



MACAO WATER ASKS FOR HIGHER SUBSIDY TO BE SUSTAINABLE

"Every time we ask for an increase, we only get a minor adjustment. This is not enough to make Macao Water sustainable," said Felix Fan

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BEHIND THE SCENES, A CATS BACKSTAGE TOUR

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'ZERO TOLERANCE' POLICY ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The Good Shepherd Center is calling on local businesses and casino operators to enforce "a zero tolerance" policy on human trafficking

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

WORLD BRIEFS



CHINA's top judge renewed his commitment to uncovering and overturning wrongful convictions, citing to national legislators yesterday the much-publicized case of an 18-year-old executed and confirmed years later to have been innocent. Chinese courts at all levels overturned convictions in 1,317 criminal cases last year, Zhou Qiang, president of the Supreme People's Court, said yesterday in an annual report to the legislature.

THAILAND's anti-corruption body has recommended that 250 former lawmakers be impeached, in the latest move targeting supporters of ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. National Anti-Corruption Commission spokesman Vicha Mahakun said yesterday that the agency found the lawmakers had misused their authority by seeking to amend the now-defunct constitution to make the Senate fully, rather than partly, elected.



MALAYSIA's transport minister yesterday vowed to take stern action against an air traffic control supervisor if it is confirmed that he was asleep on the job when Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 disappeared a year ago.

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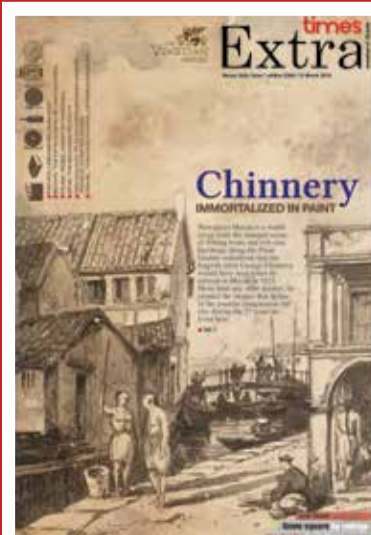
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NPC AND CPPCC MEETINGS

Region's role as Lusophone link highlighted in Beijing

MACAU is expected to playing an even larger role as a regional platform, as local delegates at the National People's Congress (NPC) and Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) have proposed multiple functions for the city to develop based on its comparative advantages.

With Macau being positioned as a service platform for China and Lusophone countries' trade and economic cooperation, NPC delegates Kou Hoi In and Lao Ngai Leong proposed to build the city into a RMB clearing center that's dedicated to Lusophone and Latin American trade partners.

"There is a huge demand on RMB clearing financial services in cross-border trade, but currently Chinese banks in the Portuguese-speaking countries still haven't achieved full coverage service network," said Kou in Wednesday's meeting, as cited by local Chinese newspaper, *Jornal do Cidadão*.

According to Kou, the trade volume between China and Lusophone countries has expanded to USD132.58 billion in 2014 from the initial USD10 billion more than a decade ago.



Chan Meng Kam delivers a speech at the third session of the 12th CPPCC

Delegates said Macau has the necessary features to be playing the above-mentioned role, with a complete liquidation channel, mature competence of RMB business, free flow of capital and foreign exchange, as well as its cultural and historical background.

Meanwhile at the consultative conference, delegate Chan Meng Kam suggested elevating Macau's function in the cross-strait relations between Taiwan and the mainland. Chan said Macau should "build an upgraded version" of its relations with Taiwan, as an example and forerunner of promoting "one coun-

try, two systems."

"Macau has been playing a special role in cross-strait relations. As the peaceful development is entering a new phase, Macau's role as a platform will not weaken but only be added new missions," he said in a speech at the assembly. The delegate suggested that the MSAR could establish a formal official liaison mechanism to explore exchanges with different political parties and cities in Taiwan.

As for cultural exchange events being held in town, Chan stressed they should strengthen the theme of "two sides sharing the same blood and culture like a family," in order to narrow the psychological distance between compatriots on both sides.

Moreover, he suggested facilitating regional integration and developing a large trade cooperation platform for four places across the straits.

In addition, at the NPC Macau delegation's meeting yesterday, the director of the Chinese Liaison Office in Macau, Li Gang, shared the SAR's experience in judicial procedure, as a reference to the mainland's judicial reform. **BY**

TRANSPORT

Tax increases aim at fighting soaring traffic

THE Transport Advisory Committee's first meeting of this year was held yesterday afternoon, during which members discussed possible measures to curb the city's growing traffic. The Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo Rosário, announced that tax increases will likely be implemented in order to make car ownership more costly.

The secretary told journalists after the meeting that a majority of the committee members are in favor of introducing economic measures to slow the surging number of cars, which is increasing annually by 5 percent.

The measures discussed at the meeting included increasing parking fees and taxation in multiple areas, which have stayed unadjusted for a decade. However, the 59-year-old secretary conceded that, so far, discussion had not yielded conclusions on specific dates, target car reduction numbers to meet, or even how much the tax increment would be.

The Transport Bureau (DSAT) director, Wong Wan, argued that measures addressing private vehicles have to be implemented in tandem with those targeting public transportation. He highlighted to the media that several committee members had agreed to put the bus priority policy for the inner harbor district in place this August, which was considered the best time to implement the policy considering a reduced traffic volume. "We will work towards the goal [of enforcing the policy in August], but we have to continue collecting the public's opinion in order to know to what extent the policy will be implemented to," said Wong.

The secretary also added that the act of raising taxes was meant to achieve "a simultaneous and proportionate increase" in terms of the money needed for "purchasing cars, keeping cars and using cars." The policy objective, as he said, was to make the tax adjustment fair to different sorts of car-owners.

The DSAT director revealed that "advance warnings" would be given to current car owners in case of tax increases, whereas there would not be any advance notification for tax increases for car imports in order to avoid the city's sudden demand for vehicles.

According to figures provided by DSAT, the estimated cost of owning a private car (including taxes, parking fees, maintenance) in Hong Kong is 7.5 times more than in Macau. In Taiwan, it costs four times more to own a vehicle. **Staff reporter**

Macao Water wants higher subsidy to be sustainable

MACAO Water achieved "hard-won better financial performance" during 2014, according to the company's executive director, Felix Fan. The company's profit after tax totaled MOP58 million, but this result is considered insufficient to face the city's rapid economic development and increasing inflation. Hence, Macao Water is once again applying for a water resources fee increase of 11

percent.

"In the past two years, we have applied for a fee increase, but the government always gave us a small percentage [of that which was requested] below the inflation rate, in order to satisfy the public. Every time we ask for an increase, we only get a minor adjustment. This is not enough to make Macao Water sustainable," the executive director said yesterday during a me-



Felix Fan

dia luncheon, which marked the 80th anniversary of the modernization of the local water supply. During his speech, Fan mentioned the case of the bankrupted bus operator Reolian (which claimed to be affected by the government's refusal to pay for a contractual annual adjustment of the fees related to inflation and annual increase of costs of operation) to illustrate the difficulties faced by pu-

blic service providers. "Some operators have left the market disappointed," he observed.

Reviewing the work done in 2014, the executive director mentioned that Macao Water "overcame a lot of difficulties" in order to make progress on the Main Storage Reservoir Water Treatment Plant III (MSR III) expansion works, after the project was suspended several times. The MSR III is expected to be completed this year, and will increase the region's daily water supply capacity. The complex aims, in particular, to meet the greater water demands that will be caused by the upcoming operations conducted by the new large-scale entertainment facilities and hotels in the Cotai area.

In addition to the MSR III project, Macao Water is currently designing the Seac Pai Van Water Treatment Plant and its supporting water supply network. Felix Fan stressed that "all these efforts make up the important measures to ensure the water supply safety of Macau." **PB**

ROUND-THE-CLOCK BORDER MAY AFFECT REVENUE

THE ECONOMIC slowdown plus the 24-hour border-crossing policy will probably slacken the increase in water consumption, and could even lead to a decrease, according to the company's estimations. "In either

case, it will bring uncertainty to Macao Water over the company's financial performance," Felix Fan said. "In the water bill for April and May, we will see if the 24-hour border has had an impact or not," he added.

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CIVIC AND MORAL EDUCATION

'One needs to love the country rationally and critically'

Brook Yang

MACAU delegates' joint proposal to Beijing of strengthening youth national education has sparked concerns over "brainwashing" in local society. Local scholar and educator Teresa Vong suggested that the timing of putting forward such a proposal is unavoidably to generate speculation and panic.

"Overly saying Macau's youngsters are unpatriotic [is a proposition that] doesn't hold," she told the Times. National education, as part of civic education, will be established as one of the mandatory school subjects like mathematics and physical education. Within the next four and half years, all schools in Macau will be implementing this obligatory course, gradually from kindergarten to high school levels starting next fall semester.

"I'm not against implementing mandatory national education. It's inevitable for every country to promote national education. It's not a sin to love one's country, but I oppose proposing it under such a sensitive circumstance," stressed the scholar.

Seven delegates told the nation's top advisory body (CPPCC) that they hope the Ministry of Education could collaborate with the Macau's Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) to compose a national education textbook. A review was called for on the current teaching materials to foster "moral quality, legal concepts and patriotism," drawing on Hong Kong's Umbrella Movement.

"Macau has a more standardized national education than Hong Kong. About sixty percent of local students are studying in the patriotic or pro-establishment schools," indicated the scholar. "All Macau's eighth graders are required to join in military training, which is also regarded as a type of



AP PHOTO
It's not the first time that patriotic education raises controversy. In Sept. 2012 thousands of protesters gathered in HK protesting against the plan to introduce "Moral and National Education" in schools

national education."

The educator indicated that "patriotic education should be established on the basis of emotions, whereas simply chanting slogans doesn't mean the children can reach that emotional level."

"It will be brainwashing if they teach it in a way of drumming it in, rather than fostering students to think about their own relation with the country. The way to handle the teaching mustn't be just one way. One needs to love the country rationally and critically, to learn not only its good side but also its bad. All those need to be included in the textbook, and what we are most concerned about here is in what way they will teach that" she stressed.

Since 2005, DSEJ has implemented a series of textbooks compiled by the Beijing Normal University's center for citizenship and moral education, said the academic. The city further included national education into a mandatory curriculum framework being promulgated last year.

"It's confusing why the delegates proposed that now, as Macau has already been imple-

menting all these. Do they know it [national education]'s happening? It's obvious in the timing that they might want the youngsters to be quiet and obedient, to abide by laws without asking for reasons. But that runs counter to the purpose of civic education," she questioned.

Regarding these concerns, the Secretary for Culture and Social Affairs, Alexis Tam, assured the public that "there's no need to be concerned that 'brainwashing education' would appear."

