotel Lan Kwai Fong and Sands Macau respectively, while MGM Macau received the "Energy-saving Concept Award" and "Excellence Award" for Hotel Group C.

VODATEL NETWORK EXPECTS TURNAROUND FOR '14

Vodatel Networks Holdings Limited said it expects to record a profit for the year ended 31 December 2014, as compared to the loss reported in the previous year.

Such improvement was primarily attributable to: (i) the increase in value of sub-contract works performed, which included the design, supply, installation testing and commissioning and maintenance of certain surveillance systems at the Galaxy Resort & Casino; (ii) the undertaking of an increased number of projects for the government of Macau; (iii) the further penetration into the construction of data centers for regional telecommunications service providers; and (iv) higher profit generated by the disposal of available-for-sale financial assets at higher selling prices for 2014.

The annual results are expected to be published next month.

SUPER JUNIOR TO HIT THE VENETIAN STAGE IN MARCH



South Korea's most popular boy band, Super Junior are returning to The Venetian Macao for the third time when they bring 'Super Show 6 - Super Junior World Tour in Macao' to the Cotai Arena Mar. 1. Tickets are on sale now.

Super Show 6 comes right after the release of the band's seventh studio album, "Mamacita". The world tour began in Seoul Sept. 19-21, 2014 and continued around Asia

visiting Tokyo, Hong Kong, Beijing, Taipei, Osaka, Fukuoka, Bangkok and Shanghai.

According to a Venetian press release, "Super Junior will wow the audience at the Cotai Arena with innovative special effects, magnificent costumes, exciting choreography and renditions of their biggest hits", including their best-selling singles "Sorry, Sorry", "Mr. Simple", "Bonamana" and their latest hit "Mamacita".

Angola issues USD20 billion in debt in 2015

ANGOLA plans this year to issue public debt of USD20 billion to private investors and pay interest of up to 7 percent, the director of the Public Debt Management Unit of the Ministry of Finance said Tuesday in Luanda.

Angélica Paquete, who presented the 2015 Annual Debt Plan, said this amount was needed to ensure the financing of the 2015 State Budget, distributed equally between domestic and international markets.

"In the 2015 fiscal year we have introduced the possibility of private or collective investors gaining access to the primary market," said Paquete.

Private investors can take on Treasury Bills, with shorter maturities and interest rates ranging from 4.5 percent (91 days) and 6 percent (364 days) for a total amount to be allotted by the State equivalent to 402 billion kwanza (US\$3.8 billion).

Private investors will also have access via the National Bank of



Roadside market in Angola

Angola to Treasury Bonds with maturities of 2-5 years and a 7 percent interest rate, described by the Angolan government as one of the highest returns in the world on this type of financial product.

In this way the Angolan state expects to collect over 480 billion kwanza (US\$4.6 billion) this year, despite the unfavorable economic and financial situation in the country, due to a fall in oil revenues.

Paquete also announced that this year the first debt issue will be carried out in the international market, with the support of financial partners in the sector.

Angola's "stock" of public debt this year, according to the latest forecast from the Ministry of Finance, will reach US\$48.3 billion, which corresponds to 35.5 percent of GDP between foreign debt (24.5 percent) and domestic debt (11 percent).

MDT/Macauhub

National Bank liberalizes foreign currency operations

The National Bank of Angola (BNA) has authorized banks operating in the country to import, export and re-export foreign currency without prior permission, according to a notice from the central bank dated 29 January.

"The banks are authorized, as part of their corporate purpose, to import, export and re-export foreign currency and travellers cheques, without prior permission from the BNA," reads the notice, which entered

into force on 29 January and that the central bank justified by the "need to readjust regulations" on these operations.

The announcement of this move comes at a time when the national currency, the kwanza, is experiencing strong devaluation, with the US dollar registering large increases on the informal market. Increasing the ease with which banks can carry out dollar-based transactions is seen as a way of curbing the disparity between the

US dollar and the kwanza.

The limitations introduced in January 2014 were intended to halt money laundering, via Angola.

According to the latest BNA figures, commercial banks purchased foreign currency worth US\$2.092 billion last December.

Of this total, US\$1.783 billion were sold by BNA, through auctions, to commercial banks, and US\$309 million dollars were bought by their customers.

AN International Monetary Fund (IMF) report recommends that Mozambique strengthen the implementation of reforms to improve its fiscal transparency, considering the macroeconomic challenges facing the country, particularly in the area of natural resources.

The Fiscal Transparency Evaluation was developed by an IMF mission that visited Mozambique at the invitation of the Mozambican authorities in late 2013, the period to which information in last week's report refers.

The document points out the budget reform that the country has been implementing is putting a number of aspects of fiscal and budgetary practices to fall

MOZAMBIQUE

IMF recommends higher fiscal transparency

into line with the standards set out in the IMF Fiscal Transparency Code.

Therefore some weaknesses observed in fiscal reporting practices are expected to be solved, although the report warned that current models of management and disclosure of fiscal risks are "inadequate".

The IMF therefore recommends the introduction of reforms with impact in the medium term given the "expected" challenges of an increase in tax revenue from exploration of natural resources.

In terms of threats to fiscal

transparency, the IMF noted that the country does not have a complete inventory of its public entities and "the institutional coverage of tax reports is limited and does not provide complete and reliable information about the operations performed by the social security fund" and other autonomous public institutions.

It is also a concern that "much of the net asset value" that the State has in "at least 156 public and publicly traded companies" remains unknown, with the IMF considering "the limited supervision capacity of

the State Holdings Management Institute (Igepe) on financial assets and the risks associated with these entities."

The Mozambican authorities announced the preparation of a draft law for the State Business Sector, an "effort to improve transparency and to consolidate existing legislation," according to a letter of intent related to the Policy Support Instrument program (PSI), sent to the IMF in December.

The document signed by former Finance Minister Manuel Chang, and the Go-

vernor of the Bank of Mozambique, Ernesto Gove, announces the State's intention "to consolidate its portfolio in the medium term," through privatization processes and liquidation.

In 2014, the country reduced "its portfolio" by two companies, after selling four and incorporating two new companies, including Mozambican tuna company Ematum, the Letter of Intent said, which also outlined the "aim of selling all shares in non-strategic businesses where government involvement is less than 20 percent."

This process should be based on a financial assessment of the portfolio of state holdings in companies, which is being carried out with World Bank assistance in order to compile information on their indirect holdings, in addition to standardizing managers' pay, among other objectives.

Also with support from the World Bank, the Ministry of Finance plans to develop a tax risk unit by the end of the first quarter, which may respond to the IMF recommendation to improve the analysis and management of risks such as "the dependence on donor support for external financing" or "the State's business sector activities."

MDT/Macauhub

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HONG KONG

Unable to Occupy, demonstrators go shopping to protest

Shai Oster

SHOPPERS of the world, unite!

In a novel twist to influencing politics through commerce, Hong Kong protesters are going shopping to spread their pro-democracy message. Carrying the bright yellow umbrellas symbolic of the movement, they are marching through shops and driving away tourists.

"It's part of the civil disobedience philosophy of taking resistance to everyday life," said Sebastian Veg, director of the French Center for Research on Contemporary China in Hong Kong. "You don't have to be camping out in front of a government office, but if you have an hour after you leave work you can set up a shopping group, chant or sing for universal suffrage and make life hard for the police."

