



### CARITAS SAYS DISCARDED FURNITURE SHOULD BE DONATED

Around 287 tones of used furniture was collected and destroyed during the week of the Lunar New Year

P2



### WITH NEW SLOGAN, XI SETS GOALS, KEEPS TRADITION

The four priorities described in state media this week add to Xi's growing roster of political slogans since he took leadership

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# Times

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

## WORLD BRIEFS

AP PHOTO



**SINGAPORE'S** government says Lee Kuan Yew (pictured), the city-state's founding father, remains on life support in intensive care being treated for severe pneumonia. A statement from the Prime Minister's Office says the 91-year-old is sedated and on mechanical ventilation. It said yesterday his doctors have restarted him on antibiotics, and are continuing to monitor him closely.

AP PHOTO



**CHINA** imposed a one-year ban on ivory imports that took immediate effect yesterday amid criticism that its citizens' huge appetite for ivory has fueled poaching that threatens the existence of African elephants.

**AFGHANISTAN** A suicide bomber driving a car packed with explosives targeted a Turkish Embassy vehicle in the Afghan capital during yesterday morning's rush hour, killing one Turkish soldier and wounding another.

**AFGHANISTAN** A senior Afghan military officer says the death toll from an avalanche caused by heavy winter snows in a mountainous valley northeast of the capital Kabul has risen to 162.

More on backpage



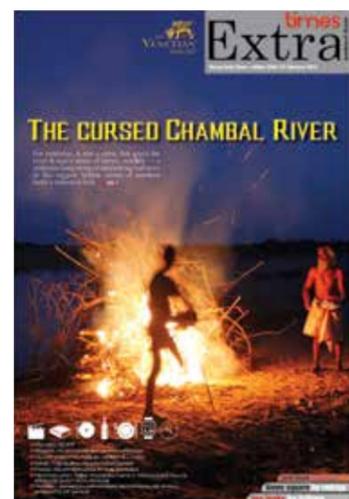
# Alexis Tam

# suggests 'control and optimization' of tourist influx

P5, EDITORIAL

# Dead baby's family questions medical assistance given at gov't hospital

P2



**Extra**  
times  
weekend Guide  
INSIDE

## HEALTH

# Grieving family suspects fatal hospital prescription

**T**HE family of a six-month-old baby boy, who died after taking a prescription from the Conde de São Januário Central Hospital (CHCSJ), have cast suspicion over a doctor who they believe may have underestimated the infant's condition.

According to the Hong Kong newspaper Apply Daily, the boy's parents brought him to the hospital for milk regurgitation on the morning of February 19, where, it is alleged, he was prescribed the antiemetic Domperidona and the anti-allergy medicine Dimetindeno. His condition did not improve after taking the medicine and his lips turned purple two hours later; he was then sent back to CHCSJ, where another doctor diagnosed the boy with sepsis causing him to go into shock. He died on the evening of the same day.

Mr Io, the boy's father said that he had always been healthy, although he had Favism and a very



minor heart issue. He questioned whether the first doctor had underestimated the seriousness of his son's condition, thus failing to prescribe the proper medication.

The Health Bureau released a statement late night on Wednesday, saying the CHCSJ had been informed by the family of the issue on February 24, and has already arranged a meeting with the family to enquire into the incident. It also promised to publish the investigation report once it is complete.

## CNY

# Caritas says discarded furniture should be donated

**T**HE Macau Residue System Company (CSR) has revealed that around 287 tones of used furniture was collected and destroyed during the week of Chinese New Year, between February 12 and 18.

Non-governmental-organization (NGO) Caritas disagrees with the CSR's option for destroying the used furniture, arguing that it should be distributed to the underprivileged.

The discarded furniture was retrieved from 108 collecting points set up by the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau

(IACM). During the Lunar New Year it is tradition for every Chinese family to thoroughly cleanse their house and get rid of objects deemed not useful or old.

"In previous years IACM hasn't received any expression of interest by associations regarding the used furniture thrown away, so all the items collected went directly to Macau's trash incinerator," IACM told Lusa.

Caritas has another version of events and has proposed to the government that the furniture could be distributed to low-in-

come families.

"I proposed several times to the government that a collecting place should be set up for the furniture, [which] could be distributed afterwards with the support of NGOs for free or against a symbolic price. I never got any answer; I don't think it's a priority," Paul Pun, Caritas's secretary general, said.

"It would be great if the government could create a space to store the furniture. (...) And if nobody took the furniture in the space of one month, it could be burned," he added.

# Wine imports stall in 2014

**W**INE imports to Macau grew 2 percent year-on-year in 2014, totaling MOP1.461 million. French brands lead the preferences of the local importers by far, holding a 77 percent quota. In second place come Australian brands, registering an increase of 44 percent year-on-year with a market share of eight percent. Portuguese wines,

traditionally popular in Macau, have a 7 percent share and occupy third position overall. They continue to be the most significant Portuguese export to Macau. Germany ranks fourth (3 percent share) and registered an abrupt fall of 33 percent in sales. It is followed by the United States, Chile, Italy, Spain and South Africa respectively.

According to Hugo Bandeira, the food and beverage manager at the Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT), these results indicate stagnation in the local wine market.

"The market has stalled and there weren't enough restaurant or hotel openings to justify a change in that trend," Mr Bandeira told Radio Macau. He added that the scenario will probably change with the upcoming opening of new resorts.



## editorial

Paulo Coutinho

### WHO GRANTS WHAT

Dr Alexis Tam said this week to Beijing from the streets of hyper-crowded Macau during CNY holidays: Thank you, but it's enough tourists. Please stop sending them here. He meant tourists from the mainland, naturally. Secretary Tam's words resounded well in the ears of stressed-out residents (631K according to the latest official statistics), more so when the visitors' charts were yet again on the rise y-o-y.

From the other margin of the Delta, Chief Executive CY Leung was saying about the same, while stats there were already showing a decrease in CNY inbound tourism. In Hong Kong, Mr Leung's intentions were greeted with moderate-to-harsh criticism. Media comments range from "Mr Leung's discussion with Beijing... does not resolve the real problem" to "Mr Leung is trying to appease the public by bringing up the proposal as he is seeking a second term in office."

I believe both comments apply to Dr Tam's wishes, with obvious modifications.

However, I think none of the comments

from officials or opinion-makers makes much sense. This whole visa scheme is complete nonsense, if you really think about it.

Just imagine you, Portuguese fellow citizen, being told by the Lisbon government: you can go to Russia, but you cannot. Not this year. Now just imagine you, English citizen, being told by someone from inside No. 10 Downing Street: you, from Bristol, cannot come see Big Ben, sorry. Not this month.

When I want to go visit Moscow, I just have to have my papers in order and ask... the Russian consulate to grant me a visa. I say nothing to Macau authorities, zip to Consul Sereno, nada to Lisbon. And if I get the nod from Putin's representatives, I just pay for the visa emoluments, get it myself; book a flight; fly there, fly out of there. As simple as that – and I tell you, from experience, Russia may be in the group of the most complicated, costly and more time-consuming nations to get a tourist visa.

Now, if I want to go to the Azores, I don't

have to tell anyone, ask anything from anybody official. I just go, it's part of my country and nobody can deny me entry.

I know what you're thinking: don't be naïve, man. This is Macau, that is Hong Kong and that over there - you can even see it - is mainland China. One-country, two-systems. Right?

Right... For the sake of argument let's stick first with the two-systems side of the story: we are dealing here with different jurisdictions.

What on earth has Beijing to do with who's or who's not to visit Macau or Hong Kong?

The control of our frontiers is ours to have.

It's Macau's duty to implement visa restrictions at the border if we feel like we can't bear more tourists! Not the other way around.

But I think we could do better than that. We could for instance create a better environment and more attractions to accommodate more tourists, like some observers are proposing in HK: "CY Leung should come up with a comprehensive plan inclu-

ding building more tourism facilities to cater to the needs of the mainland tourists," says Mingpao. Here it's more complex than that, due to the scarcity of space, but Macau has enough money to build Sentosas, floating-casinos marinas, make Cotai 3.0 and explore those Hengqin opportunities, but seriously, claim more land to be under our jurisdiction. The public university campus there is a precedent deserving of more attention.

Because, believe me, we really don't want tourists to go away for either economic or political reasons. Restrict Chinese nationals to visit their own country? Just see what China Daily, which pretty much voices Beijing's feelings, has to say about CY Leung's pretention:

"When the whole world is trying to attract mainland tourists to visit their countries by loosening visa requirements, it is ridiculous to hear that Hong Kong, which is part of our own country, is trying to push mainland visitors out."

Think it over.

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## Delay on minimum wage legislation criticized

Kwan Tsui Hang has criticized her Legislative Assembly colleagues for not reviewing the minimum wage bill fast enough. The lawmaker, who is also vice-president of the Macau Federation of Trade Unions, said that although the legislation was first introduced to the AL more than half a year ago, the AL Third Standing Committee is yet to finish discussing it. She said that the committee should carry out its duty quickly, and deliver its formal opinion to the government to kick start the minimum wage for security guards and cleaners working for property management companies. The lawmaker also asked the committee to disclose to the public what is hindering its discussion process. She said that the stalling of the bill gives the public the impression that the committee is not determined to promote the legislation.

# Exco defends decision to cut committee secretariat

**EXECUTIVE** Council spokesperson Leong Heng Teng has reiterated that the axing of the Urban Planning Committee's secretariat will have no effect on the power and duties of the committee or its independence. The Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo Rosário, has also rejected the allegation that the government's decision is administratively illegal on account of a failure to allow the committee to discuss the issue.

In a press conference yesterday, Mr Leong said that all 14 members of the committee secretariat were sustaining a very heavy workload. According to the department's development trajectory, it will need to hire more people to handle the increasing capacity. As a result, the government believes it would be a better utilization of human resources if the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) takes over the work of the committee secretariat.

He stressed that the secretariat



Raimundo Rosário and Leong Heng Teng

only has a supportive role. Therefore, the independence of the committee should not be compromised by the cancellation of the secretariat.

Moreover, Secretary Rosário, who also attended the press conference, argued that the government had not broken the law when it axed the department before allowing the committee to discuss the issue first. He said that, while the relevant legisla-

tion stated that one of the duties of the committee is to discuss legislation and regulations related to urban planning, the existence of the secretariat does not fall into that category. Therefore, the government is not obliged to seek opinions from the committee regarding the change.