"I think national education is a very good [form of] education and I've heard from many residents and associations that Macau society has this demand," he told the media yesterday after a plenary meeting of the Youth Affairs Committee he leads.

The secretary further explained that "it will be implemented in a way that lets our local students have more independent thinking rather than letting them grow up in a greenhouse." "The DSEJ and tertiary education departments will outreach to schools how to conduct the national education," he added.

The DSEJ officials also explained that the mandatory curriculum framework is applicable to all local schools, whether they are public, private-run, Catholic-based or international. However, each school has its own autonomy over what textbook to choose and how they will teach the subject.

"Civic and moral education is a mandatory subject and we will formulate the goals for each educational level to reach. Apart from that, the government won't intervene," clarified Wong Kin Mou, educational and research resources department head. Wong said that patriotic education will not become an independent subject and that schools will not be requested to use a unified textbook in the future.

MGTO simplifies license application process

The Macau Government Tourist Office (MGTO) will further simplify the license application process for the hospitality and entertainment sectors, which include hotels, restaurants, bars, clubs, massage and sauna houses, and karaoke venues. The Bureau will implement the second phase of the simplification of internal measures from next Monday, stating that the documents' roundtrip between departments and repeated work can be reduced. The MGTO and the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) will jointly launch guidelines for restaurants to apply for licenses and changes in construction.

Composers' association to collect royalties

The Macau Association of Composers, Authors and Publishers intends to start collecting copyright fees from retail and karaoke venues this year, and plans to gradually extend the action to other sectors in the future. Entrusted by various overseas musicians, the association covers up to 90 percent of all musical works being used in Macau. However, only the government and two casino operators currently pay royalties through it, according to the TDM. The association is in negotiations with other casino operators, and says that it has received positive feedback so far. Meanwhile, several cases of payment refusal are being countered through civil actions.

Locals encouraged to pursue studies in Portugal

THE Tertiary Education Services Office (GAES) is holding an information session on Monday for residents looking to study at the Portuguese University of Coimbra (UC). A representative of the university will be attending the event, providing prospective students with a glimpse into the university's application process, GAES said in a statement. The representative will also provide details on the university's curricula, as well as information on available scholarships. The information session takes place between 5.30 p.m. and 7 p.m. at the Center for Higher Education Students, which is located in front of the Lou Lim Ieoc Garden bus stop.

Meanwhile, UC representatives will begin a visit to China today to meet prospective students and provide them with information on curricula offered at its seven faculties.

The university said in a press release that it will be participa-



PAULO BARBOSA
University of Coimbra, Portugal

ting in the International Higher Education Exposition of Macau 2015, taking place between today and Monday at the Venetian Macao.

The UC delegation, which will be led by vice-rector Joaquim Ramos de Carvalho, heads to Beijing on March 20 to attend the China Study Abroad Fo-

rum, which is held as part of the China International Education Exhibition Tour.

UC is the first Portuguese university to accept students from China, who have undertaken the National Higher Education Entrance Examination (Gaokao). The university also accepts applications from students from Macau, Hong Kong and Taiwan. "Besides providing quality education and an internationally recognized diploma, the University of Coimbra, which is

now celebrating its 725th anniversary, offers students a unique life experience, promoting a multicultural environment and contact between students of 90 nationalities," the university says.

The university has made available a specific website addressing Chinese students, with useful information on academic and research programs, as well as details on student financial aid (<http://www.uc.pt/en/china/uc-visits-china>). **CP**

GAES OPEN CALL FOR EU TRIP

THE TERTIARY Education Services Office (GAES) has opened calls for students interested in participating in an exchange program featuring a visit to the European Union institutions in Brussels. Local students who are enrolled in their second year of university or above may apply, except those who are now completing their final

year. GAES said in a statement that it will select a total of 20 students through assessing their academic achievements and conducting interviews. Selected candidates will attend a preparatory training course in Macau in mid-June ahead of their trip to Belgium, which will take place between June 13 and 19.

Residents barred from buying property in India

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced yesterday that Macau and Hong Kong are on a list of countries and regions whose citizens cannot acquire or transfer immovable property in India. "As they are notified separately, it has been decided that citizens of Macau and Hong Kong will also be included on the list of countries which are prohibited to acquire/transfer immovable property in India," the country's authority said in a notification, without further explaining why the measure was taken. Under the current regulations regarding foreign ownership, citizens from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, China, Iran, Nepal or Bhutan can't acquire or transfer immovable property in India without prior permission of the RBI. However, those citizens can lease property, as long as the lease does not exceed five years.

ASIDE from the artists' inspired choreographic movements and ear-pleasing vocals onstage that captivates the audience, what really makes the Broadway musical show *Cats*, which runs until the 15th of this month at the Venetian Theatre, so appealing? One simple answer; the elaborately designed costumes, wigs and, of course, the show's set.

On a backstage tour this week, Maykayla Bishop, Company Manager of the musical team, shared with the Times some secrets lying within the shows mise-en-scene and on how the artists turn into active and energetic Jellicle cats all by themselves.

The two conspicuous junk piles resting on both sides of the stage, according to the show's manager, are indeed comprised of rubbish collected from this city intentionally to create a local sense. Therefore, the destinations the show tours bring different indigenous elements to its set. Besides, another noteworthy part of the stage set is a plate bearing "J-AR-12" placed next to the gargantuan tire. The letters there basically stand for the name of the show's director and choreographer - Jo-Anne Robinson while the number that follows indicates the number of prop edition, meaning that the plate has been

ENTERTAINMENT

Behind the scenes, a Cats backstage tour



changed 12 times since the first performance.

As Maykayla Bishop revealed, the coated-surface stage enables the Jellicle cats to perform swift dancing moves, and its slightly inward inclination allows the audience to catch sight of all performers packed onstage. If you ever look meticulously at the patterns on the stage, it's not that difficult to find the word "Seoul" written right above the roaring tiger, as the team brought the entire set to the Venetian Theatre from its pre-

vious tour stop in South Korea.

Taking into account the actual size of the props and the set, "everything, from the broken cellphone or even to the drain pipeline was devised and created from a kitten's perspective," she said.

Asked if the performers have adequate rest for the show, the company's manager said that full-day rehearsals only take place before the musical officially begins its season. "When we first started the show, when we were bumping in and having new cast members, we did

the full-day rehearsal. Once we were up and running, we didn't have to because we're doing eight shows a week," she said.

Wearing the right cosmetics and wigs are essential to making up the vivid appearance of the Jellicle cats for the show. The latter is done by a group of specialists

Everything, from the broken cellphone or even to the drain pipeline was devised and created from a kitten's perspective

MAYKAYLA BISHOP

who take care of the wigs carefully before each show starts, while the former is what the performers themselves are responsible for.

It took more than applying hairspray and combing to make the wigs characteristic. "Firstly, we need to wash the wigs completely before drying them up, the fragile laces on the exterior of the wigs have to be pinned in order to find the right position for setting," said one of the specialists, stressing that the "cat ears" are the hardest part to form with hair tips that had to look "slightly transparent" under the spotlight.

For the first few run-throughs, there were make-up artists on set who would do half a face of make-up, for the performers, leaving them to learn how to wear make-up by finishing up the rest. As Maykayla Bishop revealed, initially it would take almost one hour for them to finish the task as they were too cautious, yet now they only need roughly fifteen minutes.

Every single costume was handmade and tailor-made according to the artist's body size. Some of them even have padding on the knees for sliding. The clothing and the wigs represent different characters and styles of the Jellicle cats, which are portrayed as certain humans in society. **Staff reporter**

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New guests confirmed for literary festival

Portuguese journalist Adelino Gomes, Hong Kong writer Kelly Yang, local author Chan Im Wa and Spanish puppeteer Toni Rumbau are among the new names confirmed to be attending the fourth edition of The Script Road, according to an announcement made yesterday by the organizers. The literary festival will take place between March 19 and 29, with the majority of the events happening at the Old Court building.

Ambrose So: No layoffs or unpaid leave for staff



SJM Holdings Limited refuses to resort to unpaid leave or massive dismissals amid an economic downturn in the gaming sector, reassured Ambrose So, the company's CEO. "First, we won't have layoffs. Second, if there are losses, it won't be that quick to be felt," Ambrose So said. "In regards to strengthening non-gaming diversification, we still need to think about what to do with non-gaming staff," he added.

André Ritchie leaves GIT



The deputy coordinator of the Transportation Infrastructure Office (GIT), André Ritchie, will be leaving his post at the end of the month, newspaper Tribuna de Macau reports. He has been serving as GIT's deputy chief since 2007. Mr Ritchie will start working for the private sector. He did not disclose which company he will be working for, but said that it is not related to the Light Rail Transit (LRT) construction work or any other major public project.

Gaming operators urged to help fight human trafficking

Catarina Pinto

THE Good Shepherd Center is calling on local businesses and casino operators to incorporate "a zero tolerance" policy on human trafficking, and the further training of staff to spot and report any potential cases. The center, together with Vital Voices USA, will be holding a one-day summit next Tuesday at MGM Macau themed "Business Leadership to End Human Trafficking & Modern Day Slavery."

"The purpose of the conference is to raise awareness about human trafficking and its many faces," said sister Juliana Devoy, director of the Good Shepherd Center.

She added that it is critical to involve the business community in the fight against human trafficking, to urge them to look into the end of their supply chain and to make sure that their products or goods are not produced through slave labor.

Sister Juliana recalled a case of a 13-year-old girl who was being used as a prostitute at a local hotel. She believes that training hotel staff to spot and act upon any potential human trafficking cases would help to tackle the problem.

Businesses should implement a zero tolerance policy "for any kind of sex trafficking taking place in or around their casino," she said.

"They can be trained up, and if they see that there are potential trafficking victims, they can alert the police, because the police can't just go in unless they have a tip off," she stressed.

"I don't think most of the hotels [and companies] provide this kind of training for their staff. There are many things that can be done and are being done in other places, but, as far as I am aware, nothing of that kind is being done in Macau. They do not have public policy statements about their policy on human trafficking," she told a press conference yesterday.

Another strategy to combat human trafficking that companies could adopt, she said, regards their own supply chain. Sister Juliana recalled that some enterprises fail to look into the end of their supply chain to make sure that none of their goods are being produced through slave labor.

"Not everyone knows [about human trafficking]. So, for me, this is a very important effort, too, to really get the business community involved."

Sister Juliana said that Macau's law against human traffi-



Juliana Devoy

cking, which came into force in 2008, is suitable, and that the government has been willing to tackle the problem. However, law enforcement is often hindered with many cases unable to reach the courtroom due to lack of evidence.

