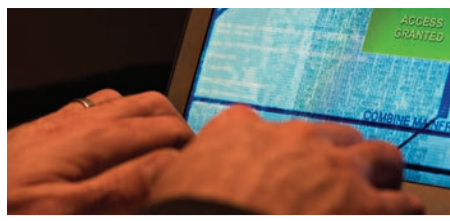




SCHOOLS IMPLEMENT MEASURES TO STOP HARASSMENT

Several local schools are creating guidelines on how to handle sexual harassment cases

P2



CTM ASKED TO INVESTIGATE GIT WEBSITE HACKING

P7



CY LEUNG URGES HONGKONGERS TO 'BE LIKE SHEEP'

"In the coming year, I hope that all people in HK will take inspiration from the sheep's character," Leung said in a statement

P13

THU. 19
Feb 2015

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA Setting off fireworks to celebrate Chinese New Year may be a centuries-old tradition, but the country's authorities are urging people to light fewer of them this week as cities fight a losing battle against relentless, toxic air pollution. [More on p13](#)

INDIA's defense minister says he will investigate a senior coast guard officer's comment that Indian coast guards had destroyed a Pakistani "terror boat" late last year, contradicting the ministry's position that the men on board had blown up their own boat.

INDIAN Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dark suit with its unique monogram pinstripes goes up for auction in his home state of Gujarat. The money raised in the three-day auction of the suit and hundreds of other gifts received by Modi will be used to clean up the heavily polluted Ganges River. [More on p14](#)

BANGLADESH A special tribunal dealing with war crimes involving Bangladesh's 1971 independence war convicts and sentences a leading collaborator to death for crimes including mass killing, arson and looting. [More on p14](#)

AFGHANISTAN The number of civilians killed or wounded in fighting in Afghanistan climbed by 22 percent in 2014 to reach the highest level in five years as foreign troops concluded their combat mission, the U.N. says in an annual report. [More on p17](#)

PHILIPPINES The Philippine government says it received 87 million pesos (USD1.97 million) from the United States to pay for damage caused by a U.S. Navy minesweeper to a protected reef two years ago.

[More on backpage](#)



Goat The year of the people

Chui pledges to listen CNY celebrations, traditions & predictions

P4,6,12,13
INSIDE EXTRA TIMES

HOLIDAY TIMES

Macau Daily Times MDT website will be updated with breaking news during the recess period. We wish our readers, advertisers and friends the best of times. *Kung Hei Fat Choy!*



Extra

times
weekend Guide
INSIDE

GAMING

MGM Resorts posts fourth-quarter loss

Christopher Palmeri

MGM Resorts International, the largest casino operator on the Las Vegas Strip, reported a wider fourth-quarter loss as gambling revenue from Macau plunged.

The loss widened to 70 cents a share from 12 cents a year earlier, the Las Vegas-based company said Tuesday in a statement. MGM China revenue decreased 22 percent, driven by its VIP table games business, which was down 39 percent.

Macau, the only place in China where casino gambling is legal, is experiencing a months-long



slump as a government crackdown on corruption in the mainland prompts high-rollers to avoid conspicuous consumption. Wynn Resorts Ltd.'s earnings disappointed as a result of a Macau shortfall. Las Vegas Sands

Corp.'s earnings beat estimates only on higher revenue from its Singapore casino.

MGM is studying ways to boost shareholder value as the stock has declined 16 percent in the past 12 months. Among the strategies

being reviewed are the potential for a real estate investment trust, or REIT, and selling parts of or refinancing CityCenter, its casino resort joint venture on the Las Vegas Strip, Dan D'Arrigo, MGM's chief financial officer, said Tuesday in a telephone interview.

"The concept of converting gaming assets to REITs is not a new one," D'Arrigo said in a conference call with analysts. "It was very active, we discussed before the recession. And more recently, the dialogue is there again."

While D'Arrigo said "there's nothing to report" on the possibility of a new financial structure, "we're pitched by every bank that

is out there in terms of whether or not we should do that. We look at this all the time. We believe that our assets are undervalued."

MGM China, the company's separately traded subsidiary, declared a special dividend of USD400 million, larger than anticipated, according to Anthony Wong, an analyst at UBS Securities in Hong Kong.

The Chinese subsidiary had a record year in 2014 and its balance sheet was strong enough to support the dividend, D'Arrigo said in a telephone interview. Construction of a new casino scheduled to open next year is proceeding "full steam ahead," he said. **Bloomberg**

COMMENTATORS

Care skeptical of the Macau government's decision to cancel the secretariat of the Urban Planning Committee, a decision which was announced on Tuesday.

According to a press release from the Executive Council, the responsibility of the committee's secretariat will be taken over by the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT). The Office of the Secretary for Transport and Public Works also

Change to Urban Planning Committee causes controversy

released a statement yesterday, claiming that this change is based on the policy of simplifying government structure. It also claimed that the cancellation of the secretariat will not change the duties, power and operation of the committee.

During his visit to the New Year market at Tap Seac Square yesterday, the

Chief Executive Chui Sai On reiterated that Secretary Raimundo Rosário is still the president of the Committee, and that it was the Secretary who proposed the change.

"The reason he gave was that it is sufficient and appropriate for DSSOPT to perform the duties of the secretariat, and provide financial and administrative support to the Committee. He, as the president of the Committee, also promised to continue the operation of the Committee according to the law," he said. "We trust and respect the recommendation of the Secretary on this matter."

Moreover, it was pointed out that Secretary Rosário just announced in the Official Gazette last week that he would transfer some of his power to the Committee secretary. Some have questioned whether the abrupt change may be considered administratively illegal.

Mr Chui said that he believes in the legal team of Secretary Rosário, and does not think there is any illegality in the actions taken. "Of course, Macau is a place that upholds the rule of law. Therefore, everybody can study the matter from a legal perspective. How-

ever, I believe that our team has prudently considered the change, and it does not affect the operation of the Urban Planning Committee," he said.

Mr Chui claimed that the secretary will be providing a more detailed explanation to the public once he comes back from his holiday. The CE also said that he will be discussing the issue of idle land lots with Secretary Rosário, and will publish related information if possible. **JPL**

EDUCATION

Local schools implement measures to stop harassment

Several local schools are creating guidelines on how to handle sexual harassment cases, after the issue entered public debate recently, following complaints filed by at least four University of Macau (UM) students.

UM revealed recently that it is planning to establish an Equal Opportunities Commission in the near future to handle harassment cases. The University of Saint Joseph has followed suit and published regulations on how to handle cases of harassment or discrimination. According to the rules, a special committee will be set up to analyze allegations.

The Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) has also said that the content of the sexual education pro-

gram has been undergoing adjustments over the past few years.

"We have added more elements regarding Internet traps into sexual education in recent years," said Leong Vai Kei, head of DSEJ's Education Department, as cited by TDM. She added that student counselors have focused their work on preventing harassment cases from eventuating, and kindergartens have already included the issue in their curriculums. Leong Vai Kei also said that parents of minors should be vigilant when their sons or daughters are absent for a long time.

Saint Paul's School principal, Alejandro Salcedo, argued that the preventative measures should start with recruitment and stricter rules for employing teachers and staff.

ONE SHOT NEWS



Stanley Ho made a video appearance at SJM's Lunar New Year's Eve Gala Dinner that took place at Grand Lisboa's Grand Ballroom. During a brief speech, the gaming tycoon wished "kung hei fat choi" to the event's guests, which included, as usual, the Chief Executive Chui Sai On.

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 A HAPPY & PROSPEROUS LUNAR NEW YEAR



THE public has once again raised concerns regarding the quality of public housing apartments, after a photo was published on the Internet allegedly showing paper bags that were found inside the wall of an affordable housing apartment. Chief Executive Chui Sai On said that the government will deal with the problem regarding the quality of public housing. He asked for residents to be patient and to allow the relevant departments to work on the issue.

It is alleged that the photo was taken in an affordable housing apartment in Edificio Koi Nga in Seac Pai Van. When the proprietor removed the doorframe during renovations, he allegedly found objects that resembled paper bags inserted into the gap in the wall.

The Infrastructure Development Office (GDI) released a statement yesterday, claiming that its staff inspected the building yesterday alongside officials from the Housing Bureau, the contractor and the supervi-

Bags found inside public housing building wall



Ho Iat Seng and former DSSOPT director Jaime Carion inspect the Seac Pai Van public housing estate

sing company of the construction works.

The office said that the wall in

question is not the load-bearing wall (shear wall) of the building. However, the Office has

already asked the contractor and the supervising company to submit a report and follow

up on any possible repairs that need to be done.

"The office has not ruled out the possibility that some of its workers may not have had a sufficient understanding of the standard of the construction quality expected. As a public infrastructure department, [GDI] thinks that this kind of construction flaw is unacceptable," the statement said.

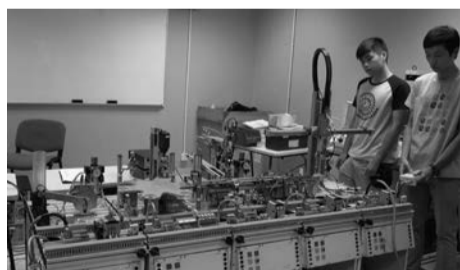
GDI added that it will monitor the quality of public works more stringently, and will penalize contractors if they are found to be responsible for construction problems.

On the sidelines of his visit to the firecrackers, fireworks and rockets lighting area in Taipa yesterday, Chui said that the relevant departments are investigating into the issue. "We must face these problems when we see them. [But the matter] is still not clear. It is important that the departments are working on it. So everybody should be patient. Of course, we have to protect the residents according to the law," he said.

New Mozambique delegate at Forum Macau

Mozambique has a new delegate to the Permanent Secretariat of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries (Forum Macau), as revealed in a press release. Francisca António Torcida Reino has been appointed delegate to Forum Macau, replacing Esmeralda Matias Patrício. The new delegate, who took office on Monday, started working for Mozambique's Ministry for Industry and Commerce in 1996 at the International Relations bureau. In 2011, she was appointed head of the Bilateral Cooperation and International Forums division within the same bureau.

DSAL opens new professional training center



The Labor Affairs Bureau (DSAL) is opening a new professional training center close to the Border Gate area, mainly addressing the needs of carpenters and decoration professionals. The center opens to the public next Tuesday. The 1500-square-meter area comprises a waiting room, classrooms for carpenters and decoration professionals' training courses, and a multifunctional hall. "This is an ideal place to organize diverse training courses, using well-equipped facilities, thus serving the purpose of furthering the public's vocational training," DSAL said in a statement. The center will also provide to Macau citizens further information on training programs, and citizens may also register for the courses and technical exams there.

Cultural events to be held at heritage sites

THE Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) is organizing a series of events to celebrate the Lunar New Year at the several heritage sites.

Between today and Feb 21, Macau Museum, the Mandarin's House, the Lou Kau House, D. Pedro V Theatre, the old house of general Ye Ting, the Kun Iam Ecumenical Center, and their Mount Fortress surroundings, among other sites, will be open to the public so that residents and tourists have a chance to visit them throughout the Chinese New Year holiday.