However, both officials failed to address concerns regarding the possible conflict of interest when staff members at DSSOPT were

asked to prepare information and to provide potentially adverse advice to their own bureau.

According to Jornal Cheng Pou, lawmaker Ng Kuok Cheong has declared it vital that the Urban Planning Committee remains independent and provides all of the relevant data and information available to its members, so that they can properly balance the interests of the public and developers, as well as monitoring the government's development projects.

The lawmaker expressed fears that once the DSSOPT assumes the work of the secretariat, officials can then filter information provided to the committee members.

Mr Ng also revealed that, in a closed-door Legislative Assembly meeting, Secretary Rosário stated that administrative procedures in the MSAR government, such as the requirement for documentation and supervision, have led to a slowdown in administration. He is concerned that the public works departments of the government will return to the Ao Man Long era if administrative procedures are reduced. "Now that [some officials] think the Ao Man Long case is approaching its end, they might want to go back to the old way," he said, warning that this will see the return of several loopholes. **JPL**

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Catarina Pinto

**S**ECRETARY for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, clarified that the Macau government is not considering a cap on mainland tourists; rather, they are discussing measures to “control and optimize” Macau’s tourist influx through the central government, namely by dividing tourist flow between different borders and optimizing the individual visa scheme.

Mr Tam stated last week that the Macau government was planning to discuss with the central government a cap on mainland tourists. On the sidelines of the Tourism Development Committee meeting yesterday, the secretary further clarified that, for now, they will only be suggesting controls on the tourist influx.

“We do not want to implement a cap on [mainland] tourists. We need to optimize the number of tourists using individual visas. And we also need to discuss with Guangdong authorities how to coordinate and divide tourist flow between different borders,” he stressed.

Mr Tam acknowledged that the growing number of Chinese visitors has put pressure on Macau residents’ daily life and mobility around the city.

On the other hand, he also recognized that Macau’s tourism industry would be concerned if a cap on mainland tourists were implemented. “We have a growing number of tourists coming from China and of course companies want this. If I were an entrepreneur I would want the same because more tourists equals more business,” he added.

He stressed that the current number of tourists (31 million recorded last year) is adequate. But Macau’s administration will be discussing with Beijing the possibility of dividing tourist influx between different times of the year too,

# Gov’t focused on ‘optimizing’ tourist influx



alleviating the pressure felt in Macau through public holidays like Chinese New Year or Golden Week.

The secretary did not disclose a calendar across which these discussions might take place but said they will be conducted “very soon.”

Mr Tam did not comment on whether the government will suggest if it is necessary to implement a quota scheme to regulate the number of tourists. “We will first discuss this matter with the central government (...) we are different from Hong Kong. They said they will be limiting the number of mainland tourists but here it’s not the case. We need to optimize and control [tourist influx],” he reiterated.

The policy, he stressed, is to be implemented progressively and will take into account existing infrastructures. He hinted that the optimization of the tourist influx policy could be adjusted according to the situation.

Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, director of the Macau Government Tourist Office, told reporters that once Macau’s infrastructures improve, the city might have a higher capacity to welcome a higher number of tourists. “At this moment we need to find ways to improve our situation. In the future, when we have more infrastructures and developments, we can re-consider [whether we can cope with more tourists

visiting Macau]. Maybe we will be able to have a higher capacity when we have more infrastructures,” she added.

Members of the Tourism Development Committee presented suggestions on how to im-

prove Macau’s tourism quality yesterday. Several members stressed that it is important to ensure residents’ quality of life and ease the pressure felt by a growing number of tourists in the city.

Member Wong Ian Man suggested that events such as the audiovisual mapping at St Paul’s Ruins should be organized at other historical sites to attract tourists to different parts of town.

Another member said that Macau is not a world tourism and leisure center, but rather a tourism and leisure center only focusing on China. He suggested the government try to promote Macau abroad and encourage tourists of other nationalities to visit the city, namely from the Middle East, Russia and Europe.

Other members hinted that there’s a need to discuss Macau’s capacity to welcome a growing number of tourists, since Macau residents’ daily life is being affected.

Mr Tam agreed with most opinions, but requested committee members have a little more patience, since the local government faces particular challenges, such as the lack of land.

## TOURISM MASTER PLAN TO BE COMPLETED IN 30 MONTHS

**A GENERAL** plan for the development of Macau’s tourism industry will be completed in 30 months, the Macau Government Tourist Office (MGTO) announced yesterday. MGTO says that the tourism master plan will define both short- and long-term policies. It will provide policies for the

next five, ten and fifteen years. The master plan will be open for bidding in March and, up until yesterday, 43 companies have presented tenders, including foreign ones; MGTO is hoping to accord one of them responsibility for the elaboration of the tourism master plan in the first half of this year.

MEDIA

# Plataforma Macau and Portuguese newspaper launch bilingual supplement

**L**OCAL newspaper Plataforma Macau and Portuguese newspaper Jornal de Notícias (JN) have signed a protocol to launch a bilingual supplement, according to a report by Hoje Macau this week.

Plataforma Macau has now confirmed that it has signed a protocol with the Portuguese media outlet. The team will be disclosing

further details on the project soon, including its style and launch date. For now, the team is looking to publish the supplement on a monthly basis, though their ultimate goal is to publish weekly.

Meanwhile, weekly newspaper Plataforma Macau has announced it will be changing its broadsheet format into a tabloid, Ra-

dio Macau reported. Other changes were underway with Luís Andrade de Sá, executive editor, replacing Paulo Rego who now serves as publisher.

Luís Andrade de Sá clarified that changing the newspaper’s format is a decision that was made according to market reactions and feedback received from advertisers. The deci-

sion was also motivated by projects with “two international partners,” which the newspaper will be developing in March.

Meanwhile, the first Luso-Chinese newspaper was launched this month in Portugal. Titled “Diário de Todos,” the newspaper is now published in both online and print versions. “The project took shape with an online

version published only in Chinese, focusing on economic topics and addressing entrepreneurs, tourists and students interested in Portugal,” Helena da Cruz Mouro, managing editor, told Lusa news agency.

She added that the market lacks a bilingual media outlet for both Portuguese and Chinese residents. Hoping to properly address

both communities, the two versions will not be a mere translation of the other. Instead, the Chinese version provides news about Portugal while the Portuguese one includes news and reports on China, mainly focusing on the economic, cultural and tourism sectors.

Its newsroom is located in Lisbon and comprises “a young team of ten people used to Macau’s environment,” the managing editor said. The publication also has correspondents in China and was recruiting human and economic sciences professionals, as well as Chinese and Portuguese translators. **CP**

## Inflation over 4 pct in January

Macau's Composite Consumer Price Index (CPI) for January went up by 4.75 percent compared with the same period last year, according to figures released yesterday by the city's Statistics and Census Service (DSEC). In comparison to January 2014, a notable increase was observed in the price index of Housing & Fuels (+11.64 pct), while the prices of Food & Non-Alcoholic Beverages and Health rose by 5.41 pct and 5.26 pct respectively.

## Smaller public purse

Local administration is facing a revenue decrease due to the slump in the gaming industry. In January, the government's revenue fell 27.5 percent year-on-year to MOP10.5 million. Last month, gaming operators paid less than 29.7 percent in direct taxes over gambling compared with January 2014. The Finance Services Bureau (DSF) indicates that the administration spent MOP2.1 million during January, more than 16.8 percent y-o-y. The spending increase is related to the 6 percent salary increase for civil servants.

## Echo Chan to head Forum Macau's Secretariat

The Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong, has appointed Echo Chan, currently serving as director of the Macau Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM), coordinator of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries' (Forum Macau) Secretariat, replacing Rita Santos. The Times reported in January that Rita Santos had expressed her intention to retire and that Echo Chan was likely to replace her. Ms Chan will take office on March 4, according to a note published in the government's Official Gazette (BO) on Wednesday. Furthermore, the Secretary recalled that the appointment takes into consideration her "professional abilities and suitability" for this particular position. Chan, who holds a degree in Economy from the University of Jinan, has been working as a public servant since 1992, when she joined IPIM's administrative council. She will still be linked to IPIM, performing non-executive duties, when she takes office at Forum Macau.

## Police warn residents against FB scam

The Judiciary Police has revealed the reception of several reports from residents claiming that their credit cards had been stolen to make purchases after they provided personal information, including their credit card numbers, to "verify" their Facebook account. It is alleged that some residents received a message on Facebook claiming that their account would be suspended within an hour if they did not verify it. They were then asked to provide a number of points of personal information. The authorities are asking residents to be vigilant on this issue.

# Business networking 'even more important in small cities like Macau'

Catarina Pinto

**F**ACILITATING the development of relationships between businesses and creating effective networking strategies is crucial for companies to enjoy success, particularly in small cities like Macau, the founder and director of Alchemy Consulting, Nidhi Kush Shah, said this week at a France-Macau Business Association (FMBA) breakfast meeting.

Based in Hong Kong, her company provides learning and development programs designed "to motivate and inspire individuals and businesses to grow better." Besides offering courses in personal branding, communication skills and networking, Ms Shah's company also provides training in interpersonal communication and intercultural communication.

During her talk, Ms Shah demonstrated how business leaders and individuals can make use of strategic business networking to increase their sales,



Nidhi Kush Shah

enhance their client base and build trusting relationships.

"In a place like Macau, networking is even more important because it's not just about exchanging business cards or meeting over a glass of wine. It is about building that relationship; especially in a small city - where a lot of business professionals know each other; it's really the time when we can look to our networks and look to our existing relationships and see how can we help each other (...) to achieve mutual goals" she told The Times on the sidelines of yesterday's talk.

Ms Shah recalled that "we are increasingly moving towards

a time when people are doing business with people they like." "It's about people they like and people they trust, so it is very important for us to network effectively," she reiterated.

Merely exchanging business cards or asking common and repeated questions are no longer enough. According to Ms Shah, it is important to create a good first impression by standing out from the crowd. This can be done by presenting ourselves in a different light and by asking "questions that will require the other person to give us something other than an automatic response."

Instead of asking about the services a person's company provides, we can ask about the reasons for the company's success. Instead of saying we are the head of talent at a particular company, we can introduce ourselves by explaining what we are passionate about, she suggested.

"Networking communication plays a big role in our strategy. These are simple communication effects (...) that can help people stand out and stay memorable," she added.

Identifying the people with whom we wish to network and carefully choosing networking events in which we feel more comfortable are also key strategies.