The conference will take place at MGM Macau on Tuesday between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Representatives of local companies, casino operators, worldwide organizations, and human trafficking researchers and experts from the United States and Asia have been invited to speak.

Sister Juliana revealed that a representative of hotel operator Carlson/Rezidor Hotels will

also be speaking at the summit, as their company has been implementing policies to help tackle human trafficking.

Other speakers include representatives from several organizations, such as Macau's Social Welfare Bureau (IAS), the Global Fund to End Slavery, CSR-Asia, and from different consulates. Kathleen Ferrier, who is an expert in international relations and a member of the United Nations-related Expert Review Group (ERG), will also be speaking in the afternoon.

About 100 participants have registered to attend the summit, including representatives of several casino operators, such as

“They can be trained up, and if they see that there are potential trafficking victims, they can alert the police

JULIANA DEVOY

Galaxy, MGM, Wynn and SJM, sister Juliana revealed.

The summit is organized by the Good Shepherd Center in cooperation with Vital Voices USA, which was founded by Hillary Clinton.

The event is also supported by the Macau government, with the collaboration of the European Union Office to Hong Kong & Macau, and the Macau Government Human Trafficking Deterrent Measures Concern Committee. Several government entities, as well as MGM Macau and Galaxy Entertainment Group, contributed financially towards the conference.

According to sister Juliana, the International Labor Organization estimates that there are 21 million human trafficking victims worldwide, which makes "forced labor and sex trade one of the greatest human rights violations of our time."

'Human trafficking has many faces'

ALTHOUGH sex trafficking is one of the most common types of modern slavery, human trafficking still "has many faces and types," according to sister Juliana Devoy.

"The traditional [cases] where [victims] are being beaten up and tied up are still happening. But that's not the only way [it happens]. In the cases we get at the center, the girls' vulnerability is exploited. They are very young and ignorant - they're easily seduced," she told reporters on the sidelines of a press conference, where she was to announce a summit on human trafficking that will take place next Tuesday.

The Good Shepherd Center, sister Juliana revealed, has provided shelter to 39 under-aged girls - victims of human or sex trafficking - from mainland China over the past two years.

The center received fewer cases in 2014 than in the previous year. Sister Juliana said that the center does not know whether this decrease is related to stricter border control or the crackdown on corruption in mainland China.

Although Macau's government is committed to treating these victims as children in need of protection, sister Juliana recalled that the

girls only stay at the center for one or two weeks, and it is hard to follow up on their cases and to ensure that they will not enter any human trafficking network again.

"When they go back, we worry that they go back to do the same. And we have no way to track that information down (...) usually they are school dropouts and they just want to leave," sister Juliana said.

The center is trying to link up with other associations that are providing assistance to these victims in mainland China, so that there's a better way to tackle these cases.

According to sister Juliana, there are cases of sex trafficking victims of other nationalities in Macau. "There are human trafficking victims inside saunas, but the police can't go there without being tipped off. These saunas are legal. Many girls who end up in these places thought that they were coming here just to do massage, but then they [the owners] want them to be prostitutes," she said.

Sister Juliana warned that "they feel like they don't have a choice. They go along and feel they have compromised themselves, and they don't see themselves as victims."

Ex-hairdresser who bought Birmingham City fights HK conviction

Douglas Wong

THE money-laundering conviction of a former hairdresser who bought British soccer club Birmingham City should be overturned as the judge failed to consider evidence properly, his lawyer said.

The lower court judge didn't use the right approach in convicting Carson Yeung of five charges of laundering HKD721 million (USD93 million), his lawyer Clare Montgomery told the Hong Kong Court of Appeal yesterday.

Hong Kong's top court in a ruling on a separate case after Yeung's March 2014 conviction raised the level of proof prosecutors need on such offenses, the lawyer told the three-judge panel. Yeung, serving a six-year jail term, failed to convince the lower court judge that the funds were winnings from gambling or profit from investments.

"It's no longer good enough for prosecutors to simply lead evidence of third-party transactions," Montgomery said. More evidence is now required that any reasonable person would believe the funds are criminal proceeds, she said.

Yeung, 55, was part of a money-laundering machine linked to organized crime in Macau, prosecutors said during the 55-day trial. He resigned as chairman of Hong Kong-listed Birmingham International Holdings Ltd. ahead of his conviction.

Evidence was carefully considered before Yeung was convicted, said Jonathan Caplan, a lawyer for the prosecution. The judge then inferred that Yeung would have had reasonable grounds to believe the funds passing through his accounts were the proceeds of crime, he said.

Caplan also disagreed that Yeung was prejudiced because multiple transactions were put under one charge.

A ruling on Yeung's appeal will be handed down at a later date.

Birmingham International Holdings, which took control of the soccer club in 2009, appointed receivers from Ernst & Young last month to preserve its assets and business. The shares have been suspended since Dec. 4.

Bloomberg

Chinese makers roll out wave of Apple watch lookalikes

Joe McDonald,
Business Writer, Beijing

A month before Apple Inc.'s smartwatch hits the market, China's thriving copycat manufacturers are selling lookalikes, some openly advertised as Apple copies.

"Apple Smart Watch with Bluetooth Bracelet," says one vendor on Alibaba Group's popular Taobao e-commerce website.

Photos on the vendor's page appear to be the real Apple Watch. It says features on the Chinese version include text messaging and a music player. It starts at 288 yuan (USD45), or one-eighth the \$349 price of the cheapest Apple Watch.

Alibaba, which listed on the New York Stock Exchange last year after a record initial public offering, has faced criticism in the past for hosting the sale of counterfeit goods. It says it has been taking steps to reduce the problem.

The flood of "me too" smartwatches reflects China's mix of skilled electronics manufacturers and a growing consumer market for bargain-price style.

Most of the world's personal computers and mobile phones are assembled in China. But this country's own companies are only starting to develop design skills and the ability to create breakthrough products.

That has led to the rise of an industry known as "shanzhai," or "mountain



Apple CEO Tim Cook explains the features of the new Apple Watch during an Apple event on Monday, March 9, 2015, in San Francisco

forts" — hundreds of small, anonymous manufacturers that quickly copy the design or features of popular foreign mobile phones or other products at a fraction of the price.

At least eight vendors on Taobao advertised watches as "Apple Watch" or "Apple Watch lookalike." Most said they were compatible with Apple's iOS or Google Inc.'s rival Android operating system.

One vendor jokingly used Chinese slang for a vulgar rich person, offering an "All-New Apple Tyrant Gold Mobile Phone-Supporting Watch" for 288 yuan (\$45).

Eight vendors failed to respond to questions from The Associated Press sent through their Taobao accounts.

Asked whether it had

taken action against any sellers, Alibaba said in a statement, "Alibaba Group is dedicated to the fight against counterfeits. We work closely with our government partners, brands and industry associations to tackle this issue at its source. We also utilize technology like data mining and big data to scrub our platforms of counterfeits."

Alibaba faced controversy in January after a Chinese government agency accused the company of lax oversight and allowing vendors to sell counterfeit goods on Taobao. The two sides settled their dispute a few days later. The agency said its report had no legal force and Alibaba promised to tighten its oversight of vendors.

Apple, based in Cupertino, California, says buyers

in China and Hong Kong can pre-order its watch beginning April 10, the same day it takes orders in the United States, Japan, Britain, France and Germany.

Most previous Apple products were released in China weeks or months after other markets. That fueled a trade in iPhones that were smuggled in for sale to gadget fans who were willing to pay a premium.

Apple lookalikes also are on sale in markets in the southern city of Shenzhen, "the mainland's best place to shop for ... hi-tech knockoffs," according to the Hong Kong newspaper The South China Morning Post.

"Shanzhai Apple Watches in Shenzhen Less Than 1 Day After Launch," said a headline on Internet portal Sohu.com. **AP**

corporate bits

CAM ATTENDS THE 9TH IATA WORLD CARGO SYMPOSIUM



The 9th World Cargo Symposium (WCS), hosted by the International Air Transport Association (IATA), was held in Shanghai, China from 10th to 12th March 2015. Mr. Franco

Kwan, Deputy Director of the Logistics and General Aviation Development Department (LGD) of Macau International Airport Company Limited (CAM) and Mr. Jim Leung,

CAM's Manager of LGD attended this air cargo industry annual conference.

The theme of year's Symposium was "Improving the Customer Experience, promoting of implementation of e-cargo". During the three-day conference, the professionals discussed the importance of, and the way to modernize, the air cargo industry to provide transparent and reliable services to customers.

Macau International Airport representatives were able to gain an insight into the latest trends of the global airfreight industry and exchange views with the representatives and different experts, helping Macau International Airport to improve future airport operations.

THE VENETIAN MACAO VOTED 'BEST HOTEL IN MACAO' IN DESTINASIAN READERS' CHOICE AWARDS 2015

The Venetian Macao is the Best Hotel in Macau in DestinAsian magazine's 10th Readers' Choice Awards. The annual awards, which ask travellers to recognize hospitality and luxury performed at their best, were presented in Hong Kong on Wednesday.

The results for 2015 were generated by a poll conducted between August and October 2014. Nearly 4,000 readers voted for their favorite brands in 35 categories, including hotels and resorts, serviced residences, spas, airlines, airports and destinations. The Venetian Macao was also voted Best Hotel in Macau in the 2014



Readers' Choice Awards — the first year Macau was added as a destination.

"It's a great honor to be recognized as the best hotel in Macau by the readers of DestinAsian magazine for two years in a row," said Ciarrán Carruthers, Senior Vice President and Director of Venetian and Plaza Operations, Sands China Ltd. "The Readers' Choice Awards are particularly important in the hospitality industry as they are a direct result of customers' experiences. We will continue to strive to exceed our guests' expectations at every level and to deliver unforgettable experiences for all our visitors."

REAL ESTATE MATTERS

The 25 questions you must ask as a tenant renting a property

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

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JULIET RISDON

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

It follows then that we should give these transactions the extra time and attention that they warrant, but this does not always happen. In many instances it isn't so much an issue of motivation, but rather not knowing the right questions to ask.

This series deals with key questions we can ask. Knowing the answers to these questions can help to avoid misunderstandings and, in many cases, will save time, money or both.

With the high costs and the potential happiness of your family at stake, it is natural to be concerned that you are both making a good decision and getting value for money.

The trouble is you may find yourself renting a property whilst starting a new job, moving your family to a new country and enrolling the kids in a new school all at the same time.

Of course it is important to do your homework about any potential property you are considering to rent, and with so many things going on you also have to remember to ask your agent the most important questions about the property you are considering.

The list below is in no particular order and is a suggested starting point to help identify which questions to ask.

How safe is it?