At the Mandarin's House, IC will be organizing calligraphy-related activities and a showcase of the Lion Dance. Meanwhile, the Lou Kau House will be offering visitors a taste of traditional Chinese music. The Macau Chinese Orchestra will also be performing at the Macao Museum's entrance on February 27 at 11 a.m.



The Macao Museum will be holding an exhibition featuring rare paintings by George Chinnery, Thomas Boswall Watson, and Marciano António Baptista until May 3. Entrance to all Chinese New Year celebration activities is

free of charge, except for the museum fees.

The IC said in a statement that Macau's Central Library and other libraries operating under it will be closed between February 19 and 21.

Women's Association delivers opinion for Policy Address

NEW leadership members of the Women's General Association visited the Chief Executive on Tuesday to provide suggestions on the formulation of the Policy Address, in particular the protection of women's rights.

The association's president, Ms Ho Teng Iat, said that their new leadership is composed mostly of professionals, and now contains more young faces. They proposed eight suggestions to Chui Sai On, including enactments to protect women and chil-



Women smile as they walk past stores in Macau

dren's rights, enhancements to the medical system and maternal healthcare, improvements to the social security system and policy for elderly services.

The representatives also suggested strengthening the moral education of youths and the cultivation of talent. Moreover, they demanded that the government improve public transportation by reinforcing the rules using law enforcement, planning well for the newly reclaimed land, and adding public housing units.

In response, the CE said that the government will analyze and study their suggestions carefully and promptly.



MGM MACAU Wishes You a Joyous and Prosperous Year of the Goat



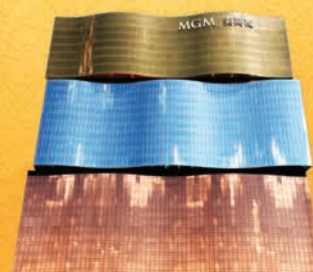
Lion Dance Blessing Ceremony

Date: February 19, 2015
Time: 12 noon



Water Ballet Performance at Water-Sky Aquarium

Date: February 19 – 23, 2015
Time: 18:30, 19:30 and 20:30





Chui Sai On tours the Lunar New Year fairs and flower stalls at Tap Seac Square

CNY MESSAGE

Chui Sai On pledges to hear population's views

CHIEF Executive Chui Sai On has pledged to hear and take into consideration the population's views on Macau, while delivering a Chinese New Year message yesterday.

The Chief Executive acknowledged that, as spring draws closer, "it's time to plan ahead" and think of the future. Looking at the New Year "with serenity," he recalled that Macau faced "difficulties and continuous change." Therefore, the government will be striving to "overcome its shortcomings." "We remain firm in our purpose

“We are all walking toward a brighter future”

CHUI SAI ON

of serving Macau's population; we will learn from the population's wisdom, look to reach a consensus and step up our efforts to plan the development of Macau and meet the goal behind our motto of 'Common wishes for the future and

the sharing of prosperity," Chui Sai On wrote.

Macau's leader stressed that, while celebrating the Spring Festival, we should show solidarity with those less fortunate. "We need to show solidarity with families and people who need further support, so that they can also take part in this festive joy," he added.

The Chief Executive recalled that this is a time of "renewal" and "blossoming," and that spring is the season of hope. He acknowledged that throughout the past year, Macau citizens had "worked devotedly," and that the city's economy

had maintained a steady growth. He added that the citizens' quality of life saw continuous improvement "and that our society retained its harmony and stability." He concluded by saying, "we are all walking toward a brighter future."

Chui Sai On thanked civil servants and employees of private companies who are on duty throughout the Lunar New Year: "To all public administration and private sector workers on duty over this holiday, serving the population, I sincerely thank you and express my wishes for a happy holiday." **CP**

Over 200,000 cross Macau's borders



BETWEEN 12 a.m. and 5 p.m. yesterday, authorities recorded a combined total of 213,276 arrivals and departures at various Macau border

crossings. A total of 101,576 people arrived in the territory yesterday, while 111,700 left Macau, the Government Information Bureau revealed.

At the Border Gate checkpoint, authorities recorded a total of 68,661 arrivals and 82,256 departures, while the Macau Outer Harbor Ferry Terminal recorded 16,289 arrivals and 12,676 departures. Finally, at the Macau International Airport, authorities recorded 4,729 arrivals and 5,346 departures.

Police authorities revealed that crowd-control measures will be in place over the Chinese New Year. Different levels of crowd management may be applied depending on the real-time situation. Authorities are expecting large crowds in the central district, as well as in the Border Gate checkpoint area, up until February 28. Besides dispatching extra personnel to ensure public order, the Public Security Police will be implementing crowd-control measures at San Ma Lo, Senado Square and at the Border Gate. PSP has established three levels of crowd control; the most severe involves possibly barring people from entering Senado Square.

Gov't publishes photos celebrating CNY



THE Government Information Bureau (IBS) has published a series of photos featuring residents buying Chinese New Year decorations, through its mobile app, MSAR News. Centered on "celebrating the festival," the photos were taken by the bureau's photographer, Mr Ho Kuok Wai, and feature people buying seasonal flowers, dried seafood, sausages, snacks and spring couplets, providing a glimpse into how locals plan for the Lunar New Year.

The MSAR News app provides real-time news and government information, as well as pictures and local weather reports. It can be downloaded from the App Store or Google Play.

Local markets to continue selling live poultry



MACAU'S markets will continue to operate regularly and to sell live poultry, with authorities yet to have called a halt to the sale of live poultry here. Sale of live birds in Guangdong has been suspended for one month due to the spread of bird flu, particularly the H7N9 virus.

The Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) told Lusa news agency that local markets and their live poultry stalls will be operating normally, but also that food inspection measures will be reinforced. IACM added that it has not received any specific information from the Guangdong authorities yet, and declined to comment any further.

According to the Guangzhou Daily, authorities have suspended the sale of live poultry after 50 cases of bird flu were recorded in 15 cities of the neighboring province. So far, 36 percent of the collected samples have tested positive for the H7N9 virus.

CARITAS Macau has announced that it is extending its Food Bank program to Coloane and Taipa. According to Caritas' secretary general, Paul Pun, over 4,000 individuals from all over Macau have benefited from the service since it was first introduced three years ago.

The short-term food assistance program is now being revamped, Paul Pun revealed to TDM: "We wish to develop the service for Coloane and Taipa residents, because, in the past, Coloane and Taipa have shared only a small portion of the food packets."

Caritas is also looking for places in Coloane and Taipa to house food distribution centers.

Caritas Macau extends Food Bank service

RENATO MARQUES



Caritas secretary general Paul Pun

The institution also intends to allow more access to the service, including having more individuals benefit from the food packets. "Children of low-income

families and senior citizens also need the Food Bank service," said Pun.

He added that Caritas is working on improving the qua-

lity of the food provided, and offering different types of foodstuffs to families, infants and to the elderly. The Food Bank has been managed by Caritas since September 2011.

Caritas has been facing a staff shortage and is now inviting families to join its homecare service training program. The plan is to strengthen family care and to teach caretakers to help the elderly. "[For example,] A daughter may not know how to care for her mother, so we teach and train her in the role of caretaker," Paul Pun said.

Caritas has been facing a staff shortage and is now inviting families to join its homecare service training program

DSRT urges CTM to investigate incident with GIT website

THE Bureau of Telecommunications Regulation (DSRT) has requested that CTM to launch a thorough investigation into an incident involving the website of the Transportation Infrastructure Bureau (GIT), which redirected users to obscene content on the night of February 12.

CTM confirmed on Tuesday that the GIT

website had not been hacked as initially thought. "CTM is now in a position to confirm that the incident that affected GIT's website was not caused by any type of cyber-attack or malicious activities against the webpage or the related systems, but rather by a third-party software fault in CTM's cache system," it stated.

CTM found that "the

problem was caused by a logic design fault in the 'content matching policy' in its cache system. It then redirected user requests for access to certain content to the wrong URL (web address).

Users who tried to access a video on GIT's website last Thursday night were redirected to an obscene video depicting a naked woman and two other people

wearing horse costumes.

The company stressed that as soon as it had identified what had caused the incident, it "put the cache system offline, isolating it from the public." "The cache system is used to temporarily store data relating to frequently accessed web content in order to enable users to get faster access to the related content, thus improving

their web browsing experience," CTM explained.

Upon receiving CTM's report, DSRT called on the company to further investigate the case, and to also create a special task group to follow up on the incident.

"DSRT has received CTM's preliminary report on the incident, and requested for the company to immediately ve-

rify the reliability of its third-party software to prevent similar incidents from occurring again," the bureau said in a statement yesterday.

DSRT advised the local telecom services provider to continue monitoring the situation, and to solve any malfunctions affecting the normal use of the network as soon as possible.

CTM said that it expresses sincere apologies to the MSAR government, GIT and Internet users over the incident. **CP**

AD

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Happy Lunar New Year

GENEVA prosecutors searched the premises of HSBC's Swiss subsidiary yesterday after launching a money-laundering investigation over a report that the bank helped hide millions of dollars for drug traffickers, arms dealers and celebrities.

Prosecutors said they were investigating HSBC Private Bank (Suisse) SA and persons unknown for suspected aggravated money laundering. The investigation could later be extended to people suspected of committing or participating in money laundering, they said in a statement.

The investigation stemmed from "the recent published revelations" about the private bank, prosecu-

Swiss prosecutors probe HSBC subsidiary for money laundering

tors said. They said a search at its premises in Geneva was carried out yesterday, but gave no details.

HSBC's Swiss subsidiary could not immediately be reached for comment. Its CEO, Franco Morra, said last week that it had shut down accounts from clients who "did not meet our high standards," and that the revelations about "historical business practices" were a reminder that the old business model of Swiss private

banking was no longer acceptable.

Last week's report from the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists and several news organizations found that the bank hid millions of dollars as it helped wealthy people around the world dodge taxes.

It was based on leaked documents covering the period up to 2007 and relating to accounts worth USD100 billion held by more than

100,000 people and legal entities from 200 countries.

A former HSBC employee, Herve Falciani, gave the data to French tax authorities in 2008. France shared it with other governments and launched investigations. The French newspaper Le Monde obtained a version of the data and shared the material with the ICJ, which analyzed the material together with other international media. AP



The entrance of the Swiss branch of the HSBC Bank in Geneva

Xiaomi smartphone sales surge to top Samsung as China's no. 1

Tim Culpnan

XIAOMI Corp. almost tripled shipments to overtake Samsung Electronics Co. as China's top smartphone vendor last year, according to researcher IDC.

Xiaomi, founded in 2010, captured 12.5 percent of the 421 million units sold in China during 2014, up from a 5.3 percent share the year earlier, IDC said in a statement. Samsung shipments slipped 22 percent, the only decline among the nation's top five vendors, as its share dropped to 12.1 percent, it said.

Chief Executive Officer Lei Jun has grown closely held Xiaomi into a global top-three vendor through a strategy of low costs and targeted marketing of its smartphones. While Lei has invested in startups to



Customers look at Xiaomi Corp. products at the company's showroom in Beijing

build a new category of devices, his phones are limited mostly to China and other parts of Asia.