The shopping tours are an attempt to keep alive the debate over greater rights for the city's leadership election in 2017, after 11 weeks of student-led rallies ended without winning concessions from China. As Hong Kong prepares for the influx of Chinese tourists coming for the Lunar New Year holiday next week, the protests may curb sales at retailers already smarting from falling revenue in December.

Annual retail sales in Hong



Kong declined last year for the first time since 2003 as Chinese President Xi Jinping's campaign against corruption and extravagance crimped spending. Luxury goods were especially hard hit, with sales slumping 16.3 percent in December. The holidays this year start on Feb. 18.

The holidays typically see an

influx of mainland tourists, who last year bumped up retail sales by one third, according to David O'Rear, chief economist for the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce. Last year, the city was the most popular destination for Chinese tourists with 47.2 million visitors, though the pro-democracy movement that occupied parts

of downtown cast a shadow.

"Hong Kong will pay a heavy price," unless it does more to cater to mainlanders who are increasingly headed to other destinations for shopping and sightseeing, warned a Jan. 26 editorial in the *Global Times*, a newspaper owned by the Communist Party-affiliated *People's Daily*.

Protesters had occupied swathes of Hong Kong last quarter to demand that China lift a demand to screen candidates for the 2017 chief executive election. After the police evicted them from the streets in December, some of the activists decided to take to the shops.

Nearly every night, anywhere from a handful to a few dozen activists can be spotted holding yellow umbrellas in shopping districts including Mong Kok.

They were partly inspired by Hong Kong Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying's appeal to help retailers affected by the protests by going shopping, said Amos Ho, a 37-year-old clerk at a power company, who joined some of the tours.

The other inspiration came from an earlier televised interview of a Chinese tourist at the protest zone who when asked why she was there said she was shopping, said Veg. Her mispronunciation of the Cantonese phrase for shopping was then picked up by pun-loving Internet users who transcribed it with a vulgar term referring to the male anatomy.

The protest are loosely organized via social media or fliers on the street.

"The point of this is since all the occupy sites were removed, the people feel like nothing was achieved," said James Bang, a 28-year-old who lost his job after he took too much time off to join the street protests. "The people feel like nothing was achieved, no concessions, no negotiations, nothing at all. We feel we have to make a statement and go out there so people see us everyday."

And this being Hong Kong, there's one other point, he said: "People love to shop anyway, so it's just perfect." **Bloomberg**

Foreign companies feel Beijing targets them in investigations

Joe McDonald,
Business Writer, Beijing

NEARLY half of foreign companies in China feel singled out in a wave of anti-monopoly and other investigations, and a growing number are deciding not to expand their investments, the American Chamber of Commerce in China said yesterday.

The report adds to complaints Beijing is improperly using regulation to limit foreign access to technology and other promising markets in violation of its free-trade pledges.

Some 57 percent of 477

firms that responded to an annual survey believe "enforcement campaigns target and hinder foreign companies," the chamber said in a report.

This week, Qualcomm Inc. was fined a record 6 billion yuan (USD975 million) by Chinese regulators on charges its licensing practices for mobile phone technology violated the country's anti-monopoly law. Foreign automakers and dairy suppliers also have been fined under the 2008 law.

Chinese regulators have rejected complaints that foreign companies are treated unfairly.

"We want full market ac-

cess for our companies," said the chamber's chairman, Jim Zimmerman, at a news conference.

The chamber said 31 percent of companies surveyed had no plans to expand investment in China. That was up from 27 percent in a similar survey last year and 13 percent in 2013.

Market barriers add to pressure on foreign companies as China's economy cools and competition heats up. Economic growth fell last year to a two-decade low of 7.4 percent. Forecasters expect it to decline further this year.

Two out of five com-

panies surveyed said revenue in 2014 was even with or below the previous year's level, while three out of five said profit held steady or declined, according to the chamber.

Four out of five companies said China's Internet censorship is hampering their business. Beijing tries to block access to online material deemed subversive or obscene. Some technology companies say regulators appear to be stepping up efforts to block use of virtual private network, or VPN, systems to circumvent the filters.

Executives said the filters slow Internet access



In this April 20, 2014 file photo, visitors look at the latest model from Mercedes at an auto show in Beijing. Nearly half of foreign companies in China feel singled out in a wave of anti-monopoly and other investigations

and hampered the movement of business data, said Mark Duval, the chamber's president.

"It wasn't a political concern," said Duval. "It was ... the effect on commercial ability to operate a business."

Technology companies also are alarmed by proposed Chinese security rules that would compel

them to disclose how encryption systems work and to keep sensitive information on servers within China.

The American Chamber and a group of technology industry groups have appealed to regulators to postpone the proposal. Zimmerman said he had no new information about it. **AP**

CHINA'S leader Xi Jinping will make his first state visit as president to the United States in September, Chinese official media reported yesterday, underlining positive momentum in the often-troubled relationship between the world's largest economies.

The state-run Xinhua News Agency said Xi had accepted President Barack Obama's invitation to visit in a telephone call between the two overnight. The announcement came as U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Tony Blinken was in Beijing to meet Chinese officials.

Obama visited China in November to attend the annual summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum during which he held a separate day of meetings with Xi.

Obama and Xi also met in the U.S. in June 2013 for an informal summit at the Sunnylands estate in Rancho Mirage, California, a meeting cited by the Chinese side as helping redefine ties based on equality and mutual respect.

The U.S. and China have been working together on a range of high-profile issues, including pledging to cut back on their emissions of greenhouse gases. At the same time, the two have clashed diplomatically on several fronts, including over cyber-espionage allegations and Chi-

Xi to make 1st state visit to US in September



In this Nov. 12, 2014 file photo, U.S. President Barack Obama, right, smiles during a welcome ceremony held by Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing

nese actions asserting its maritime territorial claims against U.S. treaty partners Japan and the Philippines.

The White House said Obama and Xi held a wide-ranging te-

lephone conversation on Tuesday night, touching on issues from China's assistance to West African nations battling the Ebola virus to prospects for a U.S.-China investment treaty.

The two also reaffirmed their commitment to closely coordinate on threats to global security. It singled out efforts to encourage Iran to respond positively in negotiations over

■ The White House said Obama and Xi held a wide-ranging telephone conversation on Tuesday night

its nuclear programs with the five United Nations Security Council members, including both China and the U.S., along with Germany.

Speaking to reporters in Beijing yesterday, Blinken said his visit aimed to "deepen our practical cooperation, to manage our differences and to deliver tangible results for the people in China and the United States and others in the world." **AP**

TAIWAN

Authorities indict 119 over anti-mainland protests

PROSECUTORS in Taiwan's capital have indicted 119 people over the occupation of the legislature and cabinet offices in a protest against a proposed agreement to loosen trade restrictions with rival China.

Those indicted included leaders of the three week-long protests that broke out last March and attracted hundreds of people, many of them university students. They stand accused of mainly minor charges of trespassing, obstructing public duties and violating laws on parades and assembly, according to the statement of indictment posted to the Taipei city prosecutor's office on Tuesday.

Christened the Sunflower Movement, the protests successfully blocked the ruling Nationalist Party's attempt to pass a trade pact that would have allowed Chinese and Taiwanese service companies such as banks and telecommunications firms to operate in each other's territory.

