



'WE CAN HAVE LESS POLLUTION'

Interview with the CEO of CESL Asia, António Trindade, ahead of MIECF, which kicks off today

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CTM PREPARING TO TRANSITION CUSTOMERS FROM 3G TO 4G

"Once customers are used to the 4G network, they will tend to switch," said CTM's chief executive officer Vandy Poon

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA rejects growing international calls for the release of five women's rights activists and accuses critics of violating the country's judicial sovereignty by appealing for the women's freedom.

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THAILAND A tour bus carrying Chinese tourists plunges off a road on the popular Thai resort island of Phuket, killing three and injuring 16, police say.

KENYA-CHINA Kenyan authorities have closed a Chinese restaurant in the capital which was accused by a local newspaper of refusing to serve Africans. A statement from Nairobi Governor Evans Kidero late Tuesday said the restaurant known as the Chinese Restaurant will remain shut because it does not have a business permit or a valid liquor license. On Monday, Kenya's leading newspaper, The Daily Nation, reported that the restaurant does not allow Africans entry after 5 p.m. The newspaper quoted a manager of the restaurant saying Africans pose a security threat to its Chinese patrons. The story has caused outrage on social media.

AUSTRALIA Counter-terrorism squads have prevented 230 suspected jihadis from departing Australian airports for the Middle East this month, including at least three teenage boys, officials say. More on p12

MALDIVES' jailed ex-president will not appeal his 13-year sentence because the court has not released all documents from the first hearing to prepare a case, his lawyer says.

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SCHOLARS

Policy Address lacks clear development guidelines

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INTERVIEW | ANTÓNIO TRINDADE, CESL ASIA CEO

'We could produce energy here much more efficiently'

Catarina Pinto

AHEAD of the Macao International Environmental Co-operation Forum & Exhibition (MIECF), which kicks off today, the CEO of CESL Asia, António Trindade, said that in addition to finding environmentally friendly solutions to improve Macau's transportation system, there's also a need to start producing energy locally. In an interview with The Times, Mr Trindade stressed that this process should be conducted by local companies.

Macau Daily Times (MDT) – The Chief Executive delivered his 2015 Policy Address this week, and in doing so mentioned a few measures to tackle environmental issues, namely the launch of a study to introduce eco-vehicles. Is this enough?

António Trindade (AT) – The measures mentioned by the Chief Executive indicate that they're on the right track. The transportation issue is one of Macau's major problems. In any case, we still need to use vehicles. And the quality of vehicles is very important, it's almost obvious that we cannot use the vehicles from ten years ago to move people and goods at the scale that Macau does today within the SAR's small space. In a tourist city, it is not acceptable; it creates too much pollution, creates too much congestion, and it doesn't provide the capacity because there's a limit – you need more space.



António Trindade

When we talk about eco-vehicles, I am sure the Chief Executive is not only referring to electrical vehicles. There are many choices. We need to understand what the best option is for Macau. Because the best option for other cities might not apply here.

MDT – What do you think the Secretary for Transport and Public Works should prioritize in terms of environmental protection?

AT – Environmental infrastructure is crucial. The treatment of water and solid waste is reaching its limit. The waste water treatment systems in Macau

are well below capacity and urgently need adjustment to be in line with the current situation.

Transportation is another environmental issue, because it reduces people's quality of life, and lowers the quality of experience for tourists. And there is too much direct air pollution. So we need an urgent solution for this.

Another problem is energy. Macau does not have energy, and the use of energy is high. I think it's time to think about consumption. There are more efficient ways to do this, and this is definitely one of the major areas for improvement, where local businesses like

CESL Asia have an opportunity to grow and to be significantly relevant.

MDT – There's a next wave of Cotai resorts taking shape. If these issues are not tackled, could we expect pollution problems to rise?

AT – Pollution will always increase because pollution is a result of human life and economic activity. But we can have less pollution, and improve our quality of life. In Macau, everything we do stays here; the waste we make here is not going very far away, so whatever we do here, we will feel and smell. We have to come up with solutions, because without that, Macau cannot develop. Everything that goes to waste can actually be very valuable.

MDT – What kind of new technologies or renewable energies could be used in Macau?