"Xiaomi's focus on selling low-cost phones with decent specifications, as well as the hype that it created through its flash sales, helped it to obtain the top position," IDC said.

While Lenovo Group Ltd.'s shipments climbed 13.7 percent in China last year, it dropped to third spot with 11.2 percent, according to IDC. Huawei Tech-

nologies Co. and Coolpad Group Ltd. rounded out the top five.

Shipment growth in China will probably halve this year to about 10 percent, from a 20 percent rise in 2014, as a reduction in operator subsidies weighs on demand.

In the fourth quarter, Apple was second in China behind Xiaomi. The maker of iPhones wasn't among the top five for the entire year, according to the IDC data. Bloomberg

Uniqlo owner cuts hours at China factories after criticism

Daryl Loo

FAST Retailing Co., Asia's biggest clothing chain, said two of its China-based suppliers are reducing working hours following a report that criticized the factories making its Uniqlo garments for labor abuses.

Dongguan Tomwell Garment Co. has cut working hours of factory workers. Pacific Textiles Ltd. gave them one holiday per week and will introduce a system to reduce hours while keeping up production volumes next month, Yamaguchi, Japan-based Fast Retailing said yesterday in a statement.

The efforts follow investigations taken after the Jan. 11 report from Students & Scholars Against Misbehavior, a Hong Kong-based non-governmental organization. Other steps include the ending of a system

of fines, air quality and temperature checks, and training on labor rights for workers who aren't represented by unions, Fast Retailing said, adding it's still in a dialogue with SACOM on other issues it found contradicted with the NGO's report.

Fast Retailing rose 0.5 percent to 43,705 yen at the close of Tokyo trading, while the benchmark Topix gained 1.4 percent.

Workers in China have increasingly agitated against their labor conditions, with operations at Yue Yuen Industrial Holdings Ltd., a major supplier to Nike Inc. and Adidas AG, idled temporarily by labor protests last year. International Business Machines Corp., PepsiCo Inc. and Wal-Mart Stores Inc. had also been affected by labor strife in the country. Bloomberg

corporate bits

GALAXY MACAU, BMW ENGINEER AUTOMOTIVE SHOW

This Chinese New Year, from 19 February to 5 March, BMW will host a showcase of its vehicles at Galaxy Macau's East Square, the venue for exhibitions and special events. According to a press release from the organizers, "from the compact MINI and BMW 2 Series Active Tourer, to the ultra-luxurious 7 Series, off-road X Series and environmentally friendly electric i3, car lovers and BMW fans will be in automotive heaven. Galaxy Macau is also proud to host the plug-in hybrid BMW i8, a unique Chinese New Year special edition MINI, and the 28 February launch of the new MINI Countryman - all for the first time ever in Macau!"

For families, children can



also race with the BMW Baby Racer at the Kids Zone, join an origami workshop, take the Playstation simulator challenge and snap a few shots at the photo booth. Guests can climb inside a

BMW and test drive it around Galaxy Macau by simply registering at the counter. And the latest BMW and MINI lifestyle collections will be on show at the BMW Lifestyle Pop-up Store.

REVEL AND STRAUB CONTINUE TALKS AS JUDGE WEIGHS ENDING SALE

Revel AC Inc. urged a judge to let it scrap the second attempted sale of its bankrupt Atlantic City, New Jersey, casino and try for a third time to find a buyer.

The current proposed buyer, Florida real estate investor Glenn Straub's Polo North Country Club Inc., has no intention of going through with the deal and Revel needs to find another suitor, the casino's lawyers told U.S. Bankruptcy Judge Gloria Burns in Camden, New Jersey.

While Polo North has stated that it's still willing to go through with the deal "the truth is they're not," John K. Cunningham, a lawyer for Revel, told the judge Tuesday.

"Actions speak louder than



words and their inaction speaks the loudest" of all, leading Revel to conclude "that we need to move on to a new buyer," Cunningham said. "There have been a lot of inquiries but no serious" offers so far, the casino owner's chief restructuring officer, Shaun Martin, testified at the hearing.

Revel, which opened

in April 2012 at a cost of USD2.4 billion, filed for bankruptcy in June and closed in September as Atlantic City lost business to competitors in neighboring states. Brookfield Property Partners LP, which won a bankruptcy auction for the assets with a \$110 million offer last year, walked away, leaving Polo North as the only suitor.

WISHING YOU A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS
CHINESE NEW YEAR
KUNG HEI FAT CHOI

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REAL ESTATE MATTERS

The Most Important Questions To Ask.....

Juliet Risdon is a Director of JML Property and a property investor. Having established the company in 1994, JML Property offers Investment Property & Homes. It specializes in managing properties for owners and investors, and providing attractive and comfortable homes for tenants.

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JULIET RISDON

All property transactions are sizeable when compared with most other decisions.

It follows that you would give these transactions the time and effort that they warrant, but this does not always happen. It sometimes isn't so much an issue of motivation, but rather a case of not knowing the right questions to ask. This series deals with the key questions for each party. Knowing the answers to these questions should help to avoid misunderstandings and in many cases will save time, money or both.

When You Are Buying A Property

With so much time and so many expenses involved, it is perfectly natural to be concerned that you are making a good decision and getting value for money.

This is why it's so important to do your homework about any potential property you are considering to purchase. But with so many things going on, how can you remember to ask your agent the most impor-

tant questions about the property you are considering?

Noting the questions below may save you hundreds of thousands of dollars on the price of property, but more importantly they may save you from making a bad decision one way or the other.

1-Ask your agent what they will do for you?

Not all agents are equal, and some will do more to help you than others.

Most importantly, the answer may help you get a better sense of whether the agent can help you find what you are looking for as opposed to trying to sell you something they already have.

2-Ask your agent for a standard buy & sell contract

This will allow you to read it through before finding a property and address any issues you have without being under any pressure.

3-If the agent finds you a property, ask whether they represent the seller?

In many places, an agent cannot

represent both parties (conflict of interest).

In Macau however, no such regulation exists, and whilst this may not present a major problem, you want to know exactly where you stand.

4-Why is the owner selling?

You will never be sure that you are hearing 100% truth, but if you're lucky the agent might let you in on the circumstances.

For example you may discover that the owner is desperate to sell because they are leaving Macau, and so would accept a lower price.

5-How did the agent / seller decide on an asking price?

If the agent is experienced and knows what they are talking about, they will be able to explain how the asking price was reached and may even let slip some important facts such as the expected selling price as opposed to just the asking price.

Next Week: 6 more important questions to ask when you are buying a property.

PokerStarsMacau
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PROJECT POKER

BY BYRAN HUANG

Better late than never

I was recently in Macau to play the Asia Championship of Poker. I wanted to share a story of someone I talked to on my way over -- a kind of inspiring story, I thought.

Before getting to Macau I had to stop in Hong Kong to do some business, and while I was there I took a cab.

My cab driver struck up a conversation with me -- in English -- which turned out to be quite interesting. He was about 55 years old and originally from Hong Kong. I commented on how well he spoke English and asked him if he studied at university, but he said no, he hadn't. In fact, his formal education had ended at the age of 15 because he had to start working then to support his parents.

I asked him how he'd learned English so well and he explained how he'd always had a dream of writing a novel in English -- a thriller -- and so he took a few classes on the side when he could.

"You only live once," he explained to me, pointing out how as long as he was providing for his family and getting his work done, he felt like he could continue to pursue his dream of learning the language and eventually writing his book.

His story struck a nerve for me. I have a lot of friends who love to play poker and talk about wanting to become professional players, but they don't put in the time or effort to realize that dream. But if they really wanted to become better players and perhaps play full-time

one day, they could find ways to study and work on their games.

I thought about my own situation, too, being a full-time pro, and how there are a lot of other things I'd like to pursue, though it's a challenge to find the time or have the energy to do those things. Often when I'm not playing I'm just watching television and not really taking advantage of my free time. But here he was basically telling me that I could do more, if I really wanted to.

The fact that the cab driver only learned English in the last 10-15 years was inspiring to me as well. That is to say, he only started to study the language in earnest by his 40s or so. I know a lot of people who reach that age might think it's too late to take on something like learning a language or accomplishing some other big goal, but the cab driver was here proving otherwise.

"Better to arrive at your destination late than never," he said, adding how it was preferable at least to try something than not to and wonder what might have been. These are things you hear people say all the time -- how important it is to live your life without regrets -- but there was something about the cab driver and the way he was delivering this message to me that really hit home.

So when you think some goal in life is beyond your reach, just think of the story of my cab driver who is willing to go the extra distance -- literally -- to try to achieve his dream.

AD

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IMF warns of 'tough period' for Angola in 2015

THE Angolan government's proposal to revise the State Budget for 2015 due to the significant decline in oil prices was "timely and fast," the head of a mission from the International Monetary Fund said in Luanda.

Ricardo Velloso said, however, that Angola will experience

■ This is the fourth visit by an IMF team to Angola in less than a year

a "tough period" this year, as a result of the drop in the price of oil per barrel, but added the economy needed to be adjusted tax-wise.

The IMF team met with the ministers of the Angolan government's economic team, which is made up of Finance Minister, Armando Manuel, the Minister of the

Economy, Abraão Gourgel, Minister of Planning, Job Graça and the governor of the National Bank Angola, José Pedro de Morais.

This is the fourth visit by an IMF team to Angola in less than a year, this time to prepare the annual consultation under Article IV of the Establishing Agreement with the IMF, to be held early in the second half of 2015.

This visit is taking place during the revision process of this year's amended budget, driven by the fall in the international price of oil, which has already been handed in to the country's parliament.

The amended budget cuts expenditure by over 25 percent and revises the expected price of oil exports from USD81 to US\$40.

To offset the effects of the decline in oil prices on the Angolan economy, the IMF recently suggested the elimination from this year, of state subsidies on gasoline and the phased reduction by 2020 of subsidies on other fuels. **MDT/Macauhub**

PORTUGAL

Public debt reaches 224.5 billion euros in 2014



A man walks past portraits of famous Portuguese Fado music singers, in the Mouraria neighbourhood of Lisbon

PORTUGAL'S public debt at the end of 2014 is expected to have stood at between 127.9 percent and 128.7 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), according to estimates from the Technical Budget Support Unit (UTAO), published this week in Lisbon.

The UTAO, which provides support to the Portuguese parliament, said public debt "amounted to 224.5 billion euros at the end of 2014, which was more than planned in nominal terms," and which, if

it is confirmed would be, "an increase of 5.3 billion euros in nominal terms compared to the end of 2013."

Also according to the statement, the forecast range is higher than the latest government forecast, included in the State Budget for 2015, which pointed to 127.2 percent.

"This differential includes not only the slippage in the debt level in nominal terms, but also the possibility of a lower than expected nominal GDP," said the parliamentary

support team, adding that the government's economic growth forecast (1%) was higher by one-tenth of a percentage point compared to the figure released by the National Statistics Institute.