Protesters said the agreement would have led to job losses and posed a threat to the self-governing island democracy's security, democracy and autonomy.



In this March 28, 2014 file photo, student protesters against a pro-China trade pact continue to occupy the legislature floor in Taipei

Taiwan separated from the mainland amid civil war in 1949 and China continues to claim it as part of its territory to be recovered by force if necessary. While China has backed off its military threats in recent years, most Taiwanese continue to favor the continuation of the present state of de-facto independence rather than seek unification.

The Judicial Reform Foundation, a legal team which repre-

sents the Sunflower students, posted a statement to its website saying the protest action was a form of civil disobedience aimed at protecting Taiwan's democracy. It also called for an investigation into the violent police action that ended the cabinet office occupation on March 23.

"Through the law, history will render this movement a clear judgment," the statement said. **Bloomberg**

Taiwan to appoint new China Affairs head, United Daily reports

Chinmei Sung

TAIWAN'S top mainland China affairs official, who participated in the first meeting between the Beijing and Taipei governments, will be replaced by a defense department official, according to a newspaper report.

Deputy defense minister Andrew Hsia will succeed Wang Yu-chi as minister of the Mainland Affairs Council, Taipei-based United Daily News reported yesterday, without saying where it got the information. President Ma Ying-jeou's office declined to comment.

Wang offered his resignation this week hours after the Taipei District Prosecutors Office decided against charging Chang Hsien-yao, a former deputy minister of mainland affairs, with crimes related to the leaking of state secrets, citing insufficient evidence. The probe arose after Wang accused Chang of damaging the cross-strait relationship.

Relations between Taiwan and China reached a politi-

cal pinnacle in February of last year, when Wang and his counterpart Zhang Zhijun, minister of China's Taiwan Affairs Office, met in the Chinese city of Nanjing, the first official contact between the governments since 1949. Zhang shook Wang's hand and called him by his formal title.

China's State Council Taiwan Affairs Office yesterday said Wang's resignation won't affect the normalized cross-strait communications mechanism, the official Xinhua News Agency reported earlier, citing Ma Xiaoguang who spoke at a scheduled press briefing.

A cross-strait trade agreement that would have opened as many as 80 service industries across the Taiwan Strait has been stalled since March, when university students occupied Taiwan's legislature for 24 days to protest tactics used by the ruling Kuomintang party in an attempt to secure passage of the deal.

Calls to Hsia's office at the Ministry of National Defense went unanswered yesterday. **Bloomberg**



Malaysian opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim



Malaysian police struggle with supporters of opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim, after the court case outside the Palace of Justice in Putrajaya

MALAYSIA

Police investigating dissenters over Anwar's jailing

Eileen Ng, Kuala Lumpur

MALAYSIAN police have detained a cartoonist and are investigating two lawmakers for sedition over tweets and a cartoon condemning the judiciary for dismissing opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim's final appeal against a sodomy conviction.

Anwar began a 5-year prison sentence Tuesday after the country's top court ruled there was overwhelming evidence showing that he sodomized a former male aide. The case was

widely seen as politically motivated to eliminate any threats to the ruling coalition, whose popularity has been eroding after more than five decades of unquestioned dominance.

Police detained cartoonist Zulkiflee Anwar Alhaque, better known as Zunar, at his home late Tuesday over a series of tweets on Anwar's case. A cartoon he posted on Twitter showed Prime Minister Najib Razak as the judge in Anwar's case.

National police chief Khalid Abu Bakar also directed his

men to investigate opposition lawmakers Nga Kor Ming and Rafizi Ramli for sedition. Nga tweeted it was time for the people to oppose a cruel regime, while Rafizi tweeted a cartoon of a judge wearing a white wig with the dollar sign on it.

The police moves were criticized by rights groups, with New York-based Human Rights Watch saying it was shameful that Malaysian authorities had turned peaceful criticism into a criminal act.

"Clearly it is designed to intimidate and instill fear in people

on social media to go silent on their views. It is a further erosion of freedom of expression in Malaysia," said the group's Asia deputy director Phil Robertson.

Anwar has been the most vocal and visible symbol of the opposition's resurgence and is seen as the most potent political threat to Najib.

Anwar's second daughter, Nurul Nuha Anwar, yesterday launched a "March to Freedom" campaign, backed by her five siblings. Eldest sister Nurul Izzah is already a lawmaker.

Nuha said the family was devastated and outraged over the "malicious persecution" of Anwar that led to his jailing again.

The new campaign will be a struggle to free Anwar from unjust incarceration and give voice to Malaysians who have suffered injustice, she said.

"These seventeen years have been an emotional roller coaster. We do not know how long this struggle will continue but we will be with our father till the end," said Nuha, 31. Details of the campaign will be announced later.

Anwar was accused of sodomizing Saiful Bukhari Azlan, then 23, who was working as a lowly aide in the opposition campaign office in 2008.

Homosexuality is a crime in Malaysia punishable by up to 20 years in prison and by whipping, although prosecutions are rare. **AP**

Matthew Pennington, Washington

Anwar conviction complicates US ties with Malaysia

THE sodomy conviction of Malaysia's opposition leader has set back, but not derailed, Washington's improved ties with a country that is becoming increasingly important for U.S. diplomacy and trade policy in Asia.

The White House strongly criticized the conviction of Anwar Ibrahim, whose case was widely seen as politically motivated. That could dash Prime Minister Najib Razak's hopes this year of being the first Malaysian leader to be invited to the White House since 2004.

The Obama administration has been considering inviting Najib as Malaysia takes the lead of the 10-nation Southeast Asian bloc that has become pivotal for Washington's engagement with the region.



In this April 27, 2014, file photo, President Barack Obama and Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak shake hands at the end of a joint news conference at his residence in Kuala Lumpur

Anwar began a five-year prison term Tuesday. He posed the most serious threat to Najib's ruling coalition, whose popularity has eroded after more than five decades of dominance.

An earlier sodomy con-

viction against Anwar was overturned in 2004 after he'd served six years in prison. That case also drew U.S. criticism and contributed to a rocky period in U.S.-Malaysian relations in the aftermath of the Asian financial cri-

sis of the late 1990s.

But ties have improved on Najib's watch. Last April, Barack Obama became the first U.S. president to visit Malaysia since 1966, and the two leaders played golf while both vacationed in Hawaii in December.

Malaysia is important to the U.S. for various reasons. It is among the 12 nations negotiating a trans-Pacific trade pact, the main economic plank of the administration's so-called pivot to Asia. Negotiators are scrambling to finalize a deal amid U.S. hopes that Congress can approve it later this year.

Malaysia, a moderate Muslim nation of 30 million people and currently a non-permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, is also

important partner for U.S. in countering violent Islamic extremism. On Tuesday, Obama's special envoy for the global coalition to counter the Islamic State group held talks with Malaysia's defense minister. The State Department credits Malaysia with taking steps to halt flows of foreign fighters.

The U.S. and Malaysia cooperate on counter-terrorism and have deepening military ties, conducting joint exercises and other training activities. Malaysia sent military medics to Afghanistan, and has supported a U.S.-backed drive to counter proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

So while the White House was quick to speak out over Anwar's conviction

for sodomizing a male aide — considered a crime in Malaysia — it spelled out no negative consequences for the U.S.-Malaysia relationship, which was upgraded last year to a "comprehensive partnership."