Ms Shah began her career in Australia but has lived and worked in India, Germany and now Hong Kong. She acknowledged that culture plays an important role in business strategies. "I learned early on that if I want to succeed in any work

place I have to understand the cultural subtleties and understand what motivates people of a certain culture."

In China, she assures that cultural understanding is key in the business sector. People are looking to build business relationships rather than cementing a simple contact base, she said. Ms Shah also recalled that negotiations here take time and "nothing is [the product of] instant gratification." "If I am being very forthright and very honest and giving very critical feedback it might offend the other person because he or she is not used to that. These are some of the subtle differences," she added.

One should think about the right way to communicate and how to build business relationships, taking into account the country and its cultural background.

"A lot of people from different countries are coming here and the region is becoming more like a melting pot and it is important to know how different people will come together," she acknowledged.

Therefore, personal branding "is the most important personal career tool," according to Ms Shah. She concluded by saying that throughout her career she had to rebrand herself a number of times due to moving countries. "Talking about Macau, it is important because here you might find a lot of people who have similar businesses. And so what [can] we do to stand out? [We need to consider how to] stay memorable and stay connected."

**A lot of people from different countries are coming here and the region is becoming more like a melting pot**

NIDHI KUSH SHAH

## TRANSPORT

# Airport records 20k passengers on CNY day

**T**HE Macau International Airport (MIA) revealed that it has dealt with 94,877 passengers in the first five days of Chinese New Year between February 19 and 23, signaling a growth of 18 percent compared to the same period last year. The total amount of daily passenger traffic even exceeded 20,000 people on February 22 and 23. The aircraft movements in these five days also increased by 11 percent, reaching 806.

Chinese New Year traditionally remained one of the peak seasons for travelling to and from Macau. In or-



der to provide passengers with an enriched seasonal atmosphere, the MIA embellished the terminal building with colorful CNY decorations. It also delivered the traditional seasonal greetings to passengers by arranging the "God

of Wealth" and "Big Head Buddha" to welcome MIA passengers at the terminal building. Visitors and children were also given goat dolls and candies as part of MIA's objective to wish travellers good fortune for the year ahead.

Moreover, the airport has invited the world-renowned "Cookin' NANTA" show to perform in the terminal as one of MIA's 20th anniversary celebration activities. The spectacle draws upon a storyline set in a kitchen, using kitchenware as instruments to perform a series of musical comic scenes.

# Parade for the Celebration of the Year of Ram



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Stephy Tang

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Tap Seac Square  
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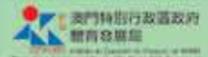
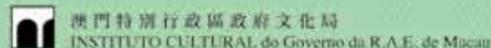
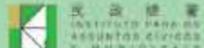


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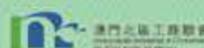
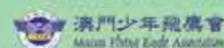
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## REAL ESTATE MATTERS

## 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.

www.JMLProperty.com  
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JULIET RISDON

Just a reminder about this series before we look at the next 6 questions;

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 now 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

Making a few notes on 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.

Last week we looked at five questions. If you missed them please do send us an e mail at the address at the bottom of the page and we will be happy to send them through to you. Let's continue...

#### 6- How long has the property been on the market?

This is arguably the most important question of all, one that will offer a lot of insight into how desirable the property is.

The longer a property has been listed, the less attractive it is, and anything over 6 months would trigger further questions such as 'what's wrong with this place'?

#### 7- Is there anything that you would want to know about the property if you were buying?

This question usually catches agents off guard, and in doing so may reveal some of things that they had decided they were NOT going to tell you.

At least this question should open up a true and frank discussion on their opinion whatever it may be.

#### 8- How much are the bills such as the management fees, government tax and utility bills?

If possible, try to get a copy of the most recent bill.

As a buying expense the cost will seem relatively small, but as a monthly or yearly recurring expense they can really add up.

#### 9- How long have the previous occupants lived there?

The reason for asking this question is to gain insight into any potential problems there may be with the building or neighbors.

Leaving after a relatively short time would of course be a warning sign, and whilst it may not be a complete red flag, it does give you reason for further investigation.

#### 10- What room is there for negotiation?

Always an important question, but again one that will give you a closer look at the sellers mindset.

A seller willing to accept a low ball offer may be hiding something, and we are conditioned to suspect such offers being accepted too quickly.

It may be a genuine bargain for a genuine reason, but tread carefully if this is the case.

#### 11- What is the minimum price the seller will accept?

It may sound crazy, but asking the sellers bottom line can save you hundreds of thousands.

Property agents will often give you an indication, their interest is in making a sale even at a lower price, because if they don't sell they don't get paid.

Next week; The final 6 questions that all buyers should ask.

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## PROJECT POKER

BY LEO MARGETS

## How smart are you...emotionally?

As poker players we're always trying to improve our "mental games." There are lots of ways to work on that side of things that don't necessarily have to happen at the tables. For example, I just completed a very interesting course concerning emotional intelligence that I think was very beneficial for me – not just for poker, but for life in general.

The course lasted for one week. The first part covered emotional skills and competencies, and the second part had to do with evaluating truthfulness and credibility.

There was a small group of us in the class, about a dozen people coming from all sorts of different backgrounds. I liked that they weren't all from the business world, but from such a variety of backgrounds. Most were entrepreneurs who had their own businesses. I think the others were kind of fascinated by my job, too, when I presented myself. That happens a lot, of course – people hear you are a professional poker player and they want to hear more about it.

Going into the course, I think everyone knew already that emotional intelligence was important. But we learned a lot more about it, including how there are so many variables that make emotional intelligence much harder to quantify and therefore harder to understand than traditional intelligence. We also learned how improving one's emotional intelligence can help so much in all aspects of a person's life.

I just loved it. While some of what we learned was certainly applicable to situations that come up at the tables, I think most of it was more beneficial to do with

developing a good, stable mindset for being a poker pro and being able to deal with the emotional ups and downs that are part of the job than necessarily "reading" players' emotions during hands. The fact is, having a strong emotional foundation is crucial for full-time players.

Something else the course helped me understand better was how so many of us instinctively interpret others' emotions via our own experiences – the "me theory," you might call it.

We often tend to assume others feel things similarly to the way we feel them. But having that as a first reaction tends to make it harder to appreciate the fact that other people don't always experience emotions the same way we do.

Since the course ended, I've tried to avoid those sorts of assumptions with others and it has really opened my eyes to the differences we all have. You can be so much more receptive to what others are feeling just by avoiding making those judgments ahead of time that others must feel the same way you do about something.

Understanding how other people feel can be very useful, especially if making other people happy is something that makes you happy. It doesn't even take that much to be more attuned to others and their feelings, but as the class helped me see it can be more complicated than it might seem.

If you're at all interested in the subject of emotional intelligence, I definitely recommend taking a course or reading more about it. But that's up to you, of course -- I'm not going to assume everyone feels the same way about the subject as I do!

AD

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**corporate bits**

**'THE FOUNTAINSIDE' AWARDED OCCUPANCY PERMIT**

Regional property investment manager, Sniper Capital, announced yesterday that it has been awarded an occupancy permit for its luxury Macau residential development dubbed "The Fountainside". Located close to Lilau Square, the property is an 80,000 square foot low-density development composed of thirty-eight apartments and four villas. According to Sniper Capital, a total of 27 units have been sold so far while the remaining 11 are still for sale.

**WORLD TRADE CENTER SEOUL NAMED 'GANGNAM MICE SPECIAL ZONE FOR TOURISM'**



Seoul City has designated Seoul Gangnam-gu Samsung World Trade Center (WTC) area, the center of Hallyu, business, culture, travel, shopping, exhibition and convention, as a "Gangnam MICE Special Zone for Tourism" to promote its travel and Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE) industry.

The designated zone includes three 5-star hotels, a department store, a duty-free store, casino, musical performance theatre, the world's largest underground shopping mall with more than 200 retail shops and 91 food & beverage restaurants, aquarium, movie theatre, the Trade Center, ASEM Tower and the City Airport Terminal. In terms of space, it amounts to 19,386m, which is larger than 74 tennis courts, or almost 3 Olympic standard pitch soccer fields.

**SANDS RESORTS COTAI STRIP MACAO PARTNERS WITH ZHUHAI HENGQIN CHIMELONG INTERNATIONAL OCEAN RESORT**

Hengqin Island, home to Hengqin Chimelong International Ocean Resort, is a stone's throw from Sands Resorts Cotai Strip Macao (Sands Resorts). With the "Macao Hengqin Experience Package", guests can enjoy a stay at The Venetian Macao or Holiday Inn Macao, Cotai Central and the ocean-themed resort.

At Chimelong, guests can visit the theme park including a waterpark, a permanent circus and a wild animal theme park, all three of which are the largest in the world. The package marks the first time Sands Resorts has collaborated with a resort in another city, making it easy to visit both spots in the Pearl River Delta.



# Billionaire Li's companies post biggest profits in 15 years

Clement Tan and Michelle Yun

**L**I Ka-shing's two main companies reported their highest annual profits in 15 years after booking gains from the listing of an electric utility unit and rising home sales in Hong Kong.

At Cheung Kong Holdings Ltd., which operates the bulk of Li's property business, net income climbed 53 percent last year to HKD53.9 billion (USD7 billion), the company said yesterday in a statement. Hutchison Whampoa Ltd., which operates industries ranging from telecommunications to infrastructure, reported profit more than doubled to HKD67.2 billion.

The results represent the final earnings before Li merges the two companies by late June as part of a \$29 billion reorganization of a business empire spanning more than 50 countries. The 86-year-old tycoon, known in Hong Kong as "Superman," isn't done making deals as Hutchison is in talks to buy British wireless carrier O2 for as much as 10.25 billion pounds (\$16 billion) and is discussing adding phone assets in Italy.

"With this new structure, they are going to be more aggressive in pursuing assets in Europe, particularly in the telecom sector," Jackson Wong, associate director at United Simsen Securities in Hong Kong, said ahead of the earnings release.

The reorganization, codenamed "Project Diamond" before being announced in January, comes as Li prepares to hand over the reins to his 50-year-old son Victor. The proposal would lump all of Li's businesses into a new company called CK Hutchison Holdings Ltd. and then separate the real-estate assets into a new entity called Cheung Kong Property Holdings Ltd., which



Li Ka-shing

ch would be the second-largest landlord in Hong Kong. The proposal still needs approval from Hutchison shareholders.