"If the European Commission's forecasts of 128.9 percent are confirmed, and the midpoint of the UTAO forecast, of 128.3 percent, public debt as a percentage of GDP will have increased in 2014, albeit very slightly," said the technical unit.

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**Happy
Year
of the
goat**



A performer from Taiwan dressed as the "Third Prince" poses for a photograph in front of the sheep decorations during the rehearsal for the International Chinese New Year Night Parade in Hong Kong

CNY holiday makes business, cultural waves around world

Kelvin Chan, Business Writer, Hong Kong

DECADES ago the Chinese New Year holiday, also known as Spring Festival, had little impact outside of China. But as the country gained outsized economic influence, the holiday, which has enormous cultural significance in the Chinese-speaking world, has become more prominent. This is how it ripples around the world.

— FACTORY FREEZE

Chinese factories shut down for the holiday and then some, with hundreds of millions of migrant workers heading to their hometowns, part of the world's largest mass movement of people. In the lead up to the holiday, factories run flat out to fill orders before shutting. The holiday itself runs from Feb. 18 to 24 this year, but workers start setting off as much as two weeks earlier on packed trains and buses. After the holiday they may take the same amount of time to return, or not. The holiday is a prime occasion to switch jobs.

It all means an annual headache for retailers and importers overseas who rely on China. Shipping companies warn customers that China's trans-

■ The holiday, which has enormous cultural significance in the Chinese speaking world, has become more prominent

port and logistics networks are at capacity and their shipments must be at ports two weeks ahead of the holiday to stand a chance of getting on a boat before the country shuts down. This year, shipping delays are compounded by a slowdown at U.S. West Coast ports.

— QUIET MARKETS

Stock market trading shudders to a halt as mainland China shuts for an entire week and financial hubs such as Hong Kong and Singapore take a break as well, albeit shorter. Numerous other countries including South Korea and Vietnam also observe Lunar New Year holidays. Muslim majority Malaysia and Indonesia, with large Chinese minorities,

take holidays too.

Trading volumes "drop off considerably" about three working days before the start of the holiday, said Andrew Sullivan, managing director at Haitong Securities in Hong Kong. This year, Friday was "the last day that you can sell in Hong Kong and get your money before Chinese New Year" under trading settlement rules, he said. Foreign investors also tend to wind down trading in Asia as the holiday nears, Sullivan said.

— GLOBAL SHOPPING

The festival is traditionally the most important time of the year for family reunions, but as China has become prosperous, an increasing number of wealthy Chinese are opting to travel abroad. That translates into big business for global luxury brands. Many British department stores, for example, are pulling out all the stops to woo mainland Chinese shoppers. (Designer handbags and watches can be up to 30 percent cheaper in Europe because of high luxury taxes in China.)

Harrods is selling its own brand of red envelopes traditionally used to give "lai see," or lucky money. Selfridges and luxury brand Burberry are each offering cards and

envelopes personalized with Chinese calligraphy. Designer label Vivienne Westwood has launched a collectors' necklace featuring a sheep pendant. Shoppers at Fortnum & Mason paying with UnionPay cards — China's homegrown payment network — will get bonus gifts.

Chinese spending in Britain last February jumped 23 percent over the same month in 2012, said Gordon Clark, manager at Global Blue, a Switzerland-based firm that tracks luxury retail spending worldwide. Chinese shoppers spend an average 739 pounds (USD1,137) per transaction in Britain each February, mostly on luxury jewelry, watches and designer clothes.

— ECONOMIC DISTORTION

Because the Lunar New Year never falls on the same date, it plays havoc with Chinese economic data at the start of the year. Economists are cautious not to read too much into figures from January or February, and prefer to wait until March to see the trends lest they make an incorrect interpretation of the world's second-biggest economy. Last year, the holiday started on the last day of January which meant activity was more compressed as

factories rushed to get their orders out the door. This year, the holiday falls about two and half weeks later, so factories had more time to work on orders. The result is that this year's January trade data, for example, was artificially weak.

"We always warn about the CNY effect and the risk of reading too much into these figures at this time of year," said Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics. "This affects most of the data out of China in January and February as well headline export growth in countries such as Korea that are heavily dependent on the Chinese market."

— CHINESE ABROAD

The holiday is celebrated by Chinese communities around the world. In San Francisco, where about one in five residents is of Chinese descent, the celebration is stretched over a few weeks, with fairs, beauty queens, bazaars, lion dances and deafening firecrackers in Chinatown. The festivities culminate in the San Francisco Chinatown Chinese New Year Parade, complete with feisty 82 meter-long dragon. It's such a big deal that schools close for the holiday.

Pius Lee, chairman of the city's Chinatown Neighborhood Association, said its Chinese New Year celebrations resemble those in Hong Kong and Shanghai, especially the parades and family reunions where food is abundant and children get red envelopes filled with crisp "lucky" dollar bills.

But unlike in China, San Francisco workers will take just two or three days off, said Lee. "We can't follow China's system because the cost of shutting down for many days here is a lot higher than in China," he said. Lee said many grocery stores and other shops close for two or three days but a handful remain open to tend to the tourists who flock to the downtown neighborhood for a glimpse of China.

The festivities have also embraced foreign culture. For example, the traditional red envelopes, usually decorated with gold Chinese letters, are sold by Chinatown merchants with pictures of Pokemon and Disney characters.

— HOLIDAY SURPRISE

Just because it's a holiday doesn't mean there won't be any major surprises. Chinese officials are notorious for releasing big news during important holidays, unexpected announcements that "hit you with your pants down unprepared," said Francis Lun, CEO of GEO Securities. The timing may be an attempt to reduce the impact on financial markets, or for the more skeptical, to bury bad news. In 2011, the central bank raised interest rates at the tail end of Chinese New Year. **AP**

Chinese corruption crackdown slams sales of New Year's bling

Bruce Einhorn

DURING China's boom years, Shanxi province was an economic backwater notorious for coal mine accidents and air pollution. According to a 2013 study by researchers at Princeton University, the University of Texas-Austin, and Peking University, the number of Shanxi infants born with neural tube defects is 18 times as high as in the United States.

Now, Shanxi is at the forefront of China's latest trend: the new frugality.

With President Xi Jinping's campaign against corruption nabbing over 70,000 officials last year, stores in the provincial capital of Taiyuan that once catered to officials with tastes running to Gucci and Hermes are empty. "Wealthy coal mine bosses and government officials have long been the patron of these luxury brands in Taiyuan," the official Xinhua news agency reported on Sunday. "But with the crackdown going strong, stores are finding it hard to get by." According to one manager at a mall in downtown Taiyuan, the news agency reported, sales of men's products have dropped 30 percent so far this year.

This week's celebrations to welcome in the lunar New Year aren't likely to offer much relief to retailers in Taiyuan or anywhere else in the country. The Chinese New Year typically is a big shopping season, but with celebrations to mark the Year of the Sheep (also known as the Year of the Goat and the Year of the Ram) starting today, prospects aren't good. A few years ago, sales during the holiday grew around 20 percent. This year, growth will be closer to 10 percent, according to James Roy, an associate principal at Shanghai-based China Market Research Group.

Ten percent growth isn't bad, but the deceleration in Chinese New Year sales comes as retailers are already struggling. Economic growth in China slumped to a 15-year low in 2014, and traditional retailers also have to cope with the rise of e-commerce rivals such as Taobao and JD.com, which have successfully wooed customers and changed spending habits. For example, instead of shopping for the New Year, many consumers are now spending money on new, online-generated events like the Nov. 11 Singles Day popularized by Alibaba.

Now Xi's anti-graft campaign is putting a damper on the celebrations as people try to avoid conspicuous spending that could land them in trouble. The corruption cops aren't going to stamp out the Chinese taste for bling, but their campaign is leading to a shift in favored designer names, says Sage Brennan, chief executive officer of consulting firm China Luxury Advisors. He sees a move away from "logo-heavy, bling-style brands" and toward "brands that are a little bit less Gucci, less Louis Vuitton." Western designers such as Michael Kors, Kate Spade, and Tori Burch stand to benefit, he says. **Bloomberg**

HONG KONG

In Year of Sheep, CE Leung suggests following their lead



Pro-democracy activists carry a banner depicting Hong Kong Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying during a march to Central, demanding universal suffrage in Hong Kong Sunday, Feb. 1, 2015

Natasha Khan

IN Hong Kong, the scene of protests that disrupted the city's Central district for 11 weeks, the chief executive used his Year of the Sheep address to ask people to take inspiration from the gentle creatures.

"Sheep are widely seen to be mild and gentle animals living peacefully in groups," Leung Chun-ying

said, according to a government statement. "In the coming year, I hope that all people in Hong Kong will take inspiration from the sheep's character and pull together."

Thousands of demonstrators, angered by a Chinese decision to vet candidates in a coming poll to elect the next leader of the former British colony, last year occupied swathes of the city, clashing with poli-

ce and obstructing traffic.

"Last year was no easy ride for Hong Kong," said Leung, who has been dubbed "Wolf Chun-ying" by newspapers critical of his policies. "Our society was rife with differences and conflicts."

Leung's message comes ahead of the Lunar New Year today, when the Year of the Sheep (also known as the Year of the Goat or Ram) will begin.

When asked whether Leung was suggesting people should be more obedient, a spokeswoman for his office declined to provide further interpretation of the speech.

Hong Kong businesses, markets and schools will be closed today and Friday as the city's 7 million people celebrate with family dinners, lion dances and fireworks displays. **Bloomberg**

Gov't urges fewer fireworks during Lunar celebrations

SETTING off fireworks to celebrate Chinese New Year may be a centuries-old tradition, but the country's authorities are urging people to light fewer of them this week as cities fight a losing battle against relentless, toxic air pollution.

Dozens of cities in China have outright banned lighting fireworks yesterday and today, while others have reduced the number of fireworks vendors allowed to operate.

In Beijing, people received text messages from their phone companies advising against setting off fireworks while local government-run media repeated the warnings in newspapers and on websites.

Still, the state-run China Daily warned yesterday that Beijing's clear skies would likely become heavily polluted by the night due to fireworks, reaching the highest level possible on a scale measuring air pollution. It said the polluted air would probably last throu-



A man covers his ears as he walks past firecrackers set off by people on a street in Beijing

gh Friday due to windless conditions.

Despite the warnings, one Beijing fireworks vendor surnamed Yu said yesterday that he was still swamped with customers. He said he was allowed to sell his goods for only 10 days this year, compared to 20 the year before.

The capital has been under intense pressure to clean up its skies, which are among the most polluted in Chi-

na. Last year, Beijing authorities said they planned to phase out all forms of coal burning by 2020.

The world's biggest emitter of greenhouse gases, China still depends on coal for about 60 percent of all energy production and about 80 percent of its electricity. In November, President Xi Jinping pledged to stop the growth in carbon emissions by 2030 at the latest. **AP**

MU S L I M guerrillas returned to the Philippine government yesterday at least 16 assault firearms of police anti-terror commandos who were killed in what the insurgents say was a "misen-counter" that has stalled a new peace deal.

Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebel Rasid Ladiasan said the handover of the firearms to government officials in a military camp in the south was meant to show the insurgents "want peace." A cellphone was also given back by the insurgents, and at least one more rifle from the slain policemen will be returned by the rebels later, he said.

President Benigno Aquino III has asked the rebels to return the slain commandos' weapons and help government forces hunt down terror suspects in the south.

"We want to show our sincerity and our commitment to the peace process," Ladiasan said by phone. "The police and military are no longer our enemies. There has been no fighting for three years, but what happened was really unfortunate and beyond our control."

PHILIPPINES

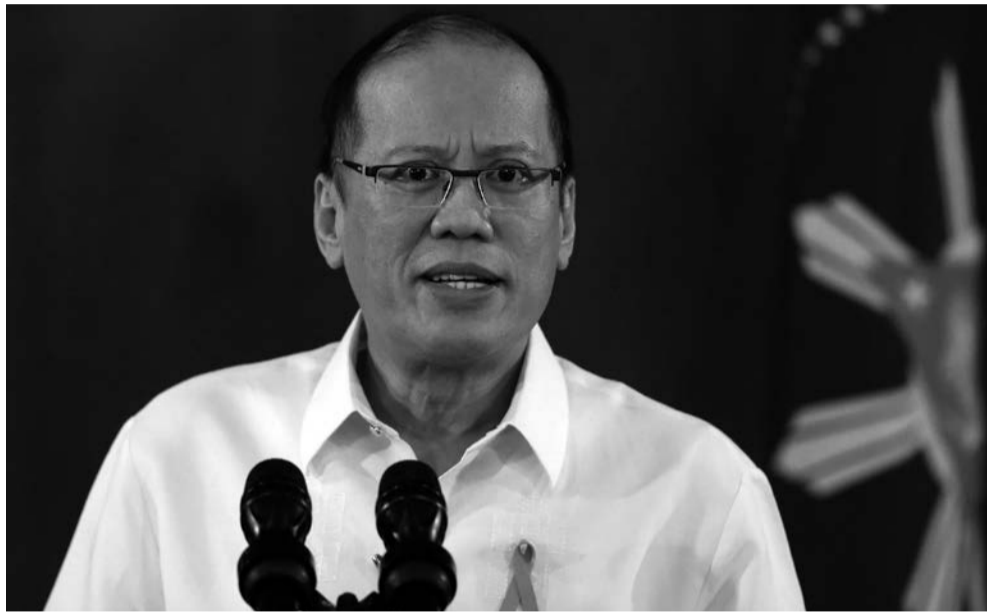
Muslim rebels return 16 firearms of slain Filipino commandos

Presidential adviser on the peace process Teresita Deles said the rebels' decision to return the firearms showed that the 11,000-strong Moro Islamic Liberation Front's leaders have control over their fighters, who traditionally don't return weapons they seize in gun battles.

"It's a show of good faith," Deles said.

The police commandos reportedly killed one of Southeast Asia's most wanted terror suspects, Malaysian Zulkifli bin Hir, also known as Marwan, in a Jan. 25 raid in the marshy outskirts of southern Mamasapano town. But as they withdrew, the policemen got entangled in two gunbattles with Muslim rebels and other armed groups in the far-flung region, killing 44 of the commandos.

At least 18 Muslim re-



Philippine President Benigno Aquino III

bels and three villagers were killed, police said.

The huge police casualty toll — the government's biggest single-day combat loss in recent memory — angered many, including lawmakers, who have suspended committee hearings on a propo-

sed law that will create a more powerful autonomous region for minority Muslims in the south under a peace deal signed by the government and the Moro rebels last year.

But a cease-fire under the peace deal actually worked to prevent more

casualties when foreign and Filipino peacekeepers intervened and managed to ease the fierce Mamasapano clashes. They also arranged the safe retrieval of the slain commandos from the two scenes of the gunbattles after the clashes, of-

officials said.

Police commandos who oversaw the anti-terror raid have acknowledged in congressional hearings that they did not effectively notify the Moro rebels about the raid as required under the cease-fire to prevent accidental clashes.

A police commander involved in the assault also has acknowledged in a congressional inquiry that he and other police officials did not notify the military and an acting national police chief before the assault was launched. That prevented the military from rapidly providing combat support to the commandos who were surrounded by an overwhelming number of insurgents.

Aquino has suggested that the anti-terror raid should have been aborted when the planned night assault unraveled not according to plan. **AP**

INDIA

Modi's uniquely monogrammed suit to be auctioned for charity

INDIAN Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dark suit with its unique monogram pinstripes went up for auction yesterday in his home state of Gujarat, officials said.

The money raised in the three-day auction of the suit and hundreds of other gifts received by Modi will be used to clean up the heavily polluted Ganges River.

Modi wore the suit when President Barack Obama visited India last month. Photographs of the suit showing Modi's name monogrammed in dull gold stripes went viral on social media.

Opposition leaders attacked Modi for his extravagance in wearing a suit that was estimated to cost more than 1 million rupees (USD16,000).

By Wednesday afternoon, the highest bid received for the suit was more than 11 million rupees (\$177,000), officials said. The auction



In this Jan. 25, 2015 file photo, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, right, wears a dark pinstriped suit with his name monogrammed in dull gold stripes as he poses for the media with U.S. President Barack Obama in New Delhi

is scheduled to conclude on Friday.

Gujarat official Milind Toravane said the suit and other items were gifts received by Modi after he became prime minister in May. The gifts include decorative pieces in silver and brass, among other items.

During Modi's 2001-2014 stint as chief minister of Gujarat, the gifts he received were regularly auctioned off and the money collected used to fund programs for the education of girls in the state.

No base price had been set for the suit, Toravane said. **AP**

BANGLADESH

Tribunal gives death sentence to 1971 war collaborator

A special tribunal dealing with war crimes involving Bangladesh's 1971 independence war convicted and sentenced a leading collaborator to death yesterday for crimes including mass killing, arson and looting.

The head judge of a three-member panel, Obaidul Hasan, delivered the verdict in a packed courtroom in the nation's capital, Dhaka, against Abdus Subhan of Jamaat-e-Islami, Bangladesh's largest Islamic political party.

Subhan, 79, is the ninth senior leader of the party to be convicted of such crimes since Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina initiated the long-stalled war crimes trials in 2010. One party leader has already been hanged for similar crimes.

Subhan faced nine charges that included the killing of 400 people in several villages in northern Bangladesh.

The defense said it would

appeal.

Bangladesh blames Pakistani soldiers and local collaborators for the deaths of 3 million people during the nine-month 1971 war. An estimated 200,000 women were raped and about 10 million people were forced to take shelter in refugee camps in neighboring India.

Trying the war crimes suspects is a daunting task for Hasina because many of them are politically and socially influential, and her archrival, former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, has a political partnership with Jamaat-e-Islami.

After Bangladesh gained independence, there was a process to try the suspects, but it was thwarted following the assassination of then-President and independence leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman — Hasina's father — and most of his family members in a 1975 military coup. **AP**



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MYANMAR

Gov't puts army in charge in troubled Kokang region

MYANMAR granted its military unprecedented powers to deal with fighting between ethnic minority rebels and government troops in the Kokang region, after week-long clashes left dozens of soldiers dead and sent tens of thousands of refugees fleeing to neighboring China.

Two announcements, signed by Myanmar President Thein Sein, were read out on national television late Tuesday declaring a 90-day state of emergency and that a military administration had been imposed in the northern special region.

A state-run newspaper, the Myanmar Ahlin daily, reported an attack on a Myanmar Red Cross convoy. It says the seven-car convoy carrying 100 civilians was under a Red Cross flag when it was attacked about 50 kilometers south of the regional capital of Laukkai. A Red Cross worker and a truck driver were hurt. The Ministry of Information blamed the attack on Kokang rebels.

Myanmar, a predominantly Buddhist nation of 50 million people, only recently emerged from a half-century of military rule.

Thein Sein's elected government, which came to power in 2011, has previously declared states of emergency because of sectarian conflict in the western state of Rakhine and for localized instances of fighting between Buddhists and Muslims.

But it was the first time his government has imposed a military administration, which gives the army executive and judicial powers in the designated region. The clause permitting this is in the 2008 constitution,



In this Jan. 12, 2015 photo, officers with the Ta'ang National Liberation army (TNLA) stand alongside their ethnic, army flags and emblems of their political and military wings in Mar Wong Village, northern Shan state, Myanmar

which was drawn up under a military government, and is one of several that enables the military to continue to dominate the government.

Independent political analyst Yan Myo Thein said the assumption of such powers by the military is likely to draw scrutiny from other ethnic groups which, like the Kokang, are seeking greater autonomy in their areas. And it comes as

the government tries to sign a nationwide peace accord with those groups and ahead of the elections that are supposed to be held later this year.

According to the government, as of Monday, more than 50 troops had been killed and 73 wounded since last week, while 26 were killed on the Kokang side.

State-run media said Tuesday that during the visit to a hospi-

tal treating wounded soldiers, Thein Sein vowed that his government "will not lose an inch of Myanmar territory."

The fighting has forced people to flee over the border. Citing government officials, the Chinese state-owned news site Yunnan.cn said Monday that there had been 30,000 border crossings by Myanmar nationals over the past week into Yunnan province.

Lin Sen, a volunteer helping refugees in Yunnan, said by phone Tuesday that as many as 50,000 refugees may have escaped Kokang.

Kokang is dominated by ethnic Han Chinese, and the region has been embroiled in fighting since conflicts between the Kokang rebels and government troops intensified on Feb. 9.

"The announcement of military administration has no impact on us. This will only make the lives of Kokang people living in Laukkai difficult," Htun Myat Lin, general secretary of the Kokang rebel group, said by phone Tuesday. He said government troops had occupied Laukkai.

He says his group is seeking autonomy for Kokang and its ethnic Han Chinese people.

"We want to have a high degree of autonomy where we can manage our own affairs, but we do not wish to split the country of Myanmar," Htun said, adding that ethnic Han Chinese are treated as second-class citizens in Myanmar.

Though preliminary peace pacts have been reached with most of the ethnic groups, clashes occasionally occur with Kachin, Shan and others. In addition to control over jade, timber and other natural resources in areas under their control, they want assurances that they will have some say over future troop movements. **AP**

AFGHANISTAN

UN finds 22 percent rise in civilian casualties

Rahim Faiez, Kabul

THE number of civilians killed or wounded in fighting in Afghanistan climbed by 22 percent in 2014 to reach the highest level in five years as foreign troops concluded their combat mission, the U.N. said in an annual report released yesterday.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan documented 10,548 civilian casualties in 2014, the highest number in a single year since 2009. They include 3,699 civilian deaths, up 25 percent from 2013.

The U.N. says the Taliban and other insurgents



UN Human Rights Director Georgette Gagnon shows a copy of the UN report detailing civilian casualties in 2014 while speaking during a press conference in Kabul

were responsible for 72 percent of all civilian casualties, with government forces and foreign troops responsible for just 14 percent.

The "Taliban don't actually accept the veracity of the information in the report," UNAMA head Nicholas Haysom told journalists yesterday

"They have accepted in the engagements with us that protection of a civilian is important and have pledged to take certain measures to eradicate

civilian casualties."