National Security Council spokeswoman Bernadette Meehan said the case raised "serious concerns about rule of law and the fairness of the judicial system in Malaysia." But she added, "we remain committed to expanding our cooperation on shared economic and security challenges."

The measured U.S. response reflected the delicate line Washington attempts to tread, criticizing infringements on political freedom in Asia without sacrificing its strategic goals. **AP**

AUSTRALIA

Police: 2 men planned 'imminent' terror attack

Kristen Gelineau, Sydney

TWO men were charged yesterday with planning to launch an imminent terrorist attack in Australia, after police seized a homemade flag associated with the Islamic State group, a machete and a hunting knife in a counterterrorism raid.

The men, aged 24 and 25, would have carried out the attack on Tuesday if they had not been arrested that day in the raid in the Sydney suburb of Fairfield, New South Wales state Deputy Police Commissioner Catherine Burn told reporters.

A video that was seized during the raid showed one of the men making threats, though Burn declined to detail exactly what was said. Australian Attorney General George Brandis later told the Senate that the video depicted one of the suspects kneeling in front of the Islamic State flag with the knife and machete while making a politically motivated statement and threatening to commit "violent acts" with those weapons.

The men planned to launch their attack in western Sydney, he said.

Asked whether they were planning a beheading, Burn replied, "We don't really know what act they were going to commit."

"What we are going to allege is consistent with the IS messaging," she said, using an abbreviation for the Islamic State group. "We believe that the men were potentially going to harm somebody, maybe even kill somebody, and potentially using one of the items that we identified and recovered yesterday, potentially a knife."

Police were trying to determine whether the men were in contact with anyone from the Islamic State movement.

"Yesterday, our focus was to act on information that we received about something that was imminent," Burn said. "We believe that we have stopped that threat from occurring. However, there are further investigations that now we will need to follow through."

Omar Al-Kutobi and Mohammad Kiad were charged with undertaking acts in preparation or planning for a terrorist act, which carries a maximum punishment of life in prison. Their lawyer didn't apply for bail and it was formally refused during a brief court hearing yesterday. Neither man appeared in the courtroom.

Police don't believe there is any link between the alleged plot and another plot that prompted a series of counterterror raids in Sydney in September. **AP**

SOUTH KOREA

100-car pileup on bridge leaves 2 dead, 68 hurt

Kim Tong-Hyung, Seoul

TWO people were killed and at least 68 were injured yesterday in a pileup involving about 100 vehicles in foggy weather on a bridge near South Korea's Incheon International Airport, officials said.

Seven of the injured were in serious condition, said Byeon Tae-u of the Incheon Fire and Safety Management Department. He said 18 foreigners were hurt, including seven Chinese, three Thai nationals and two each from the Philippines and Vietnam.

Park Sang-yeoul, an official from the Incheon Seobu Police Station, said the damaged cars had been removed from the 4,400-meter cross-sea bridge on the highway from the airport to the capital, Seoul.

He did not have the exact number of vehicles involved in the accident, but said it was about 100.

The crash occurred in the morning in a Seoul-bound lane and was likely aggra-

AP PHOTO



Damaged vehicles sit on Yeongjong Bridge in Incheon

vated by thick fog and icy road conditions, Byeon said. It was not immediately known what started the pileup.

Lee Gyeong-hoon, a 39-year-old driver whose car was involved in the crash, said he was driving slowly because the fog prevented him from

seeing much more than 10 meters ahead.

"I saw the brake lights of the car in front of me turn on and I stopped abruptly," said Lee, whose car was hit from behind. He was able to open the door and escape to the side.

The foggy weather delayed

the departure of 18 flights and the arrival of seven others at the airport during the morning, said airport spokesman Cho Sang-hyun.

In 2006, a 29-car pileup in foggy weather on another cross-sea bridge in South Korea left 11 people dead and more than 50 injured. **AP**

Ex-coast guard officer in S. Korea guilty over ferry sinking

AP PHOTO



A South Korean court yesterday sentenced a former coast guard officer to four years in prison for negligence while rescuing passengers during last year's ferry sinking that killed more than 300 people.

Kim Kyung-il was the captain of the first coast guard ship sent to the scene of the sinking on April 16. Slow and unprofessional rescue work by the coast guard has been considered as one

of the reasons for the scale of the disaster, together with ferry crewmembers' negligence, overloaded cargo, improper storage and corruption by the ferry's owners.

Most of the dead were students on a school trip.

The Gwangju District Court said in its verdict that the death toll would have been lower if Kim had broadcast an evacuation order for those trapped in-

side the sinking ship after he arrived at the scene.

The verdict said Kim fabricated official documents and falsely stated in them that he had issued an evacuation order. In the days after the sinking, Kim said in media interviews that his ship issued a broadcast urging people to stay out of the ferry and jump to the water.

The sinking, one of the deadliest disasters in South Korean history, triggered an outpouring of national grief and raised pointed questions about public safety.

In November, the same court handed down a 36-year prison term to the sunken ferry's captain and sentenced 14 other navigation crewmembers to five to 30 years in prison.

The ship's billionaire owner was found dead after fleeing arrest, and his son and two brothers were sentenced to up to three years in prison for corruption. South Korea also disbanded the coast guard and launched a new safety agency. Kim has been working at a local maritime police station under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Public Safety and Security, according to ministry officials. **AP**

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Tel.: (853) 2822 1341
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Nicole Winfield, Rome

ITALY

UN: At least 300 migrants missing in new sea tragedy

SOME 300 migrants who tried to cross the frigid Mediterranean in open, rubber boats, were reported missing yesterday by survivors as the U.N. refugee agency and other aid groups sharply criticized the new EU rescue operation as insufficient and costing lives.

The suspected deaths add to the 29 reported earlier in the week by the Italian coast guard, which said those victims had died of hypothermia during the voyage that began over the weekend in Libya, where most smuggling operations originate.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees said survivors had reported that four boats had left together, without food or water, and that the boats began taking on water almost immediately. Some 107 people had been rescued by the Italian coast guard and a merchant ship. The agency's spokeswoman in Italy, Carlotta Sami, said the victims had been "swallowed up by the waves," the youngest a child of 12.

The nationalities of the survivors and those missing were not immediately given, but a large proportion of those arriving at the moment are fleeing conflicts

AP PHOTO



In this file photo taken on Thursday, Dec. 4, 2014 provided by the Italian Navy, rescue crews approach migrants on a rubber boat some 65 km from the Libyan capital, Tripoli

in Iraq, Syria, Mali and elsewhere. UNHCR, Save the Children, Amnesty International

and other aid groups blasted the new EU-backed rescue patrol as insufficient for the task

at hand. The European Union took over Mediterranean patrols after Italy phased out its

robust Mare Nostrum operation in November. Mare Nostrum (Our Seas) had been launched in 2013 after 360 migrants drowned off the coast of the Sicilian island of Lampedusa.

But the EU's Triton mission only operates a few miles off Europe's coast — its job is to patrol Europe's borders — whereas Mare Nostrum patrols took Italian rescue ships up close to Libya's coast.

"The Triton operation doesn't have as its principal mandate saving human lives, and thus cannot be the response that is urgently needed," Laurens Jolles, the head of the U.N. agency for southern Europe, said in a statement.