Cheung Kong shares rose 0.7 percent to close at HK\$153 in Hong Kong before the earnings report, while Hutchison dropped 0.1 percent to HK\$105.50. The Hang Seng Index advanced 0.5 percent.

At Cheung Kong, which owns 52 percent of Hutchison, profit excluding property revaluations rose 46 percent to HK\$48.9 billion as Hong Kong home prices rose 13 percent to a record last year despite government steps to cool the market.

After Li's real-estate assets are spun off into CK Property, investment properties that generate lower returns could be sold off, according to JPMorgan Chase & Co. analysts Cusson Leung and Leo Ng.

At Hutchison, net income rose after the initial public offering of HK Electric Investments Ltd. in January of last year generated HK\$16.1 billion in gains. Excluding special items such as the HK Electric spinoff and property re-

valuations, earnings rose 3 percent to HK\$32 billion, compared with the HK\$33.1 billion average of nine analyst estimates compiled by Bloomberg.

Profit rose amid higher contributions from the European phone business. Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization at Hutchison's 3 Group in Europe rose 23 percent to HK\$15.6 billion. The company generates more than 40 percent of its revenue from Europe and is looking to increase that proportion.

The company announced last month it's in exclusive talks to buy O2 from Telefonica SA. Separately, Hutchison is in discussions to buy Italian carrier Wind Telecomunicazioni SpA from VimpelCom Ltd., a person familiar with the matter said this month.

If completed, those deals would add to the 10 acquisitions Li's companies have announced in the past year in areas ranging from Australian gas distribution to airplanes, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. **Bloomberg**

AD



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# SPRING IT ON!

Winter's out and Spring is in, so kick-start the season with these must-have items. Layer up with light sweaters, cute cardies and silk scarves over stylish shirts and tops. Head to Michael Kors, Diane von Furstenberg, Dior, Saint Laurent and more for a dose of Spring style.

**Style Tip:** With the mercury rising slowly, opt for brightly-hued layers and accessories to bridge the seasons.



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Shop 2802, Shoppes at Four Seasons

**NEW & EXCLUSIVE**




## GUCCI GRAND OPENING

Don't miss the exclusive opening of Italian fashion brand Gucci's new dedicated Timepieces and Jewelry boutique. The new store offers superior quality Swiss-made watches in a range of styles, as well as exquisitely crafted rings, bracelets, necklaces and other jewellery items. The grand opening takes place on 6 March, from 2pm to 4.30pm.  
Shop 801, Shoppes at Venetian



## CALVIN KLEIN

Discover Calvin Klein Collection and Calvin Klein Platinum at the newly refurbished duplex in Shoppes at Four Seasons. The minimalist, urban style of Calvin Klein Platinum (Level 1) can be found among stainless steel fixtures, white glass and limestone floors, while the company's most prestigious line, Calvin Klein Collection (Level 2), offers its luxurious and sophisticated fashion amidst sleek Italian marble and glass. Enjoy up to 50% off all Fall/Winter items at Calvin Klein Platinum and 10% off new arrivals purchases over MOP6,000. At Calvin Klein Collection there's 10% off new arrivals purchases over MOP10,000.  
Shop 1207-1208 & 2818-2819, Shoppes at Four Seasons



## RICKY BAG IT

A Giant Red Ricky Bag in real leather is the centrepiece of Ralph Lauren's special exhibition where shoppers have the opportunity to get their hands on their very own limited-edition Ricky Bag with bespoke embossing. Showcases change weekly and bags are selling fast. Of six limited edition pink alligator bags, sold exclusively in Macao, there are just a few left. Hurry down to West Shoppes at Cotai Central Entrance before 1 March to see which exclusive Ricky Bags are on offer this week!




# Angola joins the Lisbon Tourism Fair

ANGOLA is taking part in the 27th edition of the Lisbon Tourism Fair (BTL), which opened Wednesday and runs until 1 March at the Feira Internacional de Lisboa venue, in order to promote the country's potential as a tourist destination, said the director of the Angola Tourism Development Institute (Infotur).



Laureth da Silva Bravo also told Angolan news agency Angop that Angola's attendance at the fair was also intended to attract potential investors, as well as for exchanges with exhibitors from various countries.

(Huambo) and the Binga Falls (Kwanza Sul), Serra da Leba (Namibe) and the Pungo Andongo Stones and the Cangandala National Park (both in Malanje) along with the Angola's "history, culture, traditions and nature."

At this year's BTL, besides the seven natural wonders of Angola, including the Calandula Falls (Malanje), the Maiombe Forest (Cabinda), Carumbo Lagoon (Lunda Norte), Nzenzo Caves (Uíge), Morro do Moco (Huambo) Chiumbe River Falls (Lunda Sul) and the Tundavala Rift (Huila), Infotur also has other tourism potential on display.

This year for the first time Benguela province is represented at the Lisbon Tourism Fair through the Hospitality and Tourism Association of Benguela, in particular the concept of "making Benguela part of the great world cruises."

Laureth Bravo pointed out other Angolan "visiting cards," such as the Mupa Falls

As well as the members of the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (CPLP), BTL this year has exhibitors from 27 countries, including Germany, Canada, USA, Italy, Poland and the UK. **MDT/Macauhub**

# ANGOLA Parliament approves revised 2015 budget

THE Angolan parliament Wednesday approved, in general terms, the bill to revise the State Budget (OGE 2015), which includes estimated revenues of 5.4 trillion kwanza, compared to 7.2 trillion in the original budget, Angolan news agency Angop reported.

The document now being analyzed in more detail was based on an oil price of USD40 per barrel compared to US\$81 in the previously approved version of the budget.

This correction is intended to adjust fiscal policy to the new international economic and financial reality, and the revised state budget includes a reduction in tax revenue of 35.75 percent, or 1.492 trillion kwanzas.

The proposed review includes a budget deficit of 6.2 percent, a basic interest rate in the range of 7 to 9 percent, and a negative current account balance equivalent to 19 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), which this year is expected grow by only 6.6 percent against an original forecast of 9.7 percent.

Annual oil production is expected to be 669.8 million barrels, inflation is projected at 9 percent, the growth rate of the M2 monetary aggregate of 14.8 percent and the net international reserves are expected to total US\$19.2 billion.

The text that has been approved in general also includes moderate real growth prospects for the agricultural sector down from 12.3 percent in the initial state budget to 7.9 percent and more moderate real growth for the manufacturing industry, expected to grow at a rate of 6.8 percent, 4.4 percentage points less than previously projected.

There is also a downward review of construction sector growth to 6 percent, compared to an initial estimate of 10.5 percent, as well as a change from 9 percent to 4 percent in the forecast for services sector growth. **MDT/Macauhub**

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## Report: Beijing loaned USD22 billion to Latin America in 2014

Jack Chang, Beijing

**C**HINESE state-owned banks loaned USD22.1 billion to Latin American countries last year, helping to keep afloat struggling economies that have been hit hard by a fall in prices for oil, minerals and other commodities that they export, according to new numbers released Thursday by the U.S. think tank the Inter-American Dialogue.

That annual loan total is the second highest in a decade, behind only 2010, and surpassed combined loans to the region from multilateral lenders the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, the data show. China loaned USD8.6 billion to Brazil, \$7 billion to Argentina, \$5.7 billion to Venezuela and \$821 million to Ecuador in 2014.

Despite its slowing economy, China has emerged as a lender of last resort for Latin America countries that had ridden a decade-long boom in Chinese demand for commodities but are now seeing budget deficits grow and currencies slip as Chinese appetite slackens.

Many traditional lenders are reluctant to take on the risk of financing countries such as Argentina and Venezuela due to their histories of default, nationalizations and high public spending.

Over the past two months, the presidents of Argentina, Ecuador and Venezuela have visited Beijing seeking more Chinese investments, and left with billions of dollars in commitments. Over the past decade, China has loaned Latin American countries about \$118 billion, with Venezuela alone receiving \$56.3 billion, the Inter-American Dialogue data showed.

The big unknown now is how long that Chinese generosity will last, and whether China will continue supporting increasingly unstable governments such as Venezuela's, said report author Margaret Myers, director of the Inter-American Dialogue's China and Latin America program. At least for this year, China has indicated it will offer another \$25 billion to \$30 billion in credit to the region, Myers said.

"It was an important year in 2014 that despite slowing growth we saw considerable commitment to the region," she said. "There's been a major promise of additional financing for the region, specifically for infrastructure. The question is who it will go to."

In 2014, Brazil's loans from the China Export-Import Bank, the Bank of China and the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China went to leasing oil rigs and purchasing equipment and financial services for the country's mining giant Vale.

The Chinese loans are also helping to pay for subway upgrades in the Argentine capital of Buenos Aires and dam construction in Ecuador and Argentina, the data show. In many cases, Chinese companies are overseeing the projects, and likely using Chinese workers, Myers said.

The Chinese financing often comes with generous terms, such as market-rate interest rates and favorable payback periods, and without the macroeconomic and good government reforms demanded by Western lenders, Myers said. Venezuela and Ecuador also pay off their loans by shipping millions of barrels of oil to China at market prices, an arrangement that's proved painful with recent plummeting oil prices.

Economic growth in Latin America and the Caribbean slowed to 1.4 percent in 2014. China's economy grew by 7.4 percent last year, compared to double-digit annual growth rates over the past two decades. **AP**



A woman carries a bag of groceries as she walks past a Chinese government billboard stating "China Dream" near a residential building in Beijing

## With new slogan, Xi sets goals, keeps tradition

Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

**W**ITH his latest political exhortation, President Xi Jinping is asserting his influence and advancing his agenda in a time-honored tradition among Chinese leaders.

Chinese Dream, meet the "Four Comprehensives."

The four priorities described in state media this week add to Xi's growing roster of political slogans since he took leadership of the Communist Party in 2012 that promote his aims of strengthening party rule, cracking down on corruption and building up China's international standing.

The most famous has been the Chinese Dream, a fuzzy concept that seeks to motivate the nation's 1.3 billion people to realize prosperity, happiness and their rightful place on the world stage.

Modernization has diluted the impact of such slogans, but Xi hopes his

will aid in his rapid consolidation of power that's already made him the most prominent Chinese leader in a quarter-century.

"Diminishing control over people's lives is an inevitable trend, but Xi is still making tremendous efforts to remain relevant by building his image," said Joseph Cheng, a Chinese politics expert at the City University of Hong Kong.