This question is often the major concern when people first arrive in Macau. They have heard stories about the dangers of living in Asia, and these stories combined with a natural fear of new environments play havoc with a persons mind.

In terms of crime, you will struggle to find many places safer than Macau. Crimes against the general population are rare, especially those of a violent nature.

However, crimes do happen occasionally of

course, so do take the time to do a security check. How secure is the external security door? Is there a security guard or video surveillance system? Does the front door feel safe to you... Is there a deadbolt?

If the apartment is on a low floor is there a cage over the windows?

These questions are important not just for your peace of mind, but also if you're getting renter's insurance, which you SHOULD do (contact your bank and they will be able to help you with an insurance policy).

Am I getting a good deal?

It's always a good idea to investigate comparative rates in a building.

If the apartment is more expensive or much cheaper than other apartments, it's better to ask "why" before moving in.

Another factor to look at is how quickly rental rates have gone up or down in the building.

If you like the building and rents have been increasing, you might want to consider a lease longer than two years that contains an increase in years three and four.

By agreeing to a rent increase you can at least have the certainty of staying in the building and apartment you enjoy for the term of the lease.

Can I actually afford this?

Excellent question!

A generally accepted rule is to spend no more than 35 percent of your after-tax income on housing expenses.

If take-home pay is MOP \$24,000 a month, that's MOP \$8,400 for rent and utilities.

This becomes a major factor as prices rise, and especially if you are also keeping another house overseas.

People do tend to stretch themselves a little thin and spend more than 35 percent on their housing costs.

It is of course a personal decision, but remem-

ber you still have other living costs to cover such as food and utilities.

Am I paying for a whole lot of amenities, and will I really use them?

Apartments offer a wide range of amenities to attract occupants.

The more expensive apartment buildings offer amenities like fitness facilities and pools, whilst other apartments might offer appliances such as washer/dryers and dishwashers in the unit.

Landlords often have to pay more and therefore charge more for these amenities, so it makes sense for potential tenants to consider carefully whether or not they will make use of them.

How much will it cost me to move in?

When you hear the monthly rent you might need to take a seat and catch your breath, but the move-in fees may in some cases cause permanent heart failure!

As a standard requirement, you will need the equivalent of four months rent when moving into a new apartment.

You will be paying for the current month's rent, and this will either be the 'pro-rata' amount if you are moving in midway through the month, or it will be a whole month's rent with the rent due on the moving-in date every month.

You will also need to pay a refundable security deposit usually equal to two months rent that is held by the landlord or representative in case of damages or breakages in the apartment.

Finally you will also be required to pay an Agency Fee / Finders Fee if you are using an agent to find an apartment, and this is usually equal to one month's rent.

A word of caution here on utilities: Some things may be covered in the rent, others not. Ask if cable TV and trash removal are covered? The tenants usually pay on a consumption basis for utilities.

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PROJECT POKER
BY ROY BHASIN

Approaching poker like a runner approaches a marathon

I just got home after a three-week trip to the PCA and traveling a bit around the US. While the whole trip was fantastic, I'd like to hone in on one particular part. Every year at the PCA we have our Team Pokers-tars Online meeting where we discuss our plans amongst one another and our team manager, and also get some great talks by professionals in the industry. This year one of the talks we received was by poker mental game coach Jared Tendler, and boy, was it great.

I have gotten some 1-on-1 coaching from Jared in the past, so I was a little weary as to whether or not I'd learn anything new from his talk. However any worries were quickly dismissed. Something that hit home the hardest was when he spoke about taking a slow and steady approach to poker playing and learning - similar to the approach a runner would take to training for a marathon. If you want to go from being able to run 5 kilometres to completing a half marathon you're going to need weeks and months of slowly increasing your distance until you hit your goal. After a bad 2014 I knew that I needed to apply this approach to my poker playing and learning.

So that's exactly what I have done. I created a chart just like a runner might have where each week and day is broken down with goals to hit. I segmented each day down into three parts - the number of hands I want to play, and the hours of study and

minutes of meditating I want to do. It's all slow progress. There is a couple of weeks where I will be going to India for my brother's wedding, so I planned for that. I won't be playing any poker but I will still meditate and put in a little bit of study so my game doesn't become stale. I have decided to take Sunday's off from playing poker. I put in one hour of study a day there which is likely to be watching a training video rather than intense study using software. In the past I have had issues with burn out where I focus too intensely on poker for too long a period and rest days are (again, just like with running) paramount, especially in staving off burnout for me.

You might notice the amount of work on my game. I intend to do and think it's a lot. I have never placed this high an importance on poker study and have always been able to just sit down and play hands and be successful. As the games get tougher though I am quickly learning how crucial it is to put in the hours away from the table. That's another thing I learnt while at PCA and while hanging out with players far more successful than I. It makes sense now why some people are crushing the highest stakes and others like me have had trouble breaking into them. I hope to overcome that hurdle this year and get back to the higher stakes PLO games - and with my plan in place I think I am putting myself in the best position I can to achieve my goals.

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Angola has 14 million mobile phone users



ANGOLA currently has about 14 million users of mobile networks, 3 million Internet users and over 400,000 users of multimedia libraries, said the Minister of Communications and Information Technology Wednesday in Luanda.

The population of Angola is 24 million people, according to the Census conducted in 2014.

Minister José Carvalho da Rocha, who gave the opening speech of the first Angolan Forum of Telecommunications and Information Technology in 2015, pointed out that the sector indicators on public policies for the area, as outlined in a White Paper, had an impact throughout Angola, notably

in areas where access was difficult.

Carvalho da Rocha said that, under the 2013/2017 National Development Program, there are goals that the sector should reach to make IT services more accessible to the population.

Economy Minister Abraão Gourgel closing the Forum, underlined the importance of telecommunications and information technologies, saying that as they evolve they reduce the cost of financial transactions, which

Angola has a population of 24 million

le boosting production at companies in various sectors of the economy.

He noted that companies now feel empowered to explore new activities and, as production processes become increasingly information intensive, so does the importance of this favorable effect. **MDT/Macauhub**

Mozambique is the gateway to Southern Africa, China Daily says

MOZAMBIQUE is a "gateway to the south of the African continent" with "unlimited natural resources," "an enviable location" and "new industries," according to a description given by state-run newspaper China Daily.

"Mozambique is a diamond waiting to be polished with the help of its main Asian partner, China," the newspaper said in a three-page supplement dedicated to that Portuguese-speaking African country.

Saying that Mozambique has large tracts of land available for agricultural production, "and so it should be simple to feed the population," the paper cites examples of Chinese companies, such as Wanbao Grains and Oils, which is investing USD200 million in rice production on a large scale in Gaza province, south of the country.

Paul Muxanga, CEO of the Cahora Bassa Hydroelectric Facility said, "we are delighted with the fact that China is supporting our economic development, given that our country offers exceptional conditions for investments."

The newspaper also refers to the investment of China State Grid Corporation that will be made in the construction of the South-Central power transmission line in partnership with Portuguese power grid company REN, which is the major shareholder, to connect the country's main hydropower facility to centres of consumption.

China supported Mozambican ruling party Frelimo in its fight against Portugal and was one of the first countries to establish diplomatic relations with Mozambique, on its day of independence, 25 June, 1975.

In 2014, two-way trade between China and Mozambique more than doubled, to US\$3,620 million, with a balance of US\$310 million in China's favour, according to statistics from the China Customs Service. **MDT/Macauhub**

ADVERTORIAL

THE WOW FACTOR

Exclusive brands form a circle of luxury around the Great Hall in Shoppes at Venetian. Fabulous products and exclusive pieces tantalise shoppers. Indulge in stunning jewellery from Tiffany & Co, Bulgari and Piaget, and the finest timepieces from master watchmakers Parmigiani, Montblanc, Rado, Omega, Breguet, Rolex and Franck Muller.



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Handmade Italian jewellery collections by Damiani have wowed the world over and the family-run company has gone on to collaborate with celebrities such as Isabella Rossellini, Brad Pitt, Gwyneth Paltrow and Sophia Loren. Discover the brand's striking jewels at Shoppes at Venetian.
Shop 006, Great Hall, Shoppes at Venetian



JAUQUET DROZ
Limited to just eight pieces, the exceptional Bird Repeater Geneva is the latest release from Jaquet Droz. Engravers, painters and enamellers have reproduced, in miniature, an exquisite pair of goldfinches set on a dial featuring Lake Geneva. Incredible mechanical genius means the timepiece boasts eight animations, paying tribute to the renowned humanoid automata created by Pierre Jaquet-Droz and his son.
Shop 005, Great Hall, Shoppes at Venetian



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Hilarious comedian Dwayne Perkins brings his acclaimed stand-up show to McSorley's Ale House on 22 March at 9pm, in partnership with Take Out Comedy. Don't miss the veteran comic who has performed on *Comedy Central* and *Conan*. Entry is free and tables can be booked by calling (853) 2882 8198
McSorley's Ale House, Shop 1038, Shoppes at Venetian



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Coal miners return to the surface after their eight hours shift at a coal mine in Gujiao in northern China's Shanxi province

Economic evolution causes small town upheaval

Joe McDonald
Business Writer, Gujiao

THIS city in China's northern coal country hardly looks like it is in trouble. After three decades fueling China's industrial boom, its wide, tree-lined avenues are filled with late model cars. Markets are crowded with people.

That activity masks malaise. Surging demand for coal that once propelled Gujiao and its 200,000 people is ebbing, and along with it the local economy.

"This year is impossible," said Li Qiumei, who sells fruit on the street. Wearing a parka and padded balaclava in the bright winter sunshine, she said her income has fallen by half since last year to about 50 yuan (USD8) a day.

Asked when she expects things to get better, Li shrugged and said, "I don't know."

From coal country to the export-driven manufacturing heartland of China's southeast, millions of people are enduring wrenching change. Beijing is trying to replace an

economic model that has run out of steam after delivering years of blistering growth based on trade and investment in construction and heavy industry.

Consumption of coal declined in 2014 for the first time in 14 years

The World Bank and other analysts say a shift to service industries and domestic consumer spending is unavoidable if the world's second-largest economy is to keep growing. The change could also help China cope with another cost of its boom: badly polluted air and water.

In Gujiao, 550 kilometers southwest of Beijing in Shanxi province, miner Fu Senjie said he still works the same eight- and 12-hour shifts but his pay has been cut by half compared with two years ago

to about 3,000 yuan (\$500) per month.

"I have considered switching industries, but right now all industries are bad," said Fu, smoking a cigarette as he sat on his bed in a room he shares in a company dormitory with two other miners.