Save The Children called for the EU to urgently meet to restart Mare Nostrum "or another rescue system that has the mandate, the capacity and means to prevent other tragedies." AP

UKRAINE

Fighting continues ahead of peace talks

Peter Leonard, Donetsk

FIGHTING continued to rage in eastern Ukraine yesterday, killing five people at a bus station in the rebel stronghold of Donetsk, as Western leaders confirmed that they would take part in crucial peace talks being held later in the day.

Steffen Seibert, a spokesman for German Chancellor Angela Merkel, said both she and French President Francois Hollande would travel to the Belarusian capital, Minsk, to attend the four-way summit alongside their Russian and Ukrainian counterparts.

European leaders have warned in recent days that there is no guarantee a deal will be reached with Moscow, which the West says is fueling a separatist rising in eastern Ukraine with troops and arms. Germany and France have rushed to mediate after a recent uptick in violence in the region, where fighting has killed at least 5,300 people since April.

In Donetsk, rebel officials said that five people were killed and nine wounded at the scene of a shelling attack early yesterday on a bus

station, where an Associated Press reporter saw one body. Donetsk city officials said in a statement that three people had been killed in shelling overnight.

Officials in Kiev also said yesterday that 19 troops had been killed and 78 wounded in a day of fighting in Debaltsevo, a hotly contested transport hub in the region.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko posted a statement on his website saying that he had made an impromptu visit to the war-torn region early yesterday. Poroshenko stopped in the city of Kramatorsk, some 50 kilometers from the nearest front line, where Kiev says 16 people were killed and 48 wounded in a rocket strike Tuesday.

"We demand an unconditional peace," Poroshenko said. "We demand a ceasefire, a withdrawal of all foreign troops, and closing of the border.... We will find a compromise within the country."

At a news conference in Moscow, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that there was "notable progress" in the peace process, though he gave no details. AP

USA

Arizona mourns for American woman killed by Islamic State militants

Felicia Fonseca, Prescott

THE small Arizona town where Kayla Jean Mueller grew up gathered in grief Tuesday (yesterday, macau time) upon learning that the 26-year-old aid worker who traveled the world on a quest to help others had died while in the hands of Islamic State militants.

A memorial of flowers and handwritten notes took shape on the courthouse plaza in Prescott near a sign calling on people to pray for her.

In Washington, President Barack Obama pledged to bring Mueller's captors to justice "no matter how long it takes."

Mueller's 18-month captivity had largely been kept secret in an effort to save her. The Islamic State group claimed Friday that she had died in a recent Jordanian airstrike targeting the militants.

On Tuesday, her parents and U.S. officials confirmed her death. The Pentagon said U.S. officials don't know how or when she died but are certain it was not in the Jordanian airstrike.

From Jordan, government spokesman Mohammed al-Momani offered his country's condolences.

AP PHOTO



Terri Crippes, left, and Lori Lyon, aunts of Kayla Mueller, speak at a press conference, Tuesday

The White House said Obama had spoken with Mueller's parents and offered his prayers. The president said Mueller "epitomized all that is good in our world."

Arizona Sen. John McCain hailed Mueller's humanitarian work in a speech from the Senate floor.

"After graduating from Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff in 2009, Kayla committed her life to helping people in need around the world — first in India, then Israel and the Palestinian territories and back home in Prescott, where she volunteered at an HIV/AIDS clinic and a women's shelter," he said.

As a high school student in Prescott, McCain noted, Mueller was recognized as a leader and re-

ceived the President's Award for Academic Excellence, as well as other honors.

Mueller is the fourth American to die while being held by Islamic State militants. Three others — journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff and aid worker Peter Kassig — were beheaded by the group.

Journalist Austin Tice disappeared in August 2012 while covering Syria's civil war. It's not clear what entity is holding him, but it is not believed to be the Islamic State group or the Syrian government, his family has said.

Mueller was taken hostage in August 2013 while leaving a hospital in Syria. AP

what's ON

WINTER ART BAZAAR

TIME: 11am-8pm

UNTIL: February 28, 2015

ADMISSION: Free

VENUE: Macpro Gallery / Avenida da Praia Grande, no.417-425, Centro Comercial Praia Grande, basement, Macau
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2833 7828

VOICE IN THE MURK BY PAPA OSMUBAL

TIME: 2pm-7pm

(Closed on Sundays and February 18-23)

UNTIL: March 14, 2015

VENUE: Creative Macau, G/F Macau Cultural Centre Building, Xian Xing Hai Avenue
ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2875 3282

POSTER DESIGN EXHIBITION

IN CELEBRATION OF THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MACAU HANDOVER

TIME: 10am-7pm

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

UNTIL: March 15, 2015

VENUE: The Handover Gifts Museum of Macau, Avenida Xian Xing Hai, NAPE
ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8504 1800

KOREAN ART EXHIBITION

OH YOUNG SOOK AND KIM YEON OK

TIME: 11am-7pm

UNTIL: February 15, 2015

VENUE: IAOHIN Gallery, Rua da Tercena no. 39a

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2892 1908

GRAND TAIPA NATURAL PARK

PARK AND SCULPTURE ZONE: 24 hours

GRASS-SKIING FIELD: 2:30pm-5:30pm (Tuesdays to Fridays); 10:30am-5:30pm (Weekends and public holidays)

VENUE: Rampa do Observatório, Taipa

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2888 0087

PENGUINS UNDERCOVER ICE WORLD

WITH THE DREAMWORKS GANG

TIME: 11am-8pm

UNTIL: March 8, 2015

VENUE: Cotai Expo

ADMISSION: MOP120

ENQUIRIES: 2882 8818

Offbeat

ISRAELI BUSTED FOR DRUGS AFTER LEAVING CV IN BAG WITH STASH

An Israeli man looking for a job may need to add "drug dealer" to his resume. Or, perhaps: No more Mr. Niceguy.

Police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld says officers arrested the 27-year-old from central Israel after finding his CV in a bag along with 350 packets of an illegal drug.

Rosenfeld said earlier this week that the man was shocked when police knocked on his door and asked how they found him.

Police say the resume described him as "responsible" and "serious" and said he had a background in security.

The drug, called "Mr. Niceguy," is a synthetic substance that users say has narcotic effects. It was outlawed in Israel about a year ago following reports of its negative effects.