The Four Comprehensives, mentioned by Xi in a speech late last year but trumpeted in state media on Wednesday and yesterday, are essentially a repackaging of goals and concepts laid out by Xi's predecessors. They comprise "comprehensively" establishing a moderately prosperous society, deepening reform, ruling the nation by law, and strictly enforcing party discipline.

Such political shorthand is deeply rooted in Chinese political life, preceding even the establishment of the communist state in 1949. Among the most fa-

mous was Deng Xiaoping's "Four Modernizations" that sought to drag the country out of the mire of orthodox Communism.

Successor Jiang Zemin sought to make his mark with the "Three Represents," seen as an invitation to tycoons to join the party that traditionally favored workers, peasants and soldiers.

Xi is establishing himself as a far stronger leader than either Jiang or Jiang's successor Hu Jintao, among whose least memorable catchphrases was the "Eight Dos and Eight Don'ts," that sought to guide the behavior of good party members.

To do so, Xi needs to seize the authority to define the political discourse and lay out his major concerns and policy directions, said City University's Cheng. "He certainly wants to show that this is the Xi era, with a different approach," Cheng said.

The party has a vast array of tools to disseminate such propaganda, es-

pecially state media that can package them as entertainment. The Chinese Dream phrase tripped off the hosts' tongues frequently during this year's Lunar New Year gala on state broadcaster CCTV.

Next week's convening of the national legislature's annual session offers a further opportunity to embed Xi's slogans in the national consciousness, through speeches, discussion groups and banners displayed in the Great Hall of the People.

The launch of the "Four Comprehensives" sets a clear direction for reform and signals that discussions on the matter have closed, said Ren Jin, professor of law, Chinese Academy of Governance in Beijing.

"It shows that the year 2015 is the key year for comprehensively deepening reforms, as well as the beginning year for comprehensively exercising rule of law," Ren said. **AP**

## NORTH KOREA

# UN: Pyongyang company renames ships to evade sanctions

Cara Anna and Edith M. Lederer

A North Korean shipping company that famously tried to hide fighter jets under a cargo of sugar later sought to evade U.N. sanctions by renaming most of its vessels, a new report says.

The effort by Pyongyang-headquartered Ocean Maritime Management Company, Ltd. is detailed in the report by a panel of experts that monitors sanctions on North Korea. The report, obtained by The Associated Press, makes clear the challenge of keeping banned arms and luxury goods from a nuclear-armed country with a history of using front companies to duck detection.

The U.N. Security Council was holding consultations yesterday on the report, which also says North Korea's government persists with its nuclear and missile programs in defiance of council resolutions.

North Korea's mission to the U.N. did not respond to a request for comment.

The council last year imposed sanctions on OMM after Panama in 2013 seized a ship it operated that carried undeclared military equipment from Cuba. Panamanian authorities found two Cuban fighter jets, missiles and live munitions beneath the Chong Chon Gang's cargo of sugar.

AP PHOTO



The council's sanctions committee said that violated a U.N. arms embargo imposed in response to North Korea's nuclear and missile programs. At the time, U.S. Ambassador Samantha Power said that imposing a global asset freeze on OMM meant that the company would no longer be able to operate internationally.

But the new report says that in the months after the sanctions were imposed, 13 of the 14 ships controlled by OMM changed

their owners and managers, "effectively erasing" the company from a database kept by the International Maritime Organization. Twelve of the ships "reportedly stayed, visited or were sighted near ports in foreign countries," and none were frozen by member states as the panel of experts recommends.

The new report explores the shipping company's global reach, using people and entities operating in at least 10 countries: Brazil, China, Egypt,

Greece, Japan, Malaysia, Peru, Russia, Singapore and Thailand. The report recommends updating the sanctions list with 34 OMM entities and says all 14 vessels should be subject to sanctions.

No interdictions of the kind that Panama made in 2013 were reported in the period between Feb. 8 of last year and Feb. 5 of this year. But the new report warns that the panel of experts sees no evidence that North Korea "intends to cease prohibited

activities."

The report also says diplomats, officials and trade representatives of North Korea continue to "play key roles in facilitating the trade of prohibited items, including arms and related materiel and ballistic missile-related items."

The panel of experts warns that some U.N. member states still are not implementing the council resolutions that are meant to keep North Korea from further violations.

North Korea also faces an embargo on luxury goods, but the report found that it managed to bring in luxury goods from multiple countries, including with the help of its diplomatic missions. Some items were for the country's Masik Pass luxury ski resort, which opened in 2013. China told the panel of experts that the ski lift equipment it provided was acceptable because "skiing is a popular sport for people" and that ski items are not specifically prohibited.

The panel also said it has opened its first investigation into a case involving North Korean drones after the wreckage of three drones was found in South Korea in late 2013 and 2014. The report says the drones had been used for reconnaissance over South Korean military facilities and that the drones contained components "sourced from at least six foreign countries." AP

Kim Tong-Hyung, Seoul

## SOUTH KOREA

## Court abolishes law saying adultery is illegal

A South Korean court yesterday abolished a 62-year-old law that bans extramarital affairs, and the stock price of a prominent condom maker immediately shot up 15 percent.

The ruling by the Constitutional Court that the law suppresses personal freedoms could potentially affect thousands of individuals who faced adultery charges since Oct. 31, 2008, a day after the court previously upheld the adultery ban. Current charges could be thrown out and anyone given a guilty verdict would be eligible for a retrial, according to a court official, who didn't want to be named, citing office rules.

Prosecutors have indicted more than 5,400 people on adultery charges between November 2008

and January this year, according to the Supreme Prosecutors' Office.

Under the law having sex with a married person who is not your spouse was punishable by up to two years in prison. Nearly 53,000 South Koreans have been indicted on adultery charges since 1985, but prison terms have been rare.

The stock price of South Korean condom maker, Unidus Corp., shot up after the court ruling, surging by the daily limit of 15 percent on South Korea's Kosdaq market.

The debate over the adultery ban, which has been part of South Korea's criminal law since 1953, intensified in recent years as fast-changing

AP PHOTO



Park Han-chul, center, president of South Korea's Constitutional Court, sits with other judges before the judgment at the Constitutional Court in Seoul

social trends challenged conservative traditional values.

Supporters of the law had claimed it promotes monogamy and keeps families intact, while opponents argued that the

government has no right to interfere with people's private lives and determine their sexual affairs.

The court was acting on 17 complaints submitted from 2009 to last year by individuals who have

been punished for adultery or whose trials have been suspended, pending yesterday's ruling.

Seven judges of the court, which rules on the constitutionality of laws, supported the ruling, while two dissented, the court said. The support of six judges is needed to abolish a law.

"(The law) excessively restricts citizens' basic rights, such as the right to determine sexual affairs," the court said in explaining that the law no longer contributed to overall public interest.

It was the fifth time the court had reviewed the adultery ban since 1990. The last time, in October 2008, five of the judges said the law was unconsti-

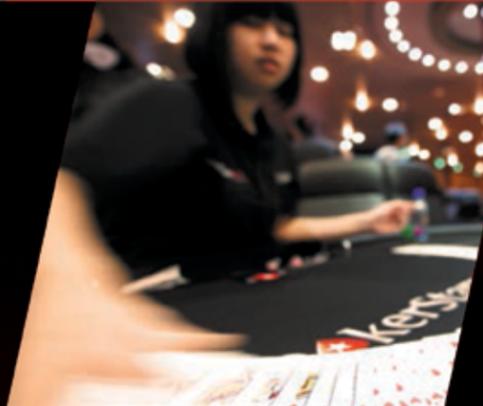
tutional.

Legal experts have said that the adultery ban had lost much of its effect as people were increasingly settling their marriage disputes in civil courts. Adultery can be prosecuted only on a complaint made by a spouse who has filed for divorce. The case immediately ends if the plaintiff drops the charge, which is common when financial settlements are reached.

"Recently, it was extremely rare for a person to serve a prison term for adultery," said Lim Ji-bong, a law professor at Sogang University in Seoul. "The number of indictments has decreased as charges are frequently dropped." AP



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## ISIS MILITANTS

# Muslim group: 'Jihadi John' resembles man who grew up in UK

Jill Lawless, London

A British-accented militant who has appeared in beheading videos released by the Islamic State group in Syria bears "striking similarities" to a man who grew up in London, a Muslim lobbying group said yesterday.

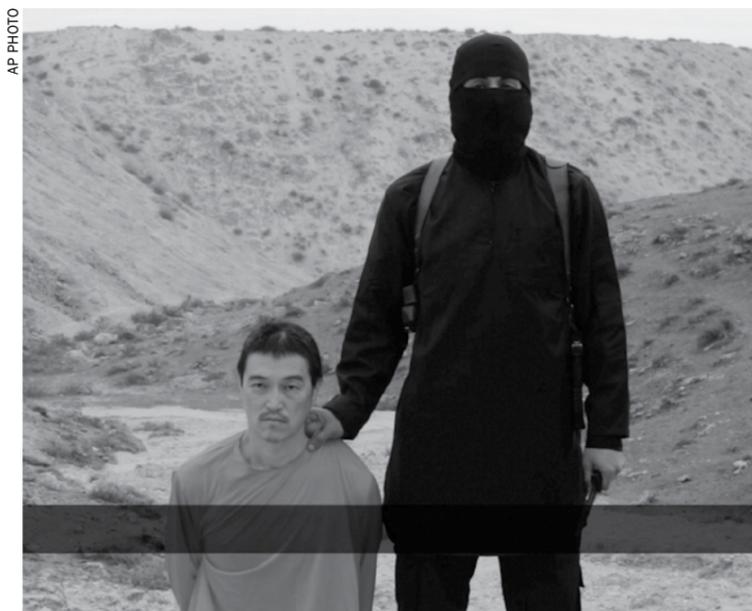
Mohammed Emwazi has been identified by news organizations as the masked militant more commonly known as "Jihadi John."

London-based CAGE, which works with Muslims in conflict with British intelligence services, said yesterday its research director, Asim Qureshi, saw strong similarities, but because of the hood worn by the militant, "there was no way he could be 100 percent certain."

The Center for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence at King's College London, which closely tracks fighters in Syria, also said it believed the identification was correct.

British counterterrorism officials wouldn't confirm the man's identity.

"Jihadi John" appeared in a video released in August showing the slaying of American journalist James Foley. A man with similar stature and voice also featured in videos of the killings of American journalist Steven



The ISIS militant standing next to Japanese journalist Kenji Goto before his beheading has been identified as Mohammed Emwazi

Sotloff, Britons David Haines and Alan Hemming and U.S. aid worker Abdul-Rahman Kassig.