The Taliban had no immediate comment.

U.S. and NATO troops pulled back from volatile areas last year, handing security responsibility over to Afghan forces and officially concluding their combat mission at the end of the year. At least 2,213 U.S. soldiers have died in Afghanistan since the invasion to topple the Taliban following the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, according to an Associated Press count.

The U.N. report attributed the rise in casualties to intensified ground fighting, in which weapons like mortars, rockets and

grenades are used in populated areas, sometimes indiscriminately.

For the first time since 2009, more Afghan civilians were killed and injured by ground fighting than by any other tactic, including roadside bombs. The report found that civilian deaths and injuries resulting from ground operations surged by 54 percent, making them the "biggest killers of Afghan women and children in 2014."

Highlighting the danger, a roadside bomb outside of Kabul exploded Tuesday night, killing four members of a family, authorities said. **AP**

ZOU SHIMING FIGHTS TO CLAIM A WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP FOR CHINA

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Traffic arrangement for the "Parade for the Celebration of the Year of Ram"

"Parade for the Celebration of the Year of Ram" is held on the 3rd day of the Lunar New Year at 20:00, and the following is the traffic arrangement:

The section from the roundabout in front of the Macao Science Center toward Praça do Lago Sai Van on the Avenida Dr. Sun Yat-Sen will be closed from 17:00 to 23:00. The other way round traffic lane allows car to move in one direction on Avenida Dr. Sun Yat-Sen. Free shuttle bus service is provided by MGTO before and after the event at certain period of time and locations for residents.

Free shuttle bus routes

1. Circular routes between the Macao Cultural Centre on Avenida Xian Xing Hai and the following locations for the easy access to the Macao Science Center

Date and time: 21st February (3rd day of Lunar New Year), 18:00-23:00

Shuttle bus pick up locations:

- next to the Macau Square on the Avenida Dr Mário Soares
- near the Edifício Pak Wai bus stop on the Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida
- near the Edifício Man Lei on the Estrada Marginal do Hipódromo
- opposite the Hotel Altira in Taipa on the Avenida de Kwong Tung
- near the Edifício Nova City (Block 7) in Taipa on the Rua de Coimbra
- near the Edifício Koi Nga (Block 5) in Coloane on Avenida de Vale das Borboletas
- near the Edifício Coloane on the Rua da Cordoaria (on the side of the Posto de Saúde de Coloane)

2. Point of Departure: Macau Tower

Date and time: 21st February (3rd day of Lunar New Year), 23:30-01:30 (22nd February)

With destination to:

- next to the Macau Square on the Avenida Dr Mário Soares
- near the Fai Chi Kei main bus stop
- near the Edifício Man Lei on the Estrada Marginal do Hipódromo

Attentions to all the residents and drivers:

please follow the instructions of the traffic policemen depending on the actual situations.

During Fireworks Display: (23:00 - 23:23)

Limited opening (Allowing one lane for Parking)

Section near the Ocean Garden, Avenida do Oceano and Avenida dos Jardins do Oceano, Taipa, allow vehicles parked one lane in the road.



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Balint Szlanko and
Nataliya Vasilyeva, Artemvsk

UKRAINE

Troops withdrawing from embattled Debaltseve

UKRAINE has pulled most of its troops out of Debaltseve, the epicenter of recent fighting in war-torn eastern Ukraine, the president confirmed yesterday. The Russia-backed separatists reported taking hundreds of soldiers captive as they continued their onslaught on the strategic railroad junction.

Associated Press reporters saw several dozen Ukrainian troops retreating with their weapons from Debaltseve yesterday morning, covered in dirt and looking exhausted. Some were driving to the nearby town of Artemivsk in trucks while several others, unshaven and visibly upset, were on foot. One soldier spoke of heavy government losses, while another said they had not been able to get food for days because of the rebel shelling.

"We're very happy to be here," the hungry soldier told the AP. "We were praying all the time and already said goodbye to our lives a hundred times."

The army has withdrawn out 80 percent of its troops from the town and two more columns have yet to leave, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said yesterday. He denied claims by the rebels that the Ukrainians were surrounded and said the troops were leaving Debaltseve with their weapons and ammunition.

"Debaltseve was under our control, it was never encircled. Our troops and formations have left in an organized and planned manner," he said in televised comments. He spoke at a Kiev airport as he traveled to eastern Ukraine to "shake the hands" of the soldiers who were pulled out of Debaltseve.

Rebel spokesman Eduard Basurin, however, said hundreds of Ukrainian soldiers had surrendered in Debaltseve. Russian state-owned television

AP PHOTO



Ukrainian government soldiers sit on top of their armored vehicle driving on a road stretching away from the town of Artemivsk

yesterday showed images of several dozen Ukrainian troops being escorted along a village road by the rebels.

Kiev admitted that some soldiers had been taken prisoner in Debaltseve, but gave no details on how many were seized.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, on a visit to Budapest on Tuesday, had called on Kiev to admit defeat in the contested town, saying "the only choice" of the Ukrainian troops was to "leave behind weaponry, lay down arms and surrender."

Fierce fighting around Debaltseve, which links the two major separatist cities of Donetsk and Luhansk, had raged on despite a cease-fire deal brokered by European leaders which went into effect on Sunday.

Some retreating troops said yesterday they had not received

any reinforcements from the government in Debaltseve and had been walking and retreating for a whole day. One Ukrainian soldier who introduced himself only as Nikolai said he was not even sure if his unit was retreating or being rotated out of Debaltseve.

"I don't know, our commanders didn't tell us whether it's retreat or just rotation," he said. "They just told us to change our positions because our unit had been staying there for quite a long time and we had sustained quite big losses."

AP journalists were turned back by rebel forces outside Vuhlehirsk, 10 kilometers west of Debaltseve, early yesterday but heard regular artillery fire coming from the rebel side in the areas.

EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini yesterday accused Russian-backed rebels in Debaltseve of acting "in clear violation of the cease-fire."

"Russia and the separatists have to immediately and fully implement the commitments agreed to in Minsk, in line with yesterday's U.N. Security Council resolution, starting with the respect of the cease-fire and the withdrawal of all heavy weapons," Mogherini said in a statement.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, the host of Ukrainian cease-fire talks last week, offered yesterday to help "stop the conflict in Debaltseve with dignity and (negotiate the) pullout" the Ukrainian troops.

Elsewhere in the conflict zone, rebel leaders said yesterday that they had begun withdrawing heavy weaponry from the parts of the front line where

■ The Russia backed separatists reported taking hundreds of soldiers captive as they continued their onslaught on a strategic railroad junction

the cease-fire that began Sunday was holding. Basurin told Russian Rossiya 1 channel that rebels were pulling back five self-propelled guns from Ole-nivka, south of the rebel stronghold of Donetsk, on the road to the government-controlled port of Mariupol.

"This is the first step," Basurin said. "And we're not waiting for Ukraine to start pulling back the weaponry together with us." Observers from the Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe, the group responsible for monitoring the cease-fire, have attempted to go to Debaltseve since Sunday but have been blocked by the rebels.

The separatists' Donetsk News Agency yesterday quoted rebel official Maxim Leshchenko saying that the OSCE will be allowed to visit Debaltseve "soon" once their forces have finished the operation there. AP

LIBYA

Italy presses UN to achieve political solution

ITALY pressed for swifter action yesterday by the United Nations to find a political solution to Libya's rapidly deteriorating security situation.

Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni, speaking in Parliament, urged the world to "quicken its pace before it is too late."

Egypt this week launched airstrikes in neighboring Libya after the Islamic State group posted a video of the beheadings of 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians there.

Hours before a U.N. Security Council emergency



Migrants wait to disembark from a tug boat after being rescued in the Pozzallo harbor, Sicily

meeting, Gentiloni said the United Nations must "double its efforts" to promote political dialogue among Libyans, who are

divided among competing militias, Islamist factions and tribal rivalries.

Gentiloni's comment that the only solution to Libya's problems is a political one was echoed by Pope Francis. The pontiff asked for prayers yesterday that "the international community can find peaceful solutions to the difficult situation in Libya."

Last week, Italy appeared to be supporting military intervention but Premier Matteo Renzi has since stressed diplomacy. A Feb. 11 meeting in Gha-

dames, Libya, among Libyan factions, appeared to be "a step in the right direction," Gentiloni said.

Italy is ready to monitor any cease-fire, contribute to peacekeeping efforts, repair infrastructure and provide military training so militias can be folded into the regular army, he said.

Italy, Libya's former colonial ruler, had close economic and political relations with Tripoli during the long rule of dictator Moammar Gadhafi, who was ousted in 2011.

With Italian islands only a few hundred kilometers from Libya, Italy has borne the brunt of waves of migrants who are smuggled across the Mediterranean from Libya. Officials say more Libyan chaos could swell the numbers of migrants fleeing war in Syria and other conflicts.

Italian authorities have also raised fears that terrorists backing the Islamic State group might mingle among the trafficked migrants and reach Italy by sea. AP

TV canal macau



THURSDAY

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	Zig Zag
15:30	Non-Daily Portuguese News
16:10	Documentary Serie
16:40	Documentary
17:40	Documentary Serie
18:10	Brazil Avenue (Repeated)
19:00	Montra do Lilau (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:28	Chief Executive Chui Sai On's Lunar New Year Message
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	Champions League Highlights
23:45	Miscellaneous

FRIDAY

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
18:10	Brazil Avenue (Repeated)
19:00	TDM Talk Show (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:20	Revenge S1
22:10	Brazil Avenue
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Europa League Highlights
23:45	Portuguese Movie
01:15	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

SATURDAY

10:30	Documentary Serie
10:45	Young Adult
11:40	Conch Bay
12:30	Cooking
13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	Soap Opera
19:00	Contest
19:50	Miscellaneous
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Parade for the Celebration of the Year of the Ram (Live)
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Shorts
00:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

offbeat

ARRESTED ROMANIAN EX-MINISTER WANTS TO WALLPAPER HER CELL



A former Romanian tourism minister in detention on corruption charges has asked to be allowed to wallpaper and paint her cell walls.

Marius Stribulea, lawyer for Elena Udrea, said his client, one of the most influential Romanian politicians in the past decade, wanted to renovate her current accom-

modation.

"As you know the conditions are not the best," he said yesterday. Mediafax reported that the flamboyant 41-year-old politician wanted to wallpaper her cell walls, as well as paint the bars and radiator.

Stribulea said Bucharest police will examine the request, but it appeared her desires won't be met: A court ruled late Tuesday that Udrea would be put under house arrest while being investigated.