Police found the resume and drugs in an impounded car.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
18:10	Brazil Avenue (Repeated)
19:00	Montra do Lilau (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:30	Criminal Minds S8
22:10	Brazil Avenue
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:20	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

cinema

CINETEATRO

12 FEB - 17 FEB

KINGSMAN: THE SECRET SERVICE

ROOM 1

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.45 pm (12-13 FEB)

Director: Matthew Vaughn

Starring: Colin Firth, Michael Caine, Samuel L. Jackson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 127min

PENGUINS OF MADAGASCAR

ROOM 1

2.15 (14-16 FEB), 5.45 pm (16 FEB)

Language: Cantonese (Chinese)

Duration: 127min

STAND BY ME DORAEMON

ROOM 1

(2D) 4.00 (14-17 FEB), 9.00 pm (16-17 FEB)

(3D) 7.30 (16-17 FEB)

Language: Cantonese (Chinese)

Duration: 95min

TRIUMPH IN THE SKIES

ROOM 1

7.45, 9.30 pm (14-15 FEB)

Language: Cantonese (english and Chinese)

Duration: 127min

FROM VEGAS TO MACAU 2

ROOM 1

7.30 pm (14-15 FEB)

Language: Cantonese (english and Chinese)

Duration: 90min

JUPITER ASCENDING

ROOM 2

(2D) 2.30, 4.45, 9.45 pm (12-13 FEB)

(3D) 7.15 pm (12-13 FEB)

Director: Andy Wachowski, Lana Wachowski

Starring: Channing Tatum, Mila Kunis

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 127min

KINGSMAN: THE SECRET SERVICE

ROOM 2

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm (16-17 FEB)

Director: Matthew Vaughn

Starring: Colin Firth, Michael Caine, Samuel L. Jackson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 127min

THE CON ARTIST

ROOM 3

2.30, 9.30 pm (12-13 FEB)

Director: Kim Hong-sun

Starring: Kim Woo-bin, Lee Hyun-woo, Ko Chang-seok

Language: Korean (Chinese/English)

Duration: 116min

JUPITER ASCENDING

ROOM 3

(2D) 2.30, 4.45, 9.35 pm (14-17 FEB)

(3D) 7.15 pm (14-17 FEB)

Director: Andy Wachowski, Lana Wachowski

Starring: Channing Tatum, Mila Kunis

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 127min

MACAU TOWER

12 FEB - 18 FEB

JUPITER ASCENDING

2.30, 4.30, 7.00, 9.30 pm

Director: Andy Wachowski, Lana Wachowski

Starring: Channing Tatum, Mila Kunis, Eddie

Redmayne

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 127min

this day in history



1994 ART THIEVES SNATCH SCREAM

Thieves have stolen one of the world's best-known paintings from a gallery in the Norwegian capital, Oslo.

Two men took just 50 seconds to climb a ladder, smash through a window of the National Art Museum in Oslo and cut The Scream, by Edvard Munch, from the wall with wire cutters.

The cutters were left behind along with a short ladder as the men fled with the painting. The entire incident was filmed by security cameras.

The director of the museum, Knut Berg, said, "It is impossible to estimate the value of the painting.

"But it is Norway's most valuable, Munch's most renowned, and it would be impossible to sell."

The museum's alarm went off at 0630 local time (0530 GMT) and a security guard immediately alerted police, who arrived within minutes.

Police officers are searching for a Mercedes car thought to have been used as a getaway vehicle.

The painting was in the gallery as the highlight of a Norwegian Culture Festival staged in connection with the Winter Olympics which start today in Lillehammer.

There is widespread speculation that the theft may have some connection with the Games, possibly as a publicity stunt by campaigners. Art experts believe the painting is so well-known that it is unsaleable.

The museum is facing strong criticism over its security after it was revealed that the masterpiece had been moved from the more secure first floor to the ground floor for the exhibition. It is believed to have been uninsured.

The stolen painting is regarded as the most important of the four versions Edvard Munch painted of The Scream, and was created in 1893 as part of his Frieze of Life series in which sickness, death, anxiety and love are central themes.

The haunting depiction of a skull-like face wide-mouthed in agony and despair before a blood-red sunset has become an icon of human anguish across the world.

Several other Munch paintings have recently been stolen: six years ago, another well-known masterpiece, The Vampire, was stolen from the Munch Museum in Oslo, but was later recovered, as was a lithograph, Madonna, which disappeared in 1990.

Another painting, Portrait Study, was taken from the National Art Museum last August and is still missing.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Initially, a radical Norwegian anti-abortion group claimed responsibility for the theft, but police remained sceptical.

Then in March 1994, the gallery received a £700,000 (\$1m) ransom demand for the painting. The gallery board refused to pay, unsure that the demand was genuine.

In May 1994, Norwegian and British police mounted an undercover sting which uncovered the painting, unharmed, in the seaside town outside Oslo where Edvard Munch painted many of his most famous paintings.

In January 1996, four men were convicted and sentenced in connection with the theft.

One of the two thieves who carried out the raid, Paal Enger, is now a legitimate art buyer, acquiring his first Munch - an unsigned lithograph - at auction in 2001.

In August 2004, another version of The Scream was stolen in Oslo along with Munch's The Madonna, this time from the Munch Museum. Three men were found guilty of charges relating to the theft of these two paintings by a court in Norway in May 2006.

In August 2006, Oslo police recovered both the Scream and The Madonna. They had minor marks and tears and were put back on show in September 2006 at the Munch Museum - this time protected in heavy glass boxes.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 You've got some concerns about how other people see you...

Taurus April 20-May 20 Your energy is terrific for moving out from your home base. This is likelier to involve travel...

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 You're not having an easy time of it today - unless you're on your own, that is!

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Your heightened awareness is making life a lot more interesting for you and your people.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Try your best to show your bright side today - it's easier than you think!

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 It's a great day for romantic adventures - even if you're stuck at work!

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 You are feeling a bit stressed out over a domestic situation, but try not to give it more power.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Today is all about work and business - so even if you're unemployed, you should be devoting a few mental cycles...

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Today is all about material concerns - try not to worry too much about your spiritual or other needs for the moment.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Someone close to you (at least physically, if not emotionally) is quite impressed by something you say or do.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Not everything is happening on the surface today - in fact, most of the really cool stuff is going on beneath the level of awareness.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 You need to find someone capable of leading your group (which could mean family, friends, work or something entirely different) in a new direction.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzles categorized by difficulty: Easy, Easy+, Medium, and Hard. Each category contains a 9x9 grid with some numbers pre-filled.

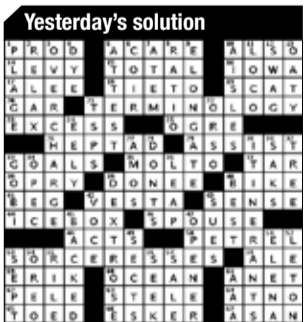
WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Deserving of reproof; 11- Thrust with a knife; 15- Assertion made without proof; 16- Central part; 17- Brass wind instrument; 18- Twice tetra-; 19- Children's game; 20- She raised Cain; 21- Made of baked clay; 23- Big birds; 25- Wrap up; 27- Alamogordo's county; 28- Stormed; 30- Pertaining to hearing; 33- Santa's aides; 35- Actress Rowlands; 36- Hanker; 38- In base 8; 41- Raised platform; 43- Biblical king; 45- Truly; 49- Lifeboat lowerer; 51- Rumsfeld's predecessor; 52- China's Sun -sen; 54- majeste; 55- As a group; 58- Cry River; 60- Mineral spring; 61- Perjurer; 62- Titan in Greek myth; 65- "Splendor in the Grass" screenwriter; 66- Soften; 67- Elderly, matured; 68- Verse of four feet;

DOWN: 1- Roof timber; 2- "Cow Cow Boogie" singer Morse; 3- Ruffian; 4- Rule, for short; 5- Arch type; 6- Flow controlling device; 7- Goddess of wisdom; 8- Life story; 9- Traditional passed-down knowledge; 10- Sicilian resort; 11- Soprano Renata; 12- Downy; 13- Blood vessel; 14- Game of chance; 22- Turned; 24- Gaffer Ballesteros; 26- Made a hole; 29- Benuubs; 31- gratias; 32- Move slowly; 34- Ladies of Sp.; 37- It may be picked; 39- Asian sea; 40- Chair for two persons; 42- Foxy; 44- Quarrel; 45- Sharpening; 46- Electric resistance; 47- Approached; 48- Complain; 50- One making fun; 51- Salsa singer Cruz; 53- "Lovegirl" singer Marie; 56- Rotisserie part; 57- Sea eagle; 59- Up and ___; 63- Baseball's Mel; 64- Charlemagne's realm: Abbr.;



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



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Rusty Miller
AP Sports Writer, Columbus

BOXING

Buster Douglas: 'Belief' led him to stunning upset of Tyson

AN uppercut and three follow-up punches made James "Buster" Douglas a household name. And 25 years later, the brief heavyweight champion is still pleased his knockout of Mike Tyson ranks among the biggest upsets in sports.