According to The Washington Post and the BBC, Emwazi was born in Kuwait, grew up in west London and studied computer programming at the University of Westminster. The university confirmed that a student of that name graduated in 2009.

"If these allegations are true, we are shocked and sickened by the news," the university said in a statement.

The news outlets said Emwazi had been known to Britain's in-

telligence services before he traveled to Syria in 2012.

CAGE said it has been in contact with Emwazi for more than two years after he accused British intelligence services of harassing him. It said that in 2010 he alleged British spies were preventing him from traveling to the country of his birth, Kuwait, where he planned to marry.

Shiraz Maher of the King's College radicalization center said he was investigating whether Emwazi was among a group of young West Londoners who traveled to Syria in about 2012. AP

## FRANCE

## 3 Al-Jazeera journalists arrested for flying drone in Paris

Thomas Adamson, Paris

THREE Al-Jazeera journalists have been arrested for illegally flying a drone in Paris Wednesday, after unidentified drones flew over the Eiffel Tower and key Paris landmarks for a second night running. It's further baffled French authorities who are investigating a spate of unidentified flying objects in the Paris skies at a time of high security across the country.

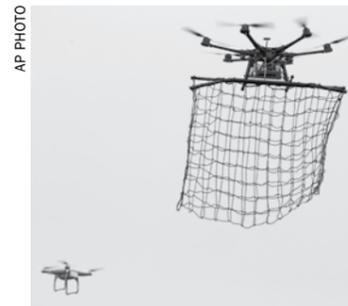
The foreign nationals aged 70, 54 and 36 — who work for the Doha-based international broadcaster — were taken into custody Wednesday afternoon after police spotted a drone flying in the Bois de Boulogne woods in western Paris, said Paris prosecutors' spokeswoman Agnes Thibault-Lecuire.

She said it was unclear what the trio were trying to accomplish.

"Three Al-Jazeera English journalists have been held by police in Paris while filming a report on the city's recent mystery drones," the network said in a comment from its base in Qatar. "We will comment further when more information is available."

The journalists can be held for a maximum of 24 hours under French law. Flying drones without a license in France is illegal and carries a maximum one-year prison sentence and a 75,000 euros (USD85,000) fine.

The Al-Jazeera arrests come



In this Monday Feb. 9, 2015 file photo, a drone interceptor MP200, top, prepares to catch a drone DJI Phantom 2 with a net during a demonstration flight in La Queue-en-Brie, east of Paris

in the midst of a police investigation into a spate of mysterious drone sightings over the French capital, including on Monday and Tuesday nights.

Police sighted one or more drones in five instances buzzing in the Paris sky in the night of Tuesday to Wednesday — from 11.30 p.m. to 2 a.m.

An unidentified flying object was first seen Tuesday night near the Gare de l'Est train station, with sightings continuing in sequence for over two hours over the Paris Opera, then on to the Tuileries gardens, past the Eiffel Tower and then south past Paris' Montparnasse Tower, according to Thibault-Lecuire.

An inquiry was launched after drones, which are banned over Paris, were also spotted Monday night — including over the U.S. Embassy.

It's not known who was behind the flights, how many objects there were in total, and even whether they were all coordinated. AP

## SYRIA

## Activists: Number of Christians abducted by IS rises to 220

THE number of Christians abducted by the Islamic State group in northeastern Syria has risen to 220, as militants have rounded up more hostages from a chain of villages along a strategic river in the past three days, activists said yesterday.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the militants have picked up dozens more Christian Assyrians from 11 communities near the town of Tal Tammr in Hassakeh province.

The province, which borders Turkey and Iraq, has become the latest battleground in the fight



against the Islamic State group in Syria. It is predominantly Kurdish but also has populations of Arabs and predominantly Christian Assyrians and Armenians.

IS began abducting the Assyrians on Monday, when militants attacked a cluster of villages along the Khabur River, sen-

ding thousands of people fleeing to safer areas.

Younan Talia, a senior official with the Assyrian Democratic Organization, said IS had raided 33 Assyrian villages, picking up as many as 300 people along the way. It was not possible to reconcile the numbers, and the fate of the hostages remained unclear.

State-run news agency SANA and an Assyrian activist group, the Assyrian Network for Human Rights in Syria, said the group had been moved to the IS-controlled city of Shaddadeh, a predominantly Arab town south of the city of Hassakeh. The Ob-

servatory, however, said they were still being held in nearby Mt. Abdulaziz.

The mass abduction added to fears among religious minorities in both Syria and Iraq, who have been repeatedly targeted by the Islamic State group. The extremists have declared a self-styled caliphate in the regions of both countries that are under their control, killing members of religious minorities, driving others from their homes, enslaving women and destroying houses of worship.

The U.N. Security Council on Wednesday evening "strongly condemned" the abduction and demanded

the immediate release of others abducted by the Islamic State and similar groups.

The White House con-

demned the attacks, saying the international community is united in its resolve to "end ISIL's depravity."

The Assyrians are indigenous Christian people who trace their roots back to the ancient Mesopotamians. AP

### NEW IS VIDEO SHOWS MILITANTS SMASHING ANCIENT IRAQI ARTIFACTS

THE ISLAMIC State group has released a video purportedly showing militants using sledgehammers to smash ancient artifacts in Iraq's northern city of Mosul.

The five-minute video shows a group of bearded men in a museum using hammers and drills to destroy several large statues, including one depicting a winged-bull As-

syrian protective deity that dates back to the 9th century B.C.

The extremist group has destroyed a number of shrines - including Muslim holy sites - in order to eliminate what it views as heresy. The militants are also believed to have sold ancient artifacts on the black market in order to finance their bloody campaign across the region.

## TV canal macau



## 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
23:50	Europa League: Sporting - Wolfsburg (Repeated)
01:20	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
21:10	Drama
22:10	Situation Comedy
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Shorts
00:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:00	RTPi Live

## SUNDAY

11:00	Sunday Mass
12:00	Miscellaneous
12:30	Miscellaneous
13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	Animation
15:25	Miscellaneous
16:20	Miscellaneous
16:50	Miscellaneous
17:05	Miscellaneous
18:40	Miscellaneous
19:35	Comedy
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Non-Daily Portuguese News
22:00	Documentary Series
23:00	TDM News
23:30	News
23:45	Miscellaneous
00:40	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:15	RTPi Live

## offbeat

## BOFA AGREES TO PAY USD300M TO SETTLE VEGAS CASINO SUIT

Bank of America Corp. agreed to pay USD300 million to settle a lawsuit that claimed the bank improperly disbursed funds to a Las Vegas casino development that went bust following the 2008 financial crisis.

A settlement could resolve legal wrangling over Fontainebleau Las Vegas LLC's project and Bank of America's part in administering a credit facility to construct it. Fontainebleau and affiliates filed for bankruptcy in Miami in 2009, and billionaire investor Carl Icahn bought the unfinished Las Vegas project for about \$150 million in 2010.

Loan holders, including hedge funds Avenue Capital Group and Brigade Capital Management, sued Bank of America for making payments on the credit facility for too long. The lenders had sought damages of more than \$700 million, Bank of America said Wednesday in a regulatory filing. "Pursuant to the settlement, plaintiffs have stipulated to the voluntary dismissal of their remaining claims with prejudice," the Charlotte, North Carolina-based bank said.

## cinema



## CINETEATRO

26 FEB - 04 MAR

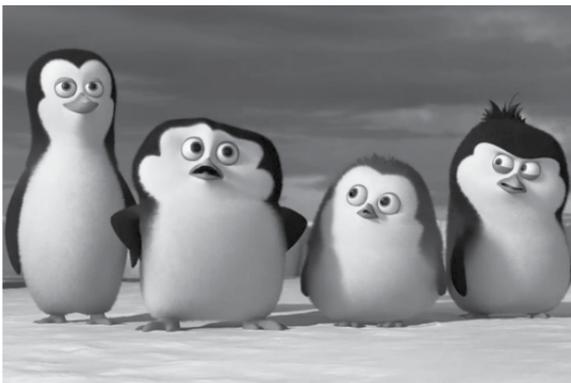
## STAND BY ME DORAEMON\_

ROOM 1  
(2D) 2.00, 5.55 pm  
(3D) 7.45 pm  
Language: Cantonese (Chinese)  
Duration: 95min



## FROM VEGAS TO MACAU 2\_

ROOM 1  
3.50, 9.45 pm  
Language: Cantonese (English and Chinese)  
Duration: 90min



## PENGUINS OF MADAGASCAR\_

ROOM 2  
2.00, 3.45, 7.45 pm  
Language: Cantonese (Chinese)  
Duration: 127min



## KINGSMAN: THE SECRET SERVICE\_

ROOM 2  
5.30, 9.30 pm  
Director: Matthew Vaughn  
Starring: Colin Firth, Michael Caine, Samuel L. Jackson  
Language: English (Chinese)  
Duration: 127min

## TRIUMPH IN THE SKIES\_

ROOM 3  
2.00, 3.45, 9.30 pm  
Language: Cantonese (English and Chinese)  
Duration: 127min

## FROM VEGAS TO MACAU 2\_

ROOM 3  
5.30, 7.30 pm  
Language: Cantonese (English and Chinese)  
Duration: 90min

## 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



## 1999 NIGERIANS VOTE TO BREAK WITH MILITARY

Voters have been thronging to polling booths in Nigeria to elect a civilian president and end 15 years of military rule. Queues formed at polling stations soon after they opened for registration.

On some street corners groups of exuberant young men shared bottles of palm wine, singing and chanting party slogans. In the cities of Lagos and Abuja, the turnout is reported to be higher than for parliamentary elections last weekend.

Up to 40 million Nigerians are expected to cast ballots in a contest between former military ruler Olusegun Obasanjo, who relinquished power for the last elected president in 1979, and former finance minister Olu Falae. The vote is being closely monitored by foreign observers.

Former US President Jimmy Carter, co-leader of the American monitoring team, said: "The turnout has been very impressive and orderly. The officials are all in their posts and all voting materials in place at the right time."

Mr Carter wrote to political parties before the vote to express concern after cheating at last Saturday's national assembly poll. The ballot will be counted as soon as polling ends at 1330 GMT.

The electoral commission says first results of the election should be in on Sunday. The new leader is due to take office on 29 May.