Nationwide, last year's economic growth fell to a 24 year low of 7.4 percent. President Xi Jinping, invoking an American phrase, has dubbed this the "new normal." The ruling Communist Party this month announced its lowest ever target for annual economic growth at 7 percent, barely half of its explosive peak of 14.2 percent in 2007. The International Monetary Fund expects growth to decline further in coming years.

Conditions are worse in areas that relied on steelmaking and other heavy industries.

Coal mining, which employs 10.3 million people, has been hit especially hard. Consumption of coal declined in 2014 for the first time in 14 years. Shanxi was China's top coal producer last year and repor-

ted its slowest growth at just 4.9 percent.

Chinese leaders have promised to generate new jobs by opening more of the state-dominated economy to private business. But they have yet to cut back monopolies and other privileges for politically favored government companies that reform advocates say are a drag on development.

"The progress is modest and gradual, and still quite small compared to what is needed," said RBS economist Louis Kuijs.

One-industry towns such as Gujiao that grew up as centers for manufacturing or mining are expected to develop a mix of retailing, technology, tourism and other businesses.

Gujiao's mayor announced ambitious plans last year to develop "new energy" industries such as solar panel manufacturing. That will be a tall order for a town in an isolated river valley with no background in technology.

Across China, labor tensions have soared as construction

companies and manufacturers cut jobs or close.

In Taiyuan, the Shanxi provincial capital and the home of the China Coal Museum, a 47-year-old woman was killed in December when police fought with laid-off workers who were demanding unpaid wages at a construction site.

In southeastern Guangdong province, a wave of factory closures has led to at least 205 strikes or protests by laid-off workers since August over unpaid wages, according to the China Labour Bulletin, a research group in Hong Kong. In many cases police beat and detained protesters.

Fu, a second-generation miner, said he came to Gujiao in 2013 after a two-year course in mining technology in his hometown east of the provincial capital. He said all 270 of his classmates went to work in coal mines.

Fu said the industry in his hometown is so anemic that at some pits two miners share one job, working alternate months. He said one former co-worker in Gujiao got a job in a pharmacy but most see no alternative to mining.

"If I work at the mine, I get a salary," Fu said.

In hopes of encouraging households to spend, Beijing is allowing wages to rise.

Domestic consumption, a pillar of Beijing's plan, accounted for just over half of economic growth last year for the first time, according to government data.

But uncertainty about the future, as well as a need to save for school fees and medical emergencies, prompts many households to avoid spending any pay increases.

"People's consumption is lagging," said Zuo Aijun, a 32-year-old truck driver at a Gujiao mine who has started a string of small businesses on the side.

Five days a week, he works eight hours a day at the mine for 3,000 yuan (\$485) a month, then another six hours at his own businesses, making up to 4,000 yuan (\$650) on the side.

Zuo is confident his family will do well but realistic about the challenge of encouraging his new customers to spend.

"People feel they need to keep money in their pocket as insurance," he said. AP

10.3m

Coal mining employs
10.3 million people in
China

Didi Tang, Beijing

IT'S China's biggest public political event of the year, but with little in the way of debate to report, local media have resorted to issuing photo galleries of attractive journalists or delegates who dance ballet to relieve their fatigue.

Much of the National People's Congress coverage looks more like celebrity-watching than political journalism, and many members of the Chinese public are increasingly disenchanted over their lack of involvement in an annual legislature that does little to hold the government to account.

Instead, they see congressional delegates not only endorsing, but raving about, the summary of past successes and directives for the future contained in the annual "work report" of the Communist Party-controlled government.

"Everyone expresses full support for the document but never questions its inadequacies or raises doubts. They are not fulfilling their duties as people's representatives, but have come to Beijing simply to attend a study session for 10 days or so," said Beijing-based historian and independent commentator Zhang Lifan.

Since Premier Li Keqiang delivered the report at the opening of the congress on March 5, the key activity of the 2,964 delegates has been to gather in groups to evaluate it before the close of the session on March 15.

There have been no disapproving voices. Delegates have enthusiastically commended the report as pragmatic, innovative, reassuring and inspiring. State media echo those remarks.

A popular joke circulating in China's social media this year is that the Communist Party is its own drama critic, and that the congress is a show "written, directed, performed — and praised" by the party.

Delegates can abstain or vote "no" on the work report, which is considered embarrassing to the leadership, though those votes are always a tiny minority with no sway over any outcome.

Nobody illustrates the rubberstamp nature of the legislature better than Shen Jilan, 85, from the northern province of Shanxi. She has served in every National People's Congress since the founding of the People's Republic of China and takes pride in the fact that she has never voted "no" since becoming a delegate in 1954.

"To be a people's delegate is to listen to the party, and I have never cast a 'no' vote," Shen has been quoted as saying in state media reports.

RUBBER STAMP LEGISLATURE

Beijing's biggest public political event - is it relevant?



Chinese photographers take pictures as a group of attendants pose for photos on the steps of the Great Hall of the People during a plenary session of the National People's Congress in Beijing

Shanghai accountant Zhu Yin is typical of many Chinese in saying she feels no connection to the congress or its delegates.

She said she has pressing issues for which she'd like their help, including transferring her mother's social insurance benefits to another location. But she added, "I don't even know how to contact a delegate."

■ Much of the National People's Congress coverage looks more like celebrity watching than political journalism

Shi Gaole, a salesman for an electrical company, said he has never voted for a delegate and believes they are selected from famous people. "I don't know who designates them to be delegates, and I do not want to know," Shi said.

The vast majority are drawn

from the Communist Party, though about a fifth are from token parties that give the legislature a veneer of diversity. It's supposed to be a forum for bringing concerns of the provinces to the leadership, but often appears more of a top-down event disseminating the leadership's priorities.

That top-down nature has only expanded under party leader and President Xi Jinping, who has consolidated his powers at the expense of other institutions, including the NPC, said Ming Xia, a political scientist at City University of New York who studies China's legislative system.

The congress has become increasingly detached from the public, and its makeup of businesspeople, government officials and party members has become increasingly elite, Xia said.

The full NPC rarely votes on legislation; six of the 10 most recent sessions did not have a single bill on their agenda. This year's session, which includes an amendment to a procedural law, is among the exceptions.

China's Constitution grants legislative powers both to the NPC and its Standing Committee, a much smaller group of about 150 members who are

much more tightly controlled by the Communist Party.

That committee, which meets all year, deals with most legislation. For instance, it is handling an anti-terror bill that has drawn concerns of foreign governments over plans for China to demand keys to encryption of secure communications.

Some news does emerge from the congress' stage-managed proceedings at Beijing's Great Hall of the People, including the government's economic growth target for the coming year — this year pegged at 7 percent, down from 7.5 percent last year.

The session also offers a rare chance for foreign reporters to question government ministers, including the premier. However, government officials work behind the scenes with reporters to vet their questions ahead of time, and only those with pre-screened questions are called upon at the news conferences.

Proposals perennially popular with the public, such requiring public officials to disclose their assets, never gain traction in the legislature.

To try to keep the public interested, state media have issued photo galleries of good-looking female journalists — including foreign ones for an

exotic flavor — and of young, pretty waitresses who arrange the delegates' teacups in perfect lines. Delegates taking selfies have been prominent this year, as have images of female delegates dancing ballet in a group.

Over the weekend, the official Xinhua News Agency carried articles by a reporter who showed unapologetic admiration for legislative spokeswoman Fu Ying, calling her a "goddess."

Another Xinhua reporter expressed her excitement at interviewing Chen Daoming, an aloof celebrity actor who serves on the NPC's top advisory panel, which meets concurrently with the legislature in Beijing. The reporter gushed that Chen not only agreed to be interviewed but helped her edit her story, line by line — an admission that drew derision online over the journalistic integrity of state media reporters.

Columnist Song Zhibiao wrote in an article circulating online that state media reporters unable to write about anything substantial were resorting to vignettes.

"When there is nothing to report but you must keep up the appearance of liveliness, vignette reporting is the best genre of news," Song said. AP

AUSTRALIA

Gov't investigating if teen among IS suicide bombers

Kristen Gelineau, Sydney

AUSTRALIA'S government was trying to confirm reports that an Australian teenager was among a group of suicide bombers from the Islamic State movement that struck Iraq's embattled Anbar province.

The Islamic State group claimed in an online statement that it used foreign fighters from Australia, Belgium, Syria and Uzbekistan in Wednesday's attack, in which at least 13 suicide car bombs exploded almost simultaneously in Ramadi, the provincial capital of Anbar, killing two soldiers and wounding eight. One photo that was posted featured a white van driving down a dusty street, alongside an image of a young man who closely resembles 18-year-old Australian Jake Bilardi sitting behind the wheel.

"I can confirm that we're seeking to independently verify that he was part of this suicide bombing attack," Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said yesterday. "The news appears very grim, but we are seeking to independently verify it."

The British press labeled Bi-



In this Sunday, March 30, 2014, file photo, Islamic State group militants hold up their flag as they patrol in a commandeered Iraqi military vehicle in Fallujah

lardi the "White Jihadi" in December after images of him armed with a rifle in front of Islamic flags appeared on social media sites.

The teen left his home in the southern Australian city of Melbourne in August and headed to the Middle East. Bishop said he

had been on Australia's radar for several months, and in October, she canceled his passport on the advice of the country's security agencies.

Last year, the Australian government passed sweeping counterterrorism legislation that made it easier for officials

to cancel the passports of people they suspect of engaging in extremism. The law also makes it a crime for Australians to visit certain terrorism hot spots overseas.

"If these reports are confirmed, this is another tragic example of a young Australian

being lured to a senseless and violent death by a brutal terrorist organization that is intent on imposing suffering and misery not only in Iraq and in Syria, but beyond," Bishop said.

Bishop would not comment on an unreported report by the Australian Broadcasting Corp. that said Bilardi had left a series of homemade bombs in his Melbourne home before leaving for the Middle East. The ABC reported that Bilardi's family found the devices after he left and alerted authorities, who then began tracking his movements overseas.

Victoria state police later said in a statement that they first learned about Bilardi when he was reported missing in late 2014. While searching his home, police found chemicals that could be used to construct an explosive device — but no actual devices were found.

At least 90 Australians are currently fighting with and supporting terrorist groups in Iraq and Syria, and more than 20 have already been killed, Bishop said. They are among about 100 whose passports have been canceled to prevent them joining militants or from returning home.

More than 30 fighters have returned to Australia and at least 140 people in Australia are actively supporting extremist groups, according to the government.

Two Australia-born brothers aged 16 and 17 were stopped at Sydney Airport last week on suspicion they were heading to join Islamic State fighters. **AP**

Rod McGuirk, Canberra

AUSTRALIA has offered to cover Indonesia's costs for keeping two Australian heroin traffickers in prison for life if Jakarta grants permanent stays of execution, the foreign minister said yesterday.