"Being crowned champion was a dream for me," Douglas said of his Feb. 11, 1990 upset. "To achieve that was the ultimate. It was awesome."

A promising if enigmatic fighter, Douglas was given almost no chance of hanging around long with the undefeated heavyweight champion in their title fight in Tokyo. The bout was considered a tuneup for Tyson before an anticipated match with rising star Evander Holyfield.

In fact, the day before Tyson fought Douglas, promoter Don King called a news conference to discuss the dates and terms of that showdown. Douglas took note.

Douglas was a terrific athlete — he played college basketball — but was considered less than committed to boxing despite a 29-4-1 record as a professional. The son of club fighter Bill "Dynamite" Douglas, he showed glimpses of promise but also displayed a lack of heart and discipline at other times.

But roughly three weeks before the opening bell with Tyson, the person who believed in him the most, his mother, Lula Pearl, died.

Reminded this week that no one thought he had a chance against Tyson, Douglas hesitated before saying: "Yeah, but she did."

Tyson was boxing's hope and its bane, a street tough who stepped into the ring in simple black trunks, black shoes and a sheared-off T-shirt. His temperament was erratic, at best. He could be emotional when he spoke of his late mentor and friend, Cus D'Amato, or he could also be raw, brutal and crude.

In the ring, he was a force of nature, always striding closer, always hurling punches, never yielding.



Heavyweight boxer James "Buster" Douglas waves his gloved hand to the cheering crowd as he makes his way to the dressing room following a 10th round knockout victory over Mike Tyson

Three weeks before the opening bell with Tyson, the person who believed in him the most, his mother, Lula Pearl, died

He was 37-0 with 33 knockouts heading into the fight. Las Vegas oddsmakers made him a 42-1 favorite to do his wrecking-ball thing against Douglas.

They weren't alone. Ed Schuyler, a boxing writer for The Associated Press, was stopped at customs on his way into Japan. The customs officer asked

Schuyler how long he would be working in Japan.

"About 90 seconds," Schuyler deadpanned.

Just before the opening bell, someone in the crowd shouted to Douglas to win it for his mother.

The 6-foot-4 (1.93-meter) Douglas, with J.D. McCauley, his trainer and uncle, along with manager John Johnson in his corner, came out inspired. He held his own in the early rounds, holding off the shorter Tyson's charge with his left jab.

Late in the eighth round, Douglas went down.

"I was kind of, like, admiring my work: Looking at him, taking my time to look at everything that was going on, and paying more attention to how he was reacting to the punches instead of continuing to fight," Douglas recalled. "He ended up catching me with a good shot. When I got up off the ground, I knew I had

to get back on focus, on point, with what I was doing."

King and Tyson would later claim that Douglas didn't get up in the mandatory 10 seconds as the round came to an end. But by the official's count, he was standing and in control of his faculties at the count of 8.

"I knew where I was the whole time," he said. "I could have got up at six, but I had a couple of seconds and I took my time."

After the fighters returned to their corners, Douglas dominated the ninth. Then in the 10th, he rocked the world.

"I finished him up with a combination," Douglas said. "I hit him with four terrific shots. He wasn't able to get up."

King, seeing a gigantic payday floating away, appealed the outcome but, days later, all of the major organizations recognized Douglas as the champion.

"This makes Cinderella look

like a sad story, what Buster Douglas has done here tonight," HBO boxing analyst Larry Merchant said after the fight.

Through a spokesman, Tyson declined to speak with The Associated Press about the fight.

The two boxers have met each other only once since.

"We only crossed paths once, and that was a few years back down in Cincinnati," Douglas said. "There wasn't much conversation. It's not like we sat down and talked about it and (became) friends, anything like that. He was still kind of short (with me). So I didn't push it any further."

Tyson's life, in and out of the ring, has grabbed headlines for years. Meanwhile, Douglas is content to live a quiet life in a large home near a farming village 25 miles (40 kilometers) from his hometown of Columbus.

He quickly lost the heavyweight title to Holyfield in October 1990 in Las Vegas. His cut of his lone defense, estimated at \$7 million after taxes, set him up for a comfortable existence.

Douglas is past struggles with weight and blood sugar, saying he now "could go a few rounds" at the age of 54.

He has thrown himself into raising his four sons with his wife, Bertha. He spends five days a week coaching young boxers at a local rec center and prides himself on how well they're doing.

All these years later, he says it was no fluke.

"When I was itty-bitty and I first put on a pair of gloves when I was 10 years old, that was the beginning," he said. "I just felt I could do anything. It was just a belief. I believed in myself and that I had the ability to do that. It's something that my mother instilled in me at a very young age: You can do whatever you want." **AP**

COMMONWEALTH GAMES

South Africa's Durban only candidate for 2022

THE South African city of Durban was the only candidate left to host the 2022 Commonwealth Games, the first in Africa, after Edmonton withdrew its bid because of economic insecurity.

Edmonton and Commonwealth Games Canada said this week they

will instead focus on bidding for the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

Edmonton's decision left Durban, on South Africa's east coast, as the only option for 2022. The winning city will be formally announced in September.

Durban's bid committee said on Wednesday

it noted Edmonton's withdrawal, but was still following "due process" with its own bid ahead of the March 2 deadline to lodge papers. Spokesman Faizal Dawjee said Durban would meet the deadline.

The Commonwealth Games Federation said it was confident there

would still be "a great 2022 Commonwealth Games."

"We are obviously disappointed to hear Edmonton will not be part of the host city bidding process ... we now look forward enthusiastically to working with the Durban 2022 bid team," said David Grevemberg, chief

executive of the CGF.

Durban's intention to host the Commonwealth Games has been viewed as preparation for a possible South African bid to host the Olympics, either in 2024 or 2028. However, South African officials have not yet committed to an Olympic bid despite the

country being considered a good contender following its widely praised hosting of the 2010 soccer World Cup, the first in Africa.

Africa has never hosted the Olympics. The next Commonwealth Games in 2018 will be held on the Gold Coast, Australia. **AP**

opinion

World Views

The Editors, Bloomberg

FIGHTING HACKERS ONE ACRONYM AT A TIME

Give a warm welcome to the newest member of the U.S.'s national cybersecurity family, the mellifluously named Cyber Threat Intelligence Integration Center.

The new agency, unveiled this week, will be modeled on the National Counterterrorism Center and designed to share information about cyberthreats. It's expected to employ about 50 people with a budget of USD35 million. That may not sound like much, as these things go. Until you remember just how vast and convoluted the federal cybersecurity bureaucracy already is.