Former military leader Olusegun Obasanjo - of the People's Democratic Party, which polled the largest number of votes in the parliamentary elections - has called for political reform to help revive Nigeria's moribund economy.

He has pledged to create an anti-corruption agency with wide-ranging powers to seek, search and recover. "We have to put our politics in order so that we can put our economy in order," said the former military leader.

Joint APP-AD candidate former Finance Minister Olu Falae has also promised to get the Nigerian economy back on track.

"I can have a debt strategy in place, and get foreign investment flowing again by creating an environment that is investment-friendly," he said in one of his last interviews before the polls.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

**Olusegun** Obasanjo won the presidential elections. He quickly set up an investigation into human rights abuses under military rule and released political prisoners. He also began a crackdown on corruption.

But critics later accused him of misappropriating funds and at the end of 2002 he was facing impeachment ahead of the next elections in 2003.

He was also accused of failing to halt spiraling violence and religious and ethnic clashes brought on by political liberalization. Mr Obasanjo has been praised for improving Nigeria's poor infrastructure but criticized over his general handling of the economy. He went on to win a decisive victory in the 2003 election and is said to be considering trying for a third term in 2007.

**YOUR STARS**

**Aries**  
Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
Your emotional side is getting a workout today — but that's more good than bad. For one thing, there are plenty of positive emotions; for another, you don't want your feelings to get flabby!

**Taurus**  
April 20-May 20  
You are feeling new depths to a love or hate that you thought you knew well. Go for it — emotional truth is vital on a day like today, and you're not doing anyone any favors by taking half measures.

**Gemini**  
May 21-Jun. 21  
It's a good time for you to check in with your doctor — or some other health pro. You aren't necessarily a ticking time bomb, though — it's just that your mental and physical energies need to get back in sync.

**Cancer**  
Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
Things are looking pretty great for you and your people today — but make sure that you're ready for the downs as well as the ups! Things get intense, but it's all part of something really good.

**Leo**  
Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
Not everything is as it seems to be today — so make sure that you're dealing with your people as if they had something to hide. You might learn something, and it can be kind of a fun game!

**Virgo**  
Aug. 23-Sept. 22  
Your brain power is still strong, so make the most of it and see if you can get your friends to do the same. Combined, you can find all sorts of new ways to pool your talents and shake things up!

**Libra**  
Sep.23-Oct. 22  
There's no substitute for a dive into today's biggest issue — so take a deep breath and then plunge on in! You are sure to learn all sorts of new things about yourself and your people.

**Scorpio**  
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21  
You are pulling in at least one person in a big way — so much so that you may find that your energy is best spent on creating new activities for the two of you to try. Things are going well.

**Sagittarius**  
Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
You seem to have slowed down relative to the pace of the world — and sometimes that's perfectly okay! Just make sure that you're handling responsibilities that are in line with your energy.

**Capricorn**  
Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
You feel somewhat removed from today's activities — but that can be an asset! You should find it easier than usual to give your honest appraisal of almost anything, and that candor is appreciated.

**Aquarius**  
Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
Your emotional tide comes in early today and it may wash up quite a bit of flotsam you thought had long ago sunk into the depths. Comb through it for anything pretty or shiny and leave the rest to rot!

**Pisces**  
Feb.19-Mar. 20  
You just don't know what you want to do next, so see if you can leave it to chance or find someone wise to offer guidance. Things are sure to get more interesting once you let go of control!

**THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom**



**SUDOKU**

**Easy**

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

**Easy+**

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

**Medium**

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

**Hard**

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

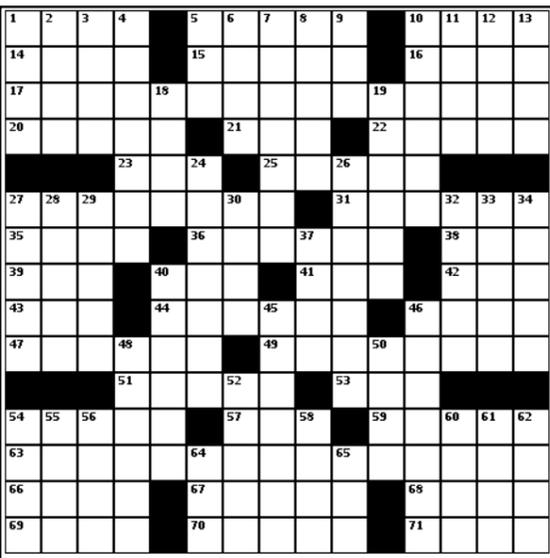
**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	-1	5	clear
Harbin	-12	-7	snow
Tianjin	0	5	clear
Urumqi	-6	-2	cloudy/snow
Xi'an	2	10	cloudy/overcast
Lhasa	-6	13	cloudy
Chengdu	10	15	cloudy
Chongqing	12	16	drizzle/overcast
Kunming	5	23	clear
Nanjing	3	12	drizzle/overcast
Shanghai	4	10	drizzle/overcast
Wuhan	5	12	drizzle
Hangzhou	5	9	drizzle/moderate rain
Taipei	14	25	clear/drizzle
Guangzhou	14	26	overcast
Hong Kong	17	24	cloudy
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	-11	2	clear
Frankfurt	-1	4	sleet/drizzle
Paris	0	6	drizzle
London	2	9	clear
New York	-11	1	flurry/cloudy

**CROSSWORDS**

**ACROSS:** 1- Actor Epps; 5- Unit of weight in gemstones; 10- Put down; 14- Spotted; 15- Bendable twig, usually of a willow tree; 16- Lhasa \_\_\_; 17- In spite of; 20- Severe; 21- Over there, old-style; 22- "Awake and Sing!" playwright; 23- Electrically charged particle; 25- Put off, as an agenda item; 27- Doubt; 31- Add fizz; 35- Italy's Villa d'\_\_\_; 36- Perches; 38- \_\_\_ Quentin; 39- Brandy letters; 40- Conductor \_\_\_-Pekka Salonen; 41- Part of TGIF; 42- Part of TNT; 43- Yes, to Yves; 44- Fret; 46- Tabula \_\_\_; 47- Drink of the Gods; 49- Containing mercury; 51- Sanctuaries; 53- Teenage lout, to a Brit; 54- Related on the mother's side; 57- Turkish title; 59- Picture puzzle; 63- Divide up; 66- Consider; 67- Keep an \_\_\_ the ground; 68- Den of wild animals and dragons; 69- Longfellow's bell town; 70- Indo-European; 71- Mgr.'s helper;

**DOWN:** 1- Possesses; 2- Debatable; 3- Commedia dell'\_\_\_; 4- Big revision; 5- Portable bed; 6- Pale; 7- Rice cooked in broth; 8- Big name in insurance; 9- Lilt syllable; 10- Climbing device; 11- \_\_\_baked in \_\_\_; 12- "\_\_\_ She Lovely?"; 13- Canines; 18- Are you \_\_\_ out?; 19- Surprisingly; 24- Room for infants; 26- Energy cell; 27- English cattle breed; 28- Magazine copy; 29- Unemotional; 30- Work up lather; 32- \_\_\_ Is Born; 33- Foot bones; 34- Early computer; 37- Coscant's reciprocal; 40- Rubber; 45- Set of mental pictures; 46- German measles; 48- Thick woven straw mat; 50- Mrs. Dithers, in "Blondie"; 52- Truman's Missouri birthplace; 54- Icelandic epic; 55- Depilatory brand; 56- Impersonator; 58- Organization to promote theater; 60- Prejudice; 61- Israeli guns; 62- Spanish muralist; 64- Leaves in a bag; 65- Freight weight;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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- PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
- PSP 28 573 333
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- S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
- Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
- Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
- IACM 28 387 333
- Tourism 28 333 000
- Airport 59 888 88
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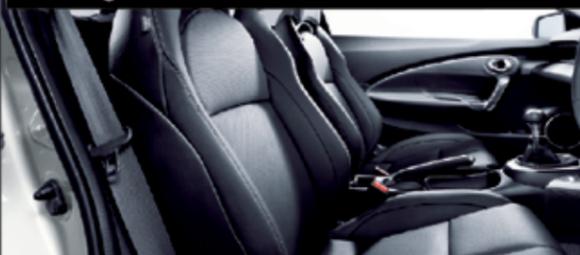
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TENNIS

# Murray loses to Croatian teen in quarterfinals in Dubai

Sandra Harwitt, Dubai

**A**NDY Murray was knocked out of the Dubai Championships yesterday, losing to 18-year-old Borna Coric 6-1, 6-3 in the quarterfinals.

Murray, who reached the Australian Open final at the beginning of the month, had 55 unforced errors and only 15 winners against the Croatian teen. Many of his shots were landing in the net or sailing beyond the lines.

"I would definitely say I was a little bit sluggish at the beginning of the match, but in the second set I definitely started to move a bit better and play a little bit better," Murray said. "But, yeah, I started the match not good."

Coric, who never offered Murray a break-point opportunity, reached his second career ATP level semifinal. His first was last year in Basel, Switzerland, after beating Rafael Nadal.



"He didn't make many errors," said Murray, who won his only other match against Coric in 2013 in the Davis Cup. "He played very solid and he moved well."

"I made way too many mistakes from the beginning of the match right through to the end."

The 84th-ranked Coric briefly wobbled when he was at 2-1 in the second set.

"I lost my focus I think somewhere in the second set on 2-1," Coric said. "Actually, I started to realize that I can win this match, so I started a little bit (to) overthink. But after

two games I think I got back at my focus."

Coric entered the main draw as a lucky loser after Philipp Kohlschreiber withdrew. And on Wednesday, he was tied at 4-4 in a third set tiebreaker when Marcos Baghdatis retired from the match with cramps.

"I know I got a little bit lucky with coming in the main draw," Coric said. "And also yesterday, I think I was actually very lucky because I was 4-1 down, double break, and also 5-3."

"But that's tennis and that's life and another day." **AP**

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

# Arsenal flaws exposed again in Wenger's sour Monaco reunion

Rob Harris

**I**NSIDE Arsenal's match-day program was a cardboard cut-out of Arsene Wenger; a memento for visiting Monaco fans of their former manager. But not many Arsenal fans will want that model perching on their desks after a timid 3-1 loss in the Champions League on Wednesday.

Booing at the final whistle was a demonstration of the impatience toward Wenger, whose only titles in the past decade are two FA Cups.

Even Monaco's ruler, Prince Albert, felt Wenger's pain. After celebrating with his entourage on the London pitch, the prince said: "I'm sort of sad for him."