Australia is lobbying hard to prevent the executions by firing squad of Australians Andrew Chan, 31, and Myuran Sukumaran, 33. They are among nine foreign drug convicts plus an Indonesian who are to be executed soon on Nusakambangan Island prison off the main island of Java.

The offer to pay for the prisoners' keep was made by Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop last week in a letter to her Indonesian counterpart Retno Marsudi and reported by The West Australian newspaper yesterday.

Bishop confirmed the offer was among several suggestions of alternatives to executions.

"We haven't had a specific response to that suggestion," Bishop told reporters.

The letter, seen by The Associated Press, proposes a prisoner exchange in which the Australians would be swapped for three Indonesian drug traffickers held in Australian prisons.

"The Australian government would be prepared to cover the costs of the ongoing life imprisonment of Mr. Chan and Mr. Sukumaran should a transfer not be possible," Bishop wrote.

In a response dated Sunday, also seen by AP, Marsudi wrote that President Jokowi Widodo "is of the position that such an exchange cannot be undertaken."

Also yesterday in Jakarta, the High Administrative Court adjourned a hearing on an appeal by the Australian pair until March 19 because of a lack of proper paperwork. Presiding Judge Ujang Abdullah said state prosecutors who were to have

Australia offers to pay for 2 prisoners' keep in Indonesia



Australian death-row prisoners Myuran Sukumaran, right and Andrew Chan, left

represented President Widodo failed to present authorization letters signed by the president and attorney general.

Lawyers for the Australians have appealed to the high court, arguing that Widodo's refusal to grant clemency did not give proper and individual consideration to their

applications. A Jakarta court dismissed the appeal last month, ruling that clemency is a prerogative of the president.

Bishop also said that an inquiry into alleged corruption of the Australians' trial judges was another legal avenue open to the pair.

"A Judicial Commission

has invited Mr. Chan, Mr. Sukumaran and their original lawyer to make statements in a matter relating to alleged corruption of the trial judges," she wrote.

"These are serious allegations and I request that your government accord due legal process and institute a pause in the execution preparations until

these two important processes have been completed," she added.

A senior Indonesian official on Tuesday warned Australia to tone down its criticism of the planned executions, saying Canberra should be grateful to Indonesia for keeping asylum seekers away from Australian shores.

The minister for political, legal and security affairs, Tedjo Edy Purdjianto, said at a seminar that if about 10,000 migrants who have been stopped in Indonesia from reaching Australia were allowed to proceed, "there will be a human tsunami in Australia."

Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott responded Wednesday by saying he isn't picking fights with anyone. **AP**

USA

2 officers shot at protest outside Ferguson police station



A protester yells at police outside the Ferguson Police Department, Wednesday, March 11, 2015, in Ferguson, Mo.

Jim Slater, Ferguson

TWO officers were shot in front of the Ferguson Police Department early yesterday, authorities said, as demonstrators gathered after the resignation of the city's police chief in the wake of a scathing Justice Department report alleging bias in the police department and court system.

A 32-year-old officer from nearby Webster Groves was shot in the face and a 41-year-old officer from St. Louis County was shot in the shoulder, St. Louis County Police Chief Jon Belmar said at a news conference. Both were taken to a hospital, where Belmar said

they were conscious, but he described their injuries as "serious."

"I don't know who did the shooting, to be honest with you," Belmar said, adding that he could not provide a description of the suspect or gun.

He said his "assumption" was that, based on where the officers were standing and the trajectory of the bullets, "these shots were directed exactly at my officers."

The shots were fired shortly after midnight as protesters were gathered following the resignation of embattled Ferguson Police Chief Thomas Jackson on Wednesday. Before the shooting, some at the protest were chanting to show they weren't

satisfied with the resignations of Jackson and City Manager John Shaw earlier in the week, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported.

The protest was a familiar scene in Ferguson, which saw similar and much larger demonstrations after the shooting death of black 18-year-old Michael Brown last summer by city police officer Darren Wilson. When Wilson, who is white, was cleared in November by a state grand jury, the decision set off further protests, looting and fires. Wednesday was the first time an officer at a protest had been shot.

After the shooting, officers with guns and in riot gear circled the station, and more than a dozen

squad cars blocked the street.

Jackson was the sixth employee to resign or be fired after a Justice Department report last week cleared Wilson of civil rights charges in the shooting. Wilson has since resigned. A separate Justice Department report released the same day found a profit-driven court system and widespread racial bias in the city police department.

Mayor James Knowles III announced Wednesday that the city had reached a mutual separation agreement with Jackson that will pay Jackson one year of his nearly USD96,000 annual salary and health coverage. Jackson's resignation becomes effective March 19.

Jackson had previously resisted calls by protesters and some of Missouri's top elected leaders to step down over his handling of Brown's shooting and the weeks of protests that followed. He was widely criticized from the outset, both for an aggressive police response to protesters and for his agency's erratic and infrequent releases of key information.

During a 12-minute news conference, Knowles said Jackson resigned after "a lot of soul-searching" about how the community could heal from the racial unrest stemming from the fatal shooting last summer.

"The chief is the kind of honorable man you don't have to go to," Knowles said. "He comes to you when he knows that this is something we have to seriously discuss." AP

RUSSIA

BBC: Nemtsov's daughter says Putin to blame for death



The daughter of Russian opposition politician Boris Nemtsov says that President Vladimir Putin is "politically" responsible for her father's death. In an interview in Italy with the BBC, Zhanina Nemtsova said that her father was "a critic of Putin, he fought with Putin, with nobody else," and said she blamed the president for his death. "After his death the opposition is beheaded and everybody is frightened," she said. The killing of the 55-year-old Nemtsov, who was shot dead near the Kremlin in late February, has infuriated the opposition, which sees Putin as responsible for his death. Five people have been detained and two of them charged for carrying out the killing, though Nemtsov's colleagues worry that whoever ordered his murder may not be found. The interview was broadcast Wednesday night.

VENEZUELA

Congress OKs president's decree powers



Venezuela's Congress has approved President Nicolas Maduro's request for expanded powers, which he says he needs to protect the socialist South American country from U.S. "imperialism." Maduro's request to enact laws for up to six months without consulting Congress was given initial approval by lawmakers Tuesday. It's expected to gain final approval Sunday. Opponents say the law further erodes the rule of law in the deeply polarized nation. Maduro requested the powers after Washington imposed sanctions Monday on a handful of top Venezuelan officials accused of human rights violations. He says he would use them to ensure Venezuela is never caught off guard by threats posed by the U.S. government. He was first granted decree powers shortly after taking office in 2013. Those expired last year.

SYRIA

Aid groups criticize UN Security Council over humanitarian crisis

Ryan Lucas, Beirut

MORE than 20 international aid groups sharply criticized the United Nations Security Council yesterday, saying it has failed to implement three resolutions passed last year seeking to boost humanitarian assistance to Syrian civilians caught in the country's civil war.

The 21 humanitarian and human rights organizations delivered a "failing grade" for world powers and the broader international community as Syria's uprising against President Bashar Assad entered its fifth year. The conflict, which began with peaceful protests before escalating into a voracious civil war, has touched off a devastating humanitarian crisis that has engulfed the broader region.



Syrian refugee children play in the backyard of the Al-Rama Public School that has become home to 22 Syrian families at the Lebanese-Syrian border village of al-Rama, north Lebanon

Since the conflict began, more than 220,000 people have been killed and 1 million wounded. Nearly 4 million Syrians have fled and registered as refugees in neighboring countries, while another 7.6 million people are displaced inside Syria. All told, an estimated 12.2 million Syrians are in need of humanitarian assistance, according to the U.N.

The spiraling crisis spurred the Security Council — usually paralyzed by divisions on Syria — to pass three resolutions last year aiming to increase humanitarian aid. The latest resolution, approved unanimously in December, extended cross-border aid deliveries to Syrians in rebel-held areas without approval from Damascus.

But the aid groups say diplomacy has not translated into action on the ground. AP

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 S2
22:10	Brazil Avenue
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Europa League Highlights
23:45	Portuguese Movie
00:50	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

SATURDAY

10:20	Documentary Serie
10:40	Young Adult
11:30	Conch Bay
12:20	Cooking
13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	Soap Opera
19:00	Contest
20:00	Miscellaneous
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:10	Drama
22:10	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
15:40	Miscellaneous
16:30	Miscellaneous
17:00	Miscellaneous
17:15	Miscellaneous
18:40	Miscellaneous
19:30	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

FIFA EXPELS ZIMBABWE FROM 2018 WORLD CUP QUALIFYING

Zimbabwe was thrown out of 2018 World Cup qualifying yesterday for failing to pay its national team coach.

FIFA's disciplinary committee said it took the action "as a result of the non-payment of an outstanding debt" by Zimbabwe's soccer federation to coach Jose Claudinei Georgini.

The decision was announced just as the first match in the global World Cup qualifying program was kicking off in Asia. East Timor beat Mongolia 4-1.

Zimbabwe's removal spoils FIFA's recent claim of a first qualifying campaign where all its member federations would play.

Zimbabwe was initially ordered by FIFA to pay the Brazilian coach in August 2012. Disciplinary proceedings were later opened against the Zimbabwe Football Association on the request of Claudinei, FIFA said.

In April 2013, ZIFA was given 60 days to pay half the amount it owed Claudinei, and 120 days to pay the full amount.

cinema



CINETEATRO

12 MAR - 18 MAR



CINDERELLA

ROOM 1

2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Kenneth Branagh

Starring: Lily James, Richard Madden, Cate Blanchett

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 112min

CHAPPIE

ROOM 2

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: Neil Blomkamp

Starring: Sharlito Copley, Dev Patel, Hugh Jackman

Language: Cantonese (English and Chinese)

Duration: 120min



THE BOY NEXT DOOR

ROOM 3

2.15, 4.00, 7.45, 9.30 pm

Director: Rob Cohen

Starring: Jennifer Lopez, Ryan Guzman, John Corbett

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 91min

STAND BY ME DORAEMON

ROOM 3

(3D) 7.30 pm

Language: Cantonese (Chinese)

Duration: 95min

MACAU TOWER

05 MAR - 18 MAR

CHAPPIE

2.30, 4.30, 7.00, 9.30 pm

Director: Neil Blomkamp

Starring: Sharlito Copley, Dev Patel, Hugh Jackman

Language: Cantonese (English and Chinese)

Duration: 120min



this day in history



1983 NKOMO FLEES ZIMBABWE 'DEATH THREATS'

The embattled leader of Zimbabwe's opposition party, Joshua Nkomo, has flown into London as his country appears to be teetering on the brink of civil war.