Udrea was arrested last week for 30 days on charges of influence peddling, taking bribes and money laundering. She denies wrongdoing. She was criticized for her close ties with Traian Basescu, Romania's president from 2004 to 2014. She ran for president in November elections, finishing fourth.

cinema



CINETEATRO

18 FEB - 25 FEB

STAND BY ME DORAEMON_

ROOM 1
(2D) 2.00, 5.40 (18-25 FEB)
Language: Cantonese (Chinese)
Duration: 95min

TRIUMPH IN THE SKIES_

ROOM 1
3.45, 9.30, 11.30 pm (18-25 FEB)
7.30 pm (19-25 FEB)
Language: Cantonese (english and Chinese)
Duration: 127min

FROM VEGAS TO MACAU 2_

ROOM 1
7.30 pm (18 FEB)
Language: Cantonese (english and Chinese)
Duration: 90min



KINGSMAN: THE SECRET SERVICE_

ROOM 2
2.15, 7.00, 9.15, 11.30 pm (18 FEB)
2.30, 7.15, 11.30 pm (19-25 FEB)
Director: Matthew Vaughn
Starring: Colin Firth, Michael Caine, Samuel L. Jackson
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 127min



PENGUINS OF MADAGASCAR_

ROOM 2
4.30 (18 FEB), 4.45 pm (19-25 FEB)
Language: Cantonese (Chinese)
Duration: 127min

STAND BY ME DORAEMON_

ROOM 2
(2D) 7.15 (19-25 FEB)
Language: Cantonese (Chinese)
Duration: 95min

JUPITER ASCENDING_

ROOM 3
(2D) 2.15, 4.30, 9.15 pm (18 FEB)
(3D) 7.00 pm (18 FEB)
Director: Andy Wachowski, Lana Wachowski
Starring: Channing Tatum, Mila Kunis, Eddie Redmayne
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 127min

FROM VEGAS TO MACAU 2_

ROOM 3
11.30 pm (18-25 FEB)
3.45, 7.30, 9.30 pm (19-25 FEB)
Language: Cantonese (english and Chinese)
Duration: 90min

PENGUINS OF MADAGASCAR_

ROOM 3
2.00, 5.45 pm (19-25 FEB)
Language: Cantonese (Chinese)
Duration: 127min

MACAU TOWER

19 FEB - 04 MAR

12 GOLDEN DUCKS_

2.30, 4.30, 7.00, 9.30 pm
Director: Matt Chow
Starring: Eason Chan, Louis Koo, Sandra Kwan Yue Ng
Language: Chinese (Chinese)
Duration: 92min

this day in history



1997 CHINA'S REFORMIST DENG XIAOPING DIES

China's paramount leader Deng Xiaoping has died at the age of 92.

He had been suffering from failing health for several years and was last seen in public three years ago.

The country's official news agency said his death was the result of advanced stages of Parkinson's Disease complicated by a lung infection and that he had failed to respond to emergency treatment.

Although he was officially retired, no important decision affecting China was made without Deng Xiaoping's approval.

He was known internationally as the leader who crushed the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989 but also as the man credited with opening up China to economic reform.

Chinese radio's shortwave English language service praised his "outstanding" leadership as a "great Marxist and the true architect of China's socialist reforms and modernisation".

A funeral committee has been announced, to be headed by Jiang Zemin, which regional experts say makes him the most likely candidate to gain the leadership.

Meanwhile Tiananmen Square the symbolic heart of China and the communist party is reported to be peaceful, with no sign of extra security.

The BBC's Beijing Correspondent Humphrey Hawksley said that given Deng Xiaoping's stated disregard for the "cult of the personality" it was unlikely there would be any grand state funerals.

Humphrey Hawksley said: "Deng wished to hand over rule to a collective leadership of modern thinking technocrats and not a god-king that China has traditionally been accustomed to."

International reaction to the news has been complimentary about the dead dictator and his contribution to the world economy.

US Secretary of State Madeline Albright said he was "an historic figure" and that the US would continue to pursue a "multi-faceted relationship with China", based on issues of trade, the environment and human rights.

The UK's Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind expressed his hope economic and political reforms would gather speed, not only for China but to protect Hong Kong's future.

The British colony is due to be handed back to the Chinese in June and the Chinese leadership has already said it intends to dismantle a recently-implemented democratic system.

But Hong Kong Democratic Party Chairman, Martin Lee, says if the Chinese leadership tries to control Hong Kong "freedoms will be eroded".

"The rule of law will be whittled down. And that cannot be good because Hong Kong's freedoms are a foundation for a bright future," he said.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

When Deng took power in 1978 he announced a new era of reform. He dismantled collective farming and allowed private enterprise including special free market zones.

Politically, Deng had a reputation as a hardliner, and repeatedly ordered crackdowns on dissidents.

He drew global condemnation when he used the army to crush student demonstrations in Tiananmen Square in June 1989.

China is a military superpower, the world's most populous country, and has a vast economy experiencing both growth and diversification. But political freedom remains heavily suppressed, and even the Chinese Communist Party's guarantee of liberal freedoms in Hong Kong is becoming questionable.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Seek wisdom from your inner self! Get a Free Spiritual Reading today. Call 1-800-648-9165 right now!

Taurus April 20-May 20 You are feeling protective of someone - maybe to the point of madness! Just let it go as much as you can and learn from your feelings.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Your desires make you stand out today - but that's okay. Just make sure that you're not too pushy, or someone with more intense energy may push right back!

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Are you feeling nervous about something? Say no! You should only agree to things that seem absolutely right at the gut level, even if people are pushing you and it's hard to refuse.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Your family needs you - and that goes both ways! Give someone what they need (instead of what they want, maybe), and you should find that things start to get better and better for all of you.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Pay attention! If you're not really listening to what others have to say, then you are sure to miss out on some important clues. Life could be really easy for you, but only if you're open to the truth.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 It may be time for an inventory - or a house-clearing! If you can handle the stress of a yard sale, you may find that you can get ready for that move that may be coming up, and defray its costs.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Inner strength is vitally important right now - and you have more than you need! You can resist others' attempts to sway you and ensure that your voice gets heard by the right people.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Keep up the inward pressure - you know that your energy is slightly out of whack, but if you don't keep up the thinking and introspection, you never know what you might miss out on later.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Your friends are rock-solid today - you can count on them for almost anything, even the flaky ones! It's a good day for you to check into some new activity that can draw you all even closer together!

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You can't quite put your finger on it, but you know that you need to deal with your ambitions today. It may be time for you to step up and ask for that promotion - or change careers entirely!

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 You can't quite figure out what's going on with your interior life today - at one point, you know just what you need, then you seem to change your mind almost immediately! Wait 'til tomorrow to choose.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 Sudoku grid for 'Easy' difficulty with some numbers pre-filled.

Easy+

9x9 Sudoku grid for 'Easy+' difficulty with some numbers pre-filled.

Medium

9x9 Sudoku grid for 'Medium' difficulty with some numbers pre-filled.

Hard

9x9 Sudoku grid for 'Hard' difficulty with some numbers pre-filled.

WEATHER

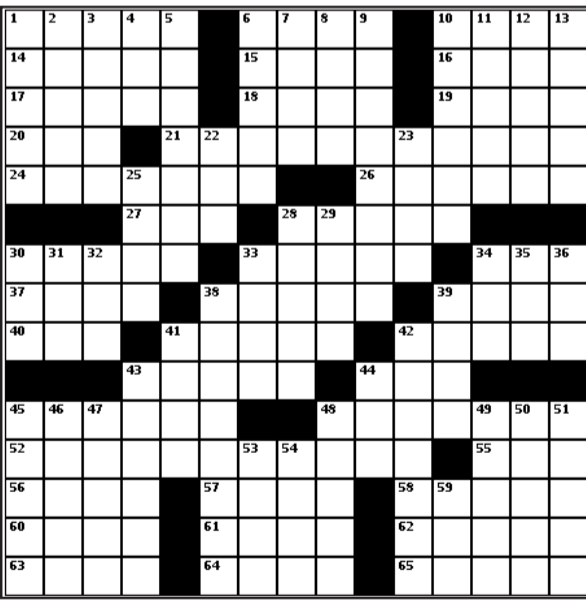
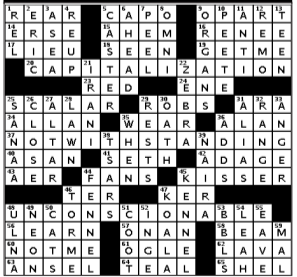
Weather forecast table with columns for MIN, MAX, and CONDITION for various cities in CHINA and WORLD.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Ghost; 6- Bibliography abbr.; 10- Cries of discovery; 14- Is wearing; 15- Carson's successor; 16- Barrett of gossip; 17- Take the honey and run; 18- Not of the cloth; 19- Take down ...; 20- Conger; 21- Eternal; 24- Devise beforehand; 26- Up-to-date; 27- Dusk, to Donne; 28- Met highlights; 30- More competent; 33- Community spirit; 34- Samuel's teacher; 37- Lively dance; 38- Actress Sophia; 39- Banned apple spray; 40- Corp. bigwig; 41- Fungal infection; 42- Penned; 43- Pass into disuse; 44- Abner's adjective; 45- Busybodies; 48- Man who has lost his wife; 52- Spread by metastasis; 55- Lyric work; 56- "So be it"; 57- ___ old cowhand...; 58- Norwegian name of Norway; 60- Shriveled, without moisture; 61- Central part; 62- Relaxed; 63- "Aquarius" musical; 64- Actor Kristofferson; 65- Apparel;

DOWN: 1- Ovis aries; 2- More wan; 3- ___ Mio; 4- Alley ___; 5- One bent in reverence; 6- Actress Barkin; 7- Eye drop; 8- Indigo source; 9- Place; 10- Speaks publicly; 11- Driver's invitation; 12- Without a break; 13- Tending to sag; 22- Moving vehicle; 23- Ladies of Sp.; 25- Rind; 28- ___ Grows in Brooklyn; 29- Perlman of "Cheers"; 30- Circle section; 31- Yellow and black insect; 32- The Lion; 33- Seemingly forever; 34- "Xanadu" band; 35- Back muscle, briefly; 36- Intense anger; 38- Lip cosmetic; 39- He sang about Alice; 41- Knocks lightly; 42- Broadened; 43- One that lends; 44- Designer Claiborne; 45- Shatter; 46- Where Hercules slew the lion; 47- Cheri of "Saturday Night Live"; 48- Fermented grape juices; 49- More unfavorable; 50- Perimeters; 51- Orchestra section; 53- Latin love; 54- Delhi dress; 59- Implement used when rowing a boat;

Yesterday's solution



Crossword puzzles provided by BesCrosswords.com

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
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



Real estate advertisement for JML Property, featuring 'FOR SALE' and 'FOR RENT' sections with details on various properties like 'Unique Roof Top Apartment', 'Chun Fok Village', 'Pou Kei Unit A', 'Tong Cheng Hin, Unit D', 'One Grantai Unit S', 'Tou Un', 'EDF. HOU CHAN', and 'The Manhattan, Unit D Taipa'.



Wishing you a
Healthy and Happy
Chinese New Year

From Your Friends
at

Wynn.

PSG draw 1-1 vs. Chelsea in Champions



PSG's Zlatan Ibrahimovic, left, is challenged by Chelsea's Gary Cahill

STRIKER Edinson Cavani gave Paris Saint-Germain a Champions League lifeline on Tuesday with a second-half equalizer as his team battled to a 1-1 draw with Chelsea in the last 16.