Wenger's Arsenal does at least always qualify for the Champions League — this is the Gunners' 17th consecutive season in Europe's top competition — but they have only come close to winning the competition once, as runners-up in 2006.

Unless the Gunners score at least three goals in the second

leg in Monaco next month, it will be five successive seasons of failure in the round of 16.

Wenger, with a contract until 2017, appears secure in his job for the time being. But how much longer can fans endure the defensive naivety of Wenger's team being repeatedly exposed against the top teams.

Discussing Wenger with shareholders in October, Arsenal chairman Chips Keswick said: "If he has a plan we back it. If he doesn't have a plan we keep quiet."

Wenger's plan against Monaco left Arsenal far too open to be exploited on the counterattack.

Manchester City losing 2-1 to the richly talented and experienced Barcelona on Tuesday was disappointing for English football but not entirely surprising. Arsenal's capitulation against unfancied Monaco was much more humbling.

This was the team third in the world's wealthiest league being outclassed by the fourth-placed team from the more modestly resourced French Ligue 1. **AP**

AD

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opinion

**Bizcuits**  
Leanda Lee



...BUT NAMES WILL NEVER HURT ME

Along with their Chinese generational names carefully crafted by the Chinese side of our family, we were going to give our daughter the western name Lily (thereby Lili Li); after all, Lilian was my grandmother's name. And the boy was going to be Bruce. No, not really but they are both good Chinese influenced jokes and a great way to tease the kids. It's bad enough that Lea got Lee as a surname. We each bear our burdens, and decades on I'm still dealing with that one.

Our family collects names. We have a list that's been growing since the mid-80s. It's simply a list somewhere on a computer that gets transferred with the thousands of files each time we upgrade our devices. It's not a list of just any name but started with unique and unusual western names used by mostly Cantonese speakers, mainly people from Hong Kong. That was before we came to Macau and now Macau names are added to the list. These are names that give us a chuckle because they sound funny to native English speakers and we've dined on this topic for years in a good humoured way.

Now, a few weeks ago a little competition was posted on a social media page to see who could come up with the funniest western name used by Chinese people. For a while this was amusing and amazing. The range of objects that people would call themselves left many people shaking their heads in wonder with all sorts of explanations as to why. What would bring people to call themselves Tangent, Fantasy, Lazy or Silent Echo? Over time we get use to the names of fruit or the seasons. Months of the year come in and out of fashion with eras even in the west. Fanny is OK in Australia but brings on mirth in the US. Dick, short for Richard, presents a similar cross-cultural response.

All was fine and fun until someone took umbrage. I braced myself for the social media barrage that was to ensue when people express offense and then accused offenders take offense at the offense that wasn't intended as offense to begin with. Then came the personal attacks and stereotyping of "you westerners". I stood back, I asked myself if this little bit of harmless fun was really so harmless.

So, racism. I had a hard time reconciling the labelling of this activity as a manifestation of racism and the actors as racist. Somehow we excuse a blond telling a tall blond joke and don't call her sexist. An Irishman gets away with telling an Irish joke and a New Zealander telling a sheep joke (don't ask), and aboriginal actors can pump out black humour. So what makes it racist when someone presumably on the outside does the same?

When one is labelled provocateur and perhaps viewed by the accuser as being in a position of power, one is not supposed to jest. How was it that the subjects of the joke were deemed powerless and in need of protection? Per virtue of perceived inferiority of ethnicity, education, age, gender, wealth or political standing so that they had no voice? Such interpretation is too ponderous, patronising and surely far from the minds of the participants that day. Oh, the dangers of humour.

This bit of community banter provoked such an intensifying vitriol that the accuser was extinguished (or removed himself) from the group. Such a pity, but the right to speak comes with responsibilities and consequences as recent lessons have taught us.

Humour, tolerance and free speech don't always enjoy happy commune. We know this as barely a month earlier the Charlie Hebdo incident and global commentary on satire, values, conflicting belief systems and perceptions raised these issues all too well in our consciousness. Raised them but obviously not concretely enough. Learning lessons from history is an abstract art and perhaps the reason why we often don't.

THE BUZZ GERMAN CONSUMER GROUPS WARNS FACEBOOK OVER DATA PROTECTION

German consumer groups say they will file a lawsuit against Facebook unless the social network changes its terms of service.

The Federation of German Consumer Organizations said yesterday it has sent a cease-and-desist letter to Facebook's European headquarters in Ireland.

The letter cites 19 clauses in the company's terms of service and data protection guidelines that the consumer groups claim breach German law.

German Justice Minister Heiko Maas backed the complaint, saying Facebook's data protection rules are too vague. He said users should be able to opt out of certain requirements without having to quit Facebook entirely.

The California-based company has faced regular legal challenges from privacy advocates in Europe. Facebook didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

39TH HKIFF

Premiere to star Macau-born Isabella Leong as lead

Robert Carroll, Hong Kong

THIS year's Hong Kong International Film Festival opens with veteran actress, producer and director Sylvia Chang's "Murmur of the Hearts" starring Macau-born Isabella Leong, lead actress of Berlinale prizewinner Isabella, filmed in Macau. Chang is also this festival's filmmaker in focus. Internationally acclaimed directors from Portugal, England and Iran will also be in Hong Kong for screenings of their most recent movies and conduct master classes for the public.

Taiwan-born Hong Kong legend Chang told MDT that her latest work is a deeply felt personal movie about parenting. "It's the kind of film that when you leave the theatre you will want to call your parents. It's about the precious things in life, kids and parents. What inspired me is what's in your heart, where the heart is."

Speaking to the Times, the festival's long-time director, Roger Garcia, of Macanese extraction, called Chang a "versatile and talented film person, actress, director, producer; very good writer of plays and screenplays [who] also produces - she produced Edward Yang's - Taiwan's greatest filmmaker's - first film. She's not only a talented person behind and in front



Sylvia Chang (2nd left), Louis Koo (4th left), Roger Garcia (right)

of the camera but also helps encourage the film industry and culture. She was Vice-Chairwoman of the Hong Kong International Film Festival Society (which oversees HKIFF and the Asian Film Awards) and now [is] chairwoman of Taiwan's Golden Horse awards.

The three internationally recognized directors appearing as special guests of the festival are Portugal's 2014 Locarno winner, critically acclaimed auteur Pedro Costa ("Horse Money"), England's multi-award winning Peter Greenaway ("Eisenstein in Guanajuato"), and Iran's Mohsen Makhmalbaf ("The President").

This year's HKIFF ambassador is Hong Kong superstar actor Louis Koo, who told MDT why he became involved with the film fest and how he sees the future for Hong Kong filmmakers. "I love movies; I have done many movies. I want to do something to help the people make more movies. And

I want to do more to make local culture movies. I want to help bring young people together to watch movies and be inspired to make movies. I want us not to [only] make big movies [for international audiences] but low budget films for [the] local market to help local culture grow. With young people [on board] maybe something will happen. The technology is becoming much cheaper - everyone can make movies now", he said, adding that Hong Kongers need to be creative to get there. "We need new ideas."

As usual the festival shows a special selection of cinema from two countries in particular. This year's turn is modern German film and Young Israeli movies. From Germany alone there will be thirteen international and Asian film premieres.

The festival, now in its 39th year, will show 280 movies from over 50 countries. It is the city's largest cultural event with total audience figures of 600,000.

HKIFF DIRECTOR'S PICKS

DOCUMENTARIES

- ("Alien" look creator) "Dark Star - HR Giger's World" is as informative as it is fascinating in its portrait of one of the great artists of our time.
- The landscapes and peoples in "The Salt of the Earth" also seem otherworldly - the film is a portrait of Sebastiao Salgado the great Brazilian photographer made by master filmmaker Wim Wenders, a celebration of the nomadic artist and the grand vision of the world as an endless horizon.
- All three "Portraits of Museums" section. Films about art used to be dry and academic but these three films are insightful and great observational documentaries

FEATURES

- "Li'l Quinquin" by Bruno Dumont - a TV series cut into a long movie, completely off the wall with a deadpan satirical approach shot under the sign of David Lynch. Think of "Twin Peaks" crossed with Fargo and you get some of the flavor.
- Retrospective of Roy Andersson, the Swedish surrealist - won at Cannes ("Songs from the

Second Floor" in 2000) and the Golden Lion in Venice 2014 with intersecting tales ("A Pigeon Sat on a Branch Reflecting on Existence"). He's described as a satirical Bergman, or a Swedish Fellini.

- Sylvia Chang, a major multi-hyphenate talent as writer, director, producer and now Chairperson of the Golden Horse Awards in Taiwan. We are showing a great selection of her films (and opening the festival with her latest Murmurs of the Heart). I am particularly fond of "That Day," on the Beach from 1983, which she produced and starred in. It was the first feature film by one of Taiwan's masters of cinema, Edward Yang who was a personal friend (I met him in Hong Kong when he was traveling from the US to Taiwan to start his career in cinema). Shot by Chris Doyle, the film takes the form of various flashbacks and already shows Yang's innovative approach to narrative construction. A film to see, and see again.
- Berlinale winners "Taxi" by Jafar Panahi (Golden Bear) and "Victoria" by Sebastian Schipper (Silver Bear for Outstanding Achievement). **RC**

Station	Air quality
Roadside	40-60 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	45-65 Moderate
Ambient	25-45 Moderate

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

**AUSTRALIA** Two men from Malaysia and Hong Kong have been charged with smuggling more than 100 kilograms of crystal methamphetamine worth 65 million Australian dollars (USD50 million) into Sydney in a shipping container from China, authorities said yesterday.

**UKRAINE** International monitors overseeing a cease-fire in Ukraine between government troops and Russian-backed separatists say that both sides are delaying progress in the planned withdrawal of heavy weaponry. However, Ukraine's military said yesterday it has noted a substantial reduction of unrest in the east and that its positions had not been shelled once over the previous night.



**RUSSIA** A spokesman for the Russian gas giant Gazprom says the company could cut off supplies to neighboring Ukraine by the end of the week, barring further payments.

**ISRAEL**'s opposition leader says Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu should cancel his upcoming speech to the U.S. Congress, saying he will cause "strategic damage" to ties with Washington.



**ARGENTINA**'s Congress has approved a law overhauling an intelligence agency under fire from the president as well as the opposition. The measure approved early yesterday comes after President Cristina Fernandez said the agency was out of control and suggested a top spy could have been involved in the death of a special prosecutor.