For just a small sampling, consider that the Pentagon's Cyber Command protects the military, the National Security Agency protects sensitive government networks, the Department of Homeland Security helps protect critical infrastructure, the Federal Bureau of Investigation pursues cybercriminals and spies, departments and agencies across the government protect their own networks, and the White House watches over things with a cybersecurity coordinator and a Cyber Response Group.

All of the above, of course, want more money and bigger staffs. President Barack Obama's new budget asks for \$16 billion to shore up digital defenses, after years of already intensive investment. The Pentagon alone spends about \$5 billion on cybersecurity a year, not counting a doubtless ample classified budget. If you're a contractor, you don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind's blowing.

Now there is the CTIIC. It will be part of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence — which already has a cybersecurity team — and will seek to integrate the information pouring in from all points, to get a sense of the bigger picture.

Sounds great in theory. But two questions suggest themselves.

First, will yet another acronym really help organize this proliferating bureaucracy? The White House should clarify, for example, how this new fiefdom will differ from (or work with) the National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center, one of five divisions of the Homeland Security Department's Office of Cybersecurity and Communications. The NCCIC describes itself as "a 24x7 cyber situational awareness, incident response, and management center that is a national nexus of cyber and communications integration for the Federal Government, intelligence community, and law enforcement." This sounds an awful lot like what the new center expects to be.

Second, what rules will govern this new apparatus? If it's to straddle the line between intelligence and law enforcement — and between the government and the private sector — it will quickly have to confront the familiar tensions between civil liberties and security. Convincing the public that it won't wantonly snoop on personal information, share it too widely or use it for some undeclared purpose won't be easy in an age of surveillance skepticism.

Finally, the parallel with fighting terrorism that the White House has invoked seems wrong. The NCTC has indeed done a good job of harmonizing the nation's intelligence operations. But transparency with the public matters a lot more in cybersecurity than in counterterrorism, while borders and nationalities typically matter less. Sensitive civilian information is more likely to come into play. And cybersecurity encompasses such a diverse spectrum of behavior — vandalism, petty crime, industrial espionage, state-sponsored attacks — that it requires a much more flexible and open approach than tracking down al-Qaeda.

Again and again, the government has responded to digital threats by asking for more money and more people. This hasn't been a notably successful strategy. The White House needs to explain why one more agency, and another line in the budget, will finally do the trick.

THE BUZZ SPAIN: KING FELIPE SLASHES SALARY BY 20 PERCENT

Spain's King Felipe VI has slashed his salary as head of state by 20 percent for 2015, a move in line with his pledges for a more moderate, fewer-frills monarchy.

A palace statement detailing the royal household's 2015 budget said Felipe, 47, would receive 234,204 euros (USD264,580), a fifth less than his father and predecessor, Juan Carlos, received as monarch before abdicating

last June.

Juan Carlos, who retains his honorary title of king, will receive 187,356 euros. The palace budget, which has been frozen or cut since 2009 as Spain suffered hard economic times, remains unchanged in 2015 at 7.8 million euros.

Felipe has striven to improve the monarchy's image, which has been tarnished by a number of scandals in recent years.

TELEVISION

Jon Stewart's exit as a phony newsman is a loss to real news

Frazier Moore
AP Television Writer, New York

Jon Stewart's fans were gobsmacked by the sad news he delivered on Tuesday's edition of "The Daily Show": He's leaving his phony anchor desk and ending his reign as phony newsman, and the loss is to real news.

"This show doesn't deserve an even slightly restless host and neither do you," he told his audience. He said he might depart in July, September or maybe December. He didn't say what he means to do next.

To appreciate the impact of his 16-year Comedy Central reign, and the loss his impending exit represents, the distraught viewer need only consider Monday's broadcast.

It was then that Stewart turned his attention to what was the biggest story in the journalism biosphere that night: the scandal surrounding NBC News' Brian Williams.

Wearing a woeful expression, he summed up everyone's befuddlement with crystalline efficiency: "Bri! Why? Why, Bri? Why lie? Sigh."

By then hours upon hours of pontificating, grouching and hollow forecasts



Jon Stewart

from other corners of the media had been focused on Williams, nailed a few days earlier for apparently fudging an account of his experience a decade ago covering the war in Iraq: He seemed to have misremembered that he wasn't, as he had declared repeatedly, shot out of the sky in a military helicopter.

Choppergate seemed custom-made for the cable-news universe. The endless talk supported by few known facts and snap-judgment calls for his dismissal — Off with his (talking) head! — accomplished little.

By contrast, in the tidy eight minutes or so that followed Stewart's silly rhyme, he proposed a shrewd

diagnosis for what might have led Williams to muddle his Serious News cred with habitual visits to any talk show (including, of course, "The Daily Show") that would have him, where he could show off his charm as a wit and raconteur.

Stewart called it Infotainment Confusion Syndrome, a brain misfire that occurs, he said, "when the 'celebrity cortex' gets its wires crossed with the 'medulla anchorgata.'"

Stewart had one more point to make. He mocked the mediaverse for obsessing over Williams' alleged misdeeds: "Finally SOMEONE is being held to account for misleading America about the Iraq war."

"Never again," he added dramatically, "will Brian Williams mislead this great nation about being shot at in a war we probably wouldn't have ended up in, if the media had applied this level of scrutiny to the actual (bleep) war."

It was a splendidly crafted satiric fusillade, the sort of cheeky truth-telling no one but a self-styled fake news anchor would dare. And until Williams was suspended by NBC for six months roughly 24 hours later, Stewart had said everything that needed to be said.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Paulo Coutinho



Speaking of weather... Grey skies and CNY are a ritual that usually go together every year. What's missing are... The crowds. That's because we are walking along the One Central waterfront promenade which is one of the very few places in the peninsula where you can have a pleasant, quiet stroll.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	120-150 Bad
High Density Residential Area	120-150 Bad
Ambient	100-130 Bad

SOURCE: D5M/G

WORLD BRIEFS

MYANMAR Hundreds of people demonstrate in Yangon, Myanmar's biggest city, to protest a government decision to allow people without full citizenship, including members of the Rohingya ethnic minority, to vote in an upcoming constitutional referendum.

PHILIPPINES The Philippine police chief, holding back tears, says Muslim rebels shot to death some of his anti-terror commandos as they lay wounded in a fierce gun battle last month that has stalled the government's peace deal with the insurgents.

MALDIVES police have accused the former Defense Minister Colonel Mohamed Nazim of plotting to overthrow the government and harm senior government officials, local media reported yesterday. A police statement detailed documents found in a pen drive confiscated from Nazim's house during a midnight raid on January 18 suggesting he "was plotting to physically harm senior Maldivian state officials."



BELGIUM A radical Islamic group that recruited youngsters to fight in Syria was a terrorist organization that wanted to violently overthrow democracy and replace it with strict sharia law, a Belgian court ruled yesterday in a case that played out against a backdrop of soaring terror fears. The court in Antwerp sentenced the Sharia4Belgium group's "charismatic leader," Fouad Belkacem, to 12 years' imprisonment and gave dozens of other members lower sentences.



YEMEN The United States, Britain and France said yesterday they were closing their embassies in Yemen following Shiite rebels seizing power there, highlighting the turmoil gripping the country as it marked the fourth anniversary of toppling its longtime autocratic ruler.