Mr Nkomo, leader of the Zimbabwe African People's Union (Zapu) party, says he was forced to flee from Zimbabwe because his life was in danger. Troops from the Fifth Brigade have sealed off his power base in the Ndebele people's stronghold of Bulawayo.

Ethnic tensions between the Ndebele and Shona tribes within Zimbabwe have been rising since President Robert Mugabe accused Mr Nkomo of attempting to overthrow his government last year.

Mr Nkomo told a news conference, held at midnight in Bulawayo last Sunday (a week ago), the soldiers had been sent to assassinate him. He also claimed the North Korean-trained troops had killed his chauffeur and ransacked his home.

He has previously denounced the Fifth Brigade as a "political army" because they are mostly made up of Shona tribesmen supporting the ruling Zanu-PF party.

The day after his news conference, he fled - first to Botswana by crossing a deserted part of the border in a Land Rover. The Botswana Government issued a brief statement saying Mr Nkomo had temporarily left Zimbabwe to try to resolve the country's problems.

He was clearly not welcome in Botswana and travelled to South Africa, to take a plane from Johannesburg to Heathrow airport.

The 66-year-old veteran was questioned for an hour by officials at Heathrow airport before he was allowed into the country. He has been told his stay is only temporary.

His arrival will be an embarrassment to the British Government, which is anxious to maintain good relations with the Zimbabwe government of Robert Mugabe.

Despite being ordered not to get involved in political activities, Mr Nkomo immediately held a news conference at Heathrow.

"It is absolutely vital that everything is done to try to solve the problem of that country and be able to minimise the violence that has now found us in this grave situation," he said.

"There is nothing that will make me not go back to that country."

Zimbabwe's information minister insisted Mr Nkomo's safety was assured - but said meaningful talks could happen only if he returned to Harare.

Mr Nkomo's outspoken comments are likely to enhance his position as the patriarch of black nationalism in Zimbabwe.

Zipra - the military wing of Zapu - is believed to be regrouping in Matabeleland against Mr Mugabe's government.

Hundreds of men are said to have left their homes in the past few weeks to join up. There is little doubt they have access to large quantities of arms.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Nkomo returned to Zimbabwe to fight in the country's first post-independence elections in 1980.

His party lost to Robert Mugabe's Zanu-PF, but in an effort at healing past rivalries, his Zapu party was invited to join a coalition government and he became Home Affairs minister.

In 1982, Zapu was accused of hatching a plot to overthrow the government and Mr Nkomo was fired.

Mistrust between the two sides escalated to the point where Mr Nkomo was forced into exile.

The two rivals finally settled their differences in 1987 when Mr Nkomo became one of two vice presidents.

Many in Matabeleland saw him as having sold out. Despite his deteriorating health he kept up the attacks on whites for not becoming assimilated as true Zimbabweans.

He died in 1999.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Try to go slower — today is all about taking care and making sure that everything goes right. Your people may be impatient, but you can tell them that it's better to avoid mistakes for now.

Taurus
April 20-May 20
You may meet a new spiritual adviser today — though they may be thoroughly untraditional! It could be anyone from a new crush to a quiet person at work to someone asking for spare change.

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21
Your head is swimming — but it's not an intellectual failure! Your energy is just out of sync with the ideas you have to confront, but you should be back in the game in a couple of days at the most.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Does it feel like nobody understands you today? That may be at least partially true — so it's likely a good time for you to hunker down and focus on your own needs and projects.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Someone near you needs help — so make sure that you've got your eyes (and heart) open! It's a good time to get your friends to pitch in, too, as your leadership qualities are in focus.

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22
Your ambition isn't getting the better of you — it's leading the way and making sure that you are taking life seriously! It's a great time for you to step up and challenge yourself in a new way.

Libra
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
Your nostalgia is a powerful force today — but that may not be positive! Try not to let yourself get wrapped up in worries over what could have been. Today can be a delight if you let it!

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
It's the best day to start something new — especially if it involves signing a contract or otherwise entering into a formal agreement. You can feel the urge to set down roots take over!

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
It's a funny sort of day for you, and you may find it harder than usual to reconcile your deeper needs with your more immediate concerns. That's okay — things should shake out for the best in the long run!

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Your accomplishments are legendary, and today shows how great you can be when it comes to making a real difference in the world. You may be in the spotlight, but you've earned your place there!

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
You don't seem to understand today's big drama — and that's fine! Sometimes you just have to act on instinct without worrying too much about what's really going on with your people.

Pisces
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
A leader appears today — could it be you? Your energy is just right for taking command, but that doesn't mean you feel like it, or even that you're the best possible candidate. Keep your eyes clear.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

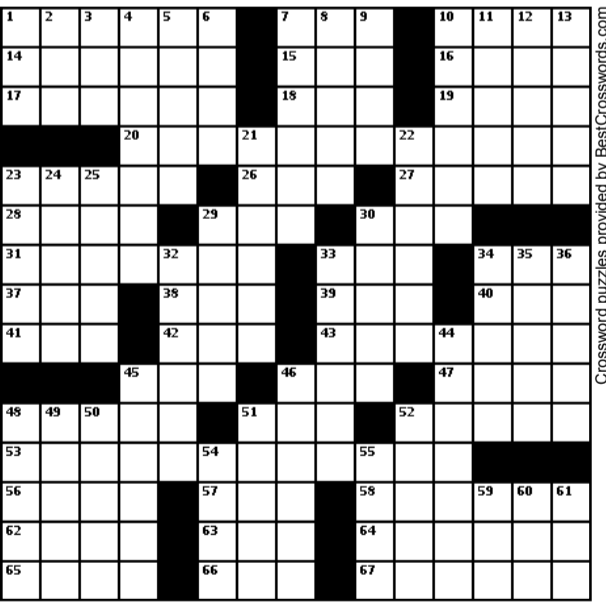
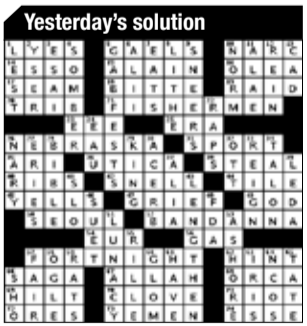
WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-4	12	clear/cloudy
Harbin	-10	-3	flurry/snow
Tianjin	0	11	clear/cloudy
Urumqi	-3	1	cloudy/sleet
Xi'an	4	20	clear
Lhasa	-2	16	clear
Chengdu	8	20	cloudy
Chongqing	9	22	cloudy/clear
Kunming	8	26	clear
Nanjing	2	17	cloudy/clear
Shanghai	5	16	cloudy/clear
Wuhan	3	19	clear
Hangzhou	5	17	overcast/cloudy
Taipei	15	19	heavy rain
Guangzhou	12	15	drizzle
Hong Kong	14	16	drizzle/cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-3	4	flurry/drizzle
Frankfurt	0	9	clear
Paris	0	14	clear
London	7	11	drizzle
New York	1	9	cloudy/clear

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Small burrowing rodent; 7- Conductance unit; 10- Of the highest quality; 14- Very; 15- 007 creator Fleming; 16- Watchful one; 17- Surrender by deed; 18- Deli bread; 19- Dies ___; 20- Secondly; 23- Hackneyed; 26- Solo of "Star Wars"; 27- Surmise; 28- Shout; 29- Intent; 30- Floor covering; 31- Patella; 33- Little one; 34- Filled pastry crust; 37- Dusk, to Donne; 38- Before, of yore; 39- Numbered rd.; 40- Bambi's aunt; 41- Nor. neighbor; 42- Rocky hilltop; 43- Polite agreement; 45- Caterer's coffeepot; 46- Chat room chuckle; 47- Writer Sarah ___ Jewett; 48- Joe of "Hill Street Blues"; 51- Former coin of France; 52- City on the Rhone; 53- Gossip; 56- Neighbor of Sask.; 57- Unburden; 58- Salty; 62- Rich soil; 63- Flamenco cry; 64- Top of the head of a bird; 65- French 101 verb; 66- Brit. lexicon; 67- Grunts;

DOWN: 1- Neth. neighbor; 2- Night before; 3- Sleep stage; 4- Stiff coarse hair; 5- Point in question; 6- "Stay" singer Lisa; 7- Sister of Moses; 8- "Surprise Symphony" composer; 9- Dedicated to the ___ Love; 10- Capital of Lebanon; 11- Eagle's nest; var.; 12- Closes; 13- Low cards; 21- Black eye; 22- Playing marbles; 23- Little ones; 24- Continue a subscription; 25- Actress Graff; 29- Brother of Moses; 30- Highway stop; 32- Gasoline; 33- Audition; 34- Bit of wisdom; 35- Foolish; 36- Chair designer Charles; 44- Sour cherry; 45- Wild; 46- Full; 48- Stagnant; 49- Guide; 50- Essential oil; 51- Subway turner; 52- Actor Delon; 54- Switch ending; 55- Cookbook amts.; 59- Comparative suffix; 60- Crackpot; 61- Dash lengths;



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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<p>La Bahia Studio Apartment Macau Studio Apartment 5 Stars Condo HKD 16,500 / 434 sq ft Ref: 15020470</p>	<p>The Manhattan, Unit D Taipa Taipa 4 Bedrooms Apartment Luxury Residence HKD 36,000 / 2,488 sq ft Ref: 15015429</p>	<p>Plum Court Ocean Gardens, Taipa 2 Bedrooms Apartment Viewing by Appointment HKD 20,000 / 1,290 sq ft Ref: 15020467</p>	<p>Tou Un Taipa 1 Bedroom Apartment Great Location HKD 12,500 / 686 sq ft Ref: 14050418</p>

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TEMPTATIONS

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FOOTBALL

After Chelsea's exit, English clubs face European humbling

EXITING the Champions League was painful for Jose Mourinho but there was no sense of injustice. The Chelsea manager was uncharacteristically restrained, with no attempt to excuse an abject performance against a Paris Saint-Germain side reduced to 10 men for most yesterday's game.

Chelsea lacked defensive organization and attacking resolve against the French league's second-place team. And Mourinho was left questioning the mental strength of his players, who have forged a five-point lead in the Premier League but couldn't beat a team shorn of striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic after half an hour.

"When a team cannot defend two corners and concedes two goals from the corners, that team doesn't deserve to win," Mourinho said after the 2-2 draw which sent PSG through on away goals with the 3-3 aggregate result.

"I think we couldn't cope with that pressure."

Mourinho was echoing Arsene

Wenger's assessment of Arsenal after the north London club crumbled 3-1 at home to another French side, Monaco, in their round of 16 first leg.