After defender Branislav Ivanovic put Chelsea ahead in the 36th minute of the first leg match with a looping header, Cavani equalized with a downward header in the 54th.

"The result is not in our favor, but what I retain is the spirit my players showed," PSG coach Laurent Blanc said. "It's the game we wanted, except for the goal we conceded. But there are a lot of very, very positive things to take."

FOOTBALL

Fans prevent black man from boarding train

Jerome Pugmire, Paris

WITH a racist song ringing in his ears, a black man trying to board a subway train in Paris stands back after twice being pushed away by a group of Chelsea soccer fans.

Sharply dressed in a long overcoat and with a bag hanging from his left shoulder — most likely on his way home from work — the man does not manage to get on the train. A black woman, preferring to move away from the mob, walks off moments later.

The incident happened Tuesday at Richelieu Drouout metro station, a short time before Chelsea played Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League. Yesterday, the Paris prosecutor's office opened an investigation into racially-motivated violence on public transport.

In a video of the incident posted online by the Guardian

newspaper, the black man tries to board the train and is pushed away. He then pushes back and says in French "Can I get on or what?" before again being shoved away.

The carriage, mixed with Parisian commuters and English football fans making their way to the game, is packed. But there is enough standing space for one more person, as is evident when the man steps inside before being pushed away the first time.

The group — some of whom chanted "Chelsea, Chelsea, Chelsea" — then sing "we're racist, we're racist, and that's the way we like it."

At about that time, several Paris transport officials walk past the group, but do not intervene, and the black woman leaves the adjacent carriage.

The identities of the men in the video, including the victim, have not yet been established, prosecutor's office spokeswoman Agnes Thibault-Lecuire

told The Associated Press. The maximum penalty possible according to the French criminal code is three years in prison and a 45,000 euro (\$51,000) fine.

London's Metropolitan Police said it will examine the footage to see if any banning orders can be applied, and will assist French authorities to "identify the people involved."

Chelsea said it would also take action — including banning orders — if possible.

"Such behavior is abhorrent and has no place in football or society," the English club said in a statement. "We will support any criminal action against those involved."

UEFA, the governing body of European soccer, said it could not take any action.

"We are appalled by the incident," UEFA said in a statement. "However, as it occurred away from the stadium, it is outside UEFA's remit to act."

The incident in Paris happened the same day as former Italy coach Arrigo Sacchi was criticized for saying that "there are too many colored players" in the youth sides of Italian clubs.

FIFA President Sepp Blatter condemned those comments as well as the fans in Paris.

"Pride and dignity is not a question of skin colour. Shocked by Arrigo Sacchi's comments. Stop it," Blatter tweeted. "I also condemn the actions of a small group of Chelsea fans in Paris. There is no place for racism in football!"

In the hours leading up to Tuesday's match, a large group of rowdy Chelsea fans congregated around two bars in the Chatelet area in central Paris. About 40 Riot police and a dozen police spotters were there to prevent a repeat of the violent clashes between Chelsea and PSG hooligans that took place in the same area before last year's Champions League quarter-finals.

On Tuesday, plainclothes police escorted three separate groups of Chelsea fans to the underground station at Etienne Marcel. After a change of trains, the route to the Parc des Princes goes through Richelieu Drouout station. **AP**

AD

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opinion

HK Observer
 Robert Carroll



CAPITAL AND DUE DILIGENCE

While much of Hong Kong's freedom is being chipped away at, it's heartening to see the stout application of the rule of law in several high-profile cases in the past month. In both the case of the horribly abused domestic helper Erwiana Sulistyansih, and the jailing of the SAR's former Chief Secretary, Rafael Hui, and property tycoon Thomas Kwok, of Sun Hung Kai Properties, justice was surely seen to be done. While the high and mighty may expect that the law does not apply to them, these cases prove that even the head of Kong Kong's biggest developer and the former second-in-command of the government receive no immunity from prosecution.

Given the collusion between government and property developers, and the great shockwaves that are expected to emanate from the successful prosecution of these two big fish, many of the more cynical and conspiratorially minded members of our community may have had a pleasant surprise. But don't these incarcerations send the right message to bigwigs and to the community that we are all equal under the law, despite Hui and Kwok having the best legal defense money can buy?

Likewise, the high-handed and totally unrepentant employer and torturer of Erwiana got her just deserts by being found guilty on multiple counts, and a long prison sentence is rightfully expected.

The third high-profile recent case where the rigorous application of the rule of law was so open to scrutiny was the Lamma ferry disaster, which also saw justice being done as the skippers' neglect was justifiably punished with jail time. However, both of the latter cases raise worrying questions. If abuse of foreign maids can reach that degree without detection, and if a half-dying girl, clearly battered and bruised, can leave without a murmur from immigration police, doesn't this mean that there are very substantial flaws in our helper abuse preventive mechanisms? If so, as barrister Robert Tibbo argued, why is nothing being done to detect and clamp down on such shocking behavior? After all, instances of abuse of foreign maids here are quite widespread.

As Tibbo pointed out that, according to Amnesty International in 2013, 60% of foreign domestic helpers in Hong Kong complained of verbal abuse from employers, and nearly 20% were victims of physical abuse. Furthermore, in 2014, 6.5% reported that they suffered from sexual abuse. While another barrister I know, a former prosecutor, calls those figures into question, there is no smoke without fire. The fact that foreign helpers are routinely exploited working from dawn until late in the evening, and acting as not only housekeepers but nanny/English teachers too, and sometimes even used as office workers as well, means there is a working-environment mindset of getting maximum value out of them. Surely that kind of dehumanizing exploitation is only a short step away from outright mental and physical abuse.

The worry about the Lamma ferry case is that while the captains were prosecuted, no Marine Department official has yet been hauled before the courts for not exercising due diligence in allowing a regularly inspected vessel with very serious safety flaws to be at sea. How many more lives could have been saved if the vessel had had the required number of water-tight doors below deck, and if the passenger seats had been properly fastened? The lack of a bulwark led to the ship sinking very rapidly, and the seats, being poorly fixed, dropped to the bottom of a near vertical ship, fatally trapping many. Lastly, does the fact that the ferry is owned by Hong Kong's richest man, Li Ka-shing, have any connection with the findings of government enquiries and the way the case was prosecuted?

THE BANK OF ENGLAND POLICYMAKERS UNANIMOUS ON INTEREST RATES

Minutes to the Bank of England's last meeting show policymakers voted unanimously to keep interest rates at record lows and to refrain from pumping more money into the British economy.

The minutes released yesterday from the Feb. 4-5 meeting of the bank's Monetary Policy Committee shows that with inflation at record lows, there was little impetus to increase rates from their record low of 0.5

percent. Inflation now stands at 0.3 percent, held down by low oil prices and supermarket price wars.

Capital Economics economist Vicky Redwood says the nine policymakers are more divided about their next move on interest rates than the unanimous vote would suggest. She says that two members — Martin Weale and Ian McCafferty — may soon reinstate their previous call for a rate hike.

OSCARS

Producers promise a show filled with magic and song



An image from "Boyhood" — the strongest candidate to the most wanted Oscar

LADY Gaga, Jennifer Hudson, Common and John Legend, Adam Levine, Rita Ora, Tegan & Sara, Tim McGraw.

This isn't the lineup for an upcoming pop concert, but rather for Sunday's Academy Awards.

"We want to entertain," said Neil Meron, producing his third consecutive Oscar ceremony with Craig Zadan. "And there's no better entertainment than to do it with music."

Host Neil Patrick Harris will perform an original song by the Oscar-winning writers behind "Let It Go," the producers said. Called "Moving Pictures," the musical number will set a "subliminal theme" for the evening, Meron said. "It's a multimedia musical number," he said, "something that we've not done before."

Music is part of the production pair's professional DNA, though.

The producers said they

started booking musical acts even before they learned the year's nominees. But they were delighted with the nominated original songs.

A spate of stars will bring those songs to life on the Oscar stage.

Common and Legend are set to perform their song, "Glory," from "Selma." Levine will sing "Lost Stars" from "Begin Again." Ora will take on Diane Warren's song from "Beyond the Lights," "Grateful." Tegan & Sara will join with The Lonely Island for "The Lego Movie" song, "Everything is Awesome." McGraw will perform Glen Campbell's song "I'm Not Gonna Miss You," from the documentary about his struggle with Alzheimer's, "Glen Campbell... I'll Be Me."

The producers wouldn't say what Hudson, Gaga and other entertainers, including Jack Black and Anna Kendrick, will sing.

Suspense about their performances will have to stand

in for the lack of suspense for most of the acting categories. Patricia Arquette of "Boyhood" and J.K. Simmons of "Whiplash" have locked up supporting-actor awards all season, and Julianne Moore is shoo-in for the best-actress Oscar for "Still Alice."

The lead actor competition has some excitement, with Michael Keaton of "Birdman" and Eddie Redmayne of "The Theory of Everything" splitting many of the early honors.

"Birdman" and "The Grand Budapest Hotel" lead all nominees with nine bids apiece, including best picture, director, cinematography and original screenplay. Also up for best picture are "American Sniper," "Boyhood," "The Imitation Game," "The Theory of Everything," "Selma" and "Whiplash."

Among the highlights of last year's top-rated ceremony was host Ellen DeGeneres' surprise pizza delivery and superstar-selfie moment.

"Everyone thinks that we pre-planned the selfie and pizza thing exactly the way they happened last year, but we didn't!" Zadan insisted, detailing the various ways the bits could have gone wrong: "Nobody takes a piece of pizza, and then it's weird. Ellen is standing there with pizza."

But they do promise real magic on Oscar night. After all, host Harris is a magician.

MDT/AP

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

João Pedro Lau



Oooops... One of the first really tough jobs for Secretary Sonia Chan: an official Chinese New Year opening. Next, elections, then democracy.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	65-95 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	65-95 Moderate
Ambient	65-95 Moderate

WORLD BRIEFS



GREECE is preparing to present its creditors with an official proposal aimed to save bailout talks from collapse, as time is running out for a deal that would keep the country solvent and within the euro currency bloc. Germany, the main European creditor, was quick to say it was skeptical of any new proposals.

FRANCE With a racist song ringing in his ears, a black man trying to board a subway train in Paris stands back after twice being pushed away by a group of Chelsea soccer fans. The incident happened Tuesday at Richelieu Drouot metro station, a short time before Chelsea played Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League. Yesterday, the Paris prosecutor's office opened an investigation into racially-motivated violence on public transport. More on p23



DANISH police have confirmed the name of the gunman who opened fire at a free-speech seminar and a synagogue in Copenhagen and revealed details of the weapons used in the deadly attacks. Police spokesman Joergen Skov says 22-year-old Omar Abdel Hamid El-Hussein killed a Danish filmmaker outside the seminar Saturday with a single shot with a M95 assault rifle. He then sprayed the entrance with 27 bullets, wounding three police officers inside.

CUBA-USA A new round of negotiations to restore full diplomatic ties with Cuba will take place next week in Washington and a delegation of U.S. senators says they are hopeful the two sides will reach a deal soon.