Unlike Chelsea, Arsenal still has a chance of qualifying for the quarterfinals next week. So does Manchester City, which trails Barcelona 2-1.

But faced with those tough away assignments in Europe, City and Arsenal also find themselves playing for the reputation of the Premier League.

The English topflight has never been stronger as a business, with its financial firepower reinforced by a new \$8 billion, three-year deal for domestic television rights sealed last month.

Premier League chief executive Richard Scudamore celebrated the windfall by predicting it will "make our clubs even more competitive against our European counterparts."

It is an optimistic outlook. English clubs have been declining as a force in Europe even though their bank balances have been swelled by Premier League cash. **AP**

RUGBY | 6N

France coach makes 8 changes to face Italy, after loss to Wales



Wales' Jamie Roberts is tackled by France's Morgan Parra

FRANCE coach Philippe Saint-Andre has shaken up his side by making eight changes from the team which lost 20-13 at home to Wales for Sunday's trip to play Italy — although four are injury swaps.

Saint-Andre was scathing after the Wales defeat, ripping into his players and even mocking them for their tendency to easily give away points by saying France has become the "Father Christmas" of international rugby.

Saint-Andre has handed debuts

to winger Noa Nakaitaci and No. 8 Loann Goujon.

Flyhalf Camille Lopez, whose erratic kicking and poor handling often put France on the back foot against Wales, keeps his place.

South-African born Scott Spedding returns at fullback in place of Brice Dulin; there are two injury replacements at center with Maxime Mermoz coming in for Remi Lamerat and Gael Fickou in for Wesley Fofana; and scrumhalf Sebastien Tillous-Borde replaces the injured Morgan Parra.

In the forwards, veteran Nicolas Mas returns at prop while Alexandre Flanquart is selected at lock.

No. 8 Damien Chouly, lock Romain Taofifenua and prop Rabah Slimani drop to the bench.

Dulin, who was disappointing against the Welsh despite scoring his side's only try, has been left out of the squad.

Nakaitaci replaces Sofiane Guitoune, who is also out injured.

The combative Parra, who was one of the only France players who did well against Wales, will miss the rest of the Six Nations after being ruled out for at least more two months with a knee injury.

France opened its campaign with a scrappy 15-8 win against Scotland and then lost 18-11 in Ireland.

Saint-Andre has been criticized for failing to produce a side capable of showing flair — with only two tries scored in three matches — and he snapped after the Wales defeat, turning the tables on his players.

France concludes its Six Nations campaign away to England on March 21. **AP**



13th March, 2015

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NATURE CALLS

I don't seem to have the words. My language appears foreign to others. I speak, they apparently understand but it doesn't elicit an appropriate response. I'm environmentally aware and becoming more radically greener as a consequence of the affluent world around me becoming less so. To be carbon neutral is easier said than done. And it's becoming harder to explain why I do what I do without looking eccentric.

I'd thought people had got the message by now and been educated about the importance of minimising their individual carbon footprint. It's simply about utilising a minimum level of resources in our daily lives. The message is harder to deliver to people in communities more recently developed, such as in China or Macau, especially when the economies have developed rapidly and citizens have other priorities. Development uses resources, but at some point the use can become wasteful; we can suffer affluenza. After all, that's what luxury is – unnecessary consumption.

A recent trip to USA left me perturbed. This is the country that has contributed most to overall global carbon emissions, but also as a well-educated and developed nation, it should be well on its way to sustainable consumerism. I'd learnt from an earlier trip that it was difficult to purchase coffee in a cup that wasn't destined for landfill. This time, I was prepared and took my own KeepCup® on my travels. (KeepCup is a Melbourne-originated global initiative for behavioural change within our convenience coffee-culture.) The reusable cup is barista standard size, so most cafes happily fill it with my morning dose, some even offering a BYO discount. But in the States, on the 1/7th Strip, I came across a problem at a café in the Venetian. Apparently, officious health regulations wouldn't allow the barista to make the coffee in my precious KeepCup. However, they suggested, they could make it in their throw-away cup and I could transfer it to my own. Glory be! How to defeat two purposes: health regulatory intent and environmental protection! Lost for words, I did without that morning.

And at Starbucks, Universal Studios a week or so earlier, I'd not brought my cup, but on billboards they advertise their coffee in real ceramic vessels. I'd have one of those, I said. The barista wasn't keen to provide me with a 'real cup' as they often get stolen and he'd have his wages docked if I absconded. I promised to sit within view and he let me do without the ubiquitous symbol of the throw-away culture.

My problem remains that I don't have the words: Not the words to explain to teenage guests why taking more food than needed and tossing the remainder is not only wasteful but disrespectful to host, cook, farmer and the animal that was grown for our consumption. They are taught about global poverty, saving the environment and sustainability but don't make the connection to their own lives and behaviours. Not the words to offer a 15-second sound bite to supermarket check-out staff why when I bring my own bags, I don't want my dairy foods wrapped in yet more plastic. Not the words to explain to dear friends why I'd prefer not to join them for dinner if the choice is buffet. Not the words to explain why an imperfect moth-nibbled local pear is far superior to the unblemished, polished one carted hundreds of miles and delivered to a refrigerated shelf on a plastic-wrapped polystyrene tray: And, bananas and oranges, don't they come in their own wrapping? Not the words to express my disgust at the mountains of packaging that go into my bins each month; each week; each day. Not the words to protest against what our love affair with plastic coffee pods says about our values (Nespresso, a "Design for Unsustainability" abomination: 28 billion sold in 2013. The nearest used-capsule collection point is IFC Mall, HK - not so convenient.)

I will eventually find the words and the sound-bites. I will find a way to leave my foot-print, just not a carbon one. But I might need a little help.

THE BUZZ VIRGIN FOUNDER: FORMER CRUISE CEO'S LAWSUIT WITHOUT MERIT

Virgin Group founder Richard Branson says a USD300 million lawsuit filed against the company by a former cruise line executive has no merit.

London-based Virgin released its statement yesterday, one day after former Norwegian Cruise Line CEO Colin Veitch accused the company and Branson in the lawsuit of stealing his ideas and business plan for a new Virgin cruise company. Virgin announced in December it will start a cruise

line. Virgin says it has been talking with many different entities about the cruise business since the 1970s.

Veitch's lawsuit contends Virgin reneged on a May 2011 agreement with him over how estimated profits would be split. Veitch would get nothing if two 4,200-passenger "ultra" ships were not profitable but could earn \$315 million if projections were met.

BOXING

Mayweather, Pacquiao begin countdown to the biggest fight ever

MANNY Pacquiao was Mout walking the red carpet by the time Floyd Mayweather Jr. arrived, fashionably late for their first appearance together to promote a fight that really needs no promoting.

But it didn't take long yesterday for Mayweather to put the fight into perspective in a way that only a fighter nicknamed "Money" can.

"You get to this level where you're making nine figures in 36 minutes," Mayweather said, "and you have to be a winner."

Mayweather had the math right, though he declined to say just how much he will make in the May 2 fight that has stirred excitement far beyond the boxing community. He will get 60 percent of the purse in what is expected to be boxing's richest fight ever, a haul that could exceed USD120 million for Mayweather alone.

Pacquiao won't do badly, either, in a fight that was five years in the making and will break records in another way – it will cost fans more than any other fight in history to watch both at the MGM Grand arena or in the comfort of their living rooms.

At the only press conference the fighters will do prior to the week of the fight, promoters announced that tickets wou-



ld range from \$1,500 in the upper reaches of the MGM Garden to \$7,500 at ringside. The pay-per-view price wasn't announced, but is expected to be in the \$90-100 range.

They may have to reach deep into their pockets to afford it, but there's little doubt that boxing fans will buy it. They want to see what Mayweather and Pacquiao say they are eager to show – the two biggest draws in boxing settling things between them once and for all in the ring.

"We don't want to leave a question mark in the minds of fans of boxing," said Pacquiao, from the Philippines. "It's also very important this fight is for the honor of my

country."

If the interest in the press conference at a downtown theater was any indication, the fight is already on its way to record business. More than 700 credentials were issued for the event, and both fighters walked a red carpet lined by photographers and video cameras that was worthy of the Academy Awards.

Mayweather came late, though he could walk over from his condo next door. The pay-per-view king was businesslike and relatively subdued, with nothing bad to say about Pacquiao or anyone in his camp.

"It's always good to have the best fight the best," Mayweather said. "That's what's so intriguing about this match up."

Mayweather said he was adamant about making the fight, pestering manager Al Haymon to get it done. But the biggest bout in recent history still may not have happened if not for a chance meeting between Mayweather and Pacquiao at a Miami Heat basketball game in January – a meeting that took place only because a big storm on the East Coast delayed Pacquiao's flight.

Mayweather went to Pacquiao's hotel suite afterward and the two talked and decided the fight had to be made. AP

Station	Air quality
Roadside	40-60 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	40-60 Moderate
Ambient	30-50 Moderate

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS

BANGLADESH The roof of a five-story cement factory under construction in Bangladesh collapses, killing at least four workers and trapping many others, an official says.

CAMBODIA Leading clothing retailers such as Gap and H&M need to help alleviate labor abuses at factories in Cambodia that manufacture their products, a human rights organization says.

MYANMAR authorities free several students detained after a bloody protest, but others involved in the stand-off over a new education law will face charges including disrupting stability.

AFGHANISTAN An Afghan official says Taliban gunmen have killed seven policemen in an ambush in the northern Kunduz province.

SRI LANKA Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's official visit to Sri Lanka reflects a bounce back in bilateral relations as the South Asian power seeks to mitigate China's growing influence on its Indian Ocean neighbors.

IRAQ Rockets and mortars echo across Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit yesterday as Iraqi security forces clash with Islamic State militants a day after sweeping into the Sunni city north of Baghdad. Recapturing Tikrit is seen as a key step toward rolling back the extremist group, which seized much of northern and western Iraq last summer and controls about a third of Iraq and Syria.

GREECE German officials say that the matter of compensation for the Nazis' World War II occupation of Greece is closed and the government isn't prepared to discuss the issue further with Athens. Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras has revived the question of war-time debts, telling Parliament on Tuesday that his debt-ridden country has never been fully compensated by Germany.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Paulo Coutinho



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A New Chapter in China-Portugal Cultural Exchange

JOANA VASCONCELOS at MGM MACAU

Nurturing diversified artistic and cultural exchanges between Macau and Portugal, MGM MACAU invites world-renowned contemporary Portuguese artist, Joana Vasconcelos, to host her first ever exhibition in the Greater China region. Her boundless creative imagination embarks a new chapter for MGM as this visionary arts program further strengthens Macau's historic role as an important bridge between China and Portugal for the past five hundred years.