AT – Better energy also depends on the consumer: turn on, turn off; the right temperature;

In terms of technologies for renewable energies, there's a lot of things we could do in Macau

ANTÓNIO TRINDADE

the right light. People in their daily lives have the power to make it 50 percent better. In terms of technologies for renewable energies, there are a lot of things we could do in Macau. One of the things we can do is decentralize energy production and distribution. This means that instead of having a remote entity producing electricity, we could do it locally and much more efficiently. Because nobody can guarantee us that there will be electricity in Macau tomorrow. If there's a problem somewhere outside Macau, we might not have electricity here, so we could produce locally. CESL Asia is already doing this and local companies have to be called to lead this process.

Why must every resort have their own energy center, or air conditioning system and water heaters? Why can't we do it a better way?

Some of the technologies we have today, they're still not aimed at Macau's situation: we don't have a lot of sun; the wind is very erratic. There's still a lot to be done, such as better consumption, better management of the existing facilities, and the decentralization of distribution, which definitely a local company like CESL Asia is ready to do. It makes sense economically and environmentally. But there has to be a government will.

MDT – What is CESL Asia focusing on in this year's MIECF?

AT – Like always, we are showcasing our services and abilities. Everybody knows we are an environmental company, we run public infrastructure, and we help the government develop. We help some of the resorts to become environmentally friendly. We run energy facilities, and we are now running a laundry business. We are not leaders; we follow the market. That's why we say 'how to grow a city' in our trademark.

TWO people were admitted to hospital following a shuttle bus accident at the Friendship Bridge on Tuesday night, the Health Bureau (SSM) revealed. 24 people were injured but only 18 sought medical treatment, TDM reported.

At around 10pm on Tuesday, a Venetian shuttle bus en route to

Two hospitalized after shuttle bus accident

the Border Gate crashed into the Friendship Bridge barrier. The driver made a mistake and instead of driving straight, turned left toward the Ferry Terminal exit. Upon realizing his mistake, the driver sudden-

ly swerved to the right, crashing into a barrier.

The bus driver passed a Breathalyzer test and one of the passengers told TDM that the driver was not speeding.

SSM said in a statement that 18 people

sought medical treatment but only two had to be admitted. The two have since been released from the hospital, according to a TDM report. SSM added that it set up a contingency plan on Tuesday night, as 12

men and six women, including five Macau residents and 13 mainland Chinese citizens, sought medical treatment at the Conde de São Januário hospital.

Yesterday morning around 7am another accident

took place near the Border Gate, also involving a shuttle bus, this time operated by a travel agency. A 50-year-old man crossed the road without using the crossing and was hit by the shuttle bus. The man received minor injuries. **CP**

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POLICY ADDRESS

Scholars slam excessive rhetoric about region's positioning, no action

Brook Yang

SCHOLARS have analyzed the features and pointed out the deficiencies in the Chief Executive's recently released 2015 Policy Address, where a clear elaboration on the city's overall positioning is allegedly lacking.

At a symposium held by the Macau Polytechnic Institute (IPM)'s One Country Two Systems Research Center yesterday, IPM scholar Yang Yunzhong indicated that clear guidelines for Macau's overall positioning are not yet in place, and thus the Policy Address has failed to balance the priorities of economic growth and social demands.

"For years we've been talking about Macau's positioning as 'a center and a platform,' but that is only in terms of economic development. Macau needs a clear position for its overall development, which should take into consideration the political and cultural developments as well," he declared.

The scholar recognized that the Policy Address shows the right attitude toward the continuous downturn in the economy, but said that it still needs to identify the downturn's various causes and the right directions to seek breakthroughs.

"Last year was the first time since the handover that Macau



has recorded a negative growth, and it is very likely to see another year of negative growth in 2015. The issues affecting the gaming industry are complex, and thus it's necessary to identify which are the structural problems, and which are periodic," he suggested.

Another feature of this year's Policy Address, according to

Two thirds of citizens are still living under the average line of the world's livable standard

YANG YUNZHONG

Professor Yang, is a whole package of livelihood measures; but it still shows a huge gap between the city's advanced GDP and its low living standards, and doesn't highlight the enhancement of social structure.

"Macau has ranked quite advanced in GDP, but the local residents' living standard shows a very large contrast to that. Two thirds of citizens are still living under the average line of the world's livable standard," stressed the scholar.

"This puzzles me a lot, as the casinos we see along the shore are indeed world-class, but the old neighborhoods' basic livelihood aspects are definitely not up to world-class standard. I felt embarrassed when reading the news saying that Macau ranked top in GDP per capita; I don't know how the government officials felt about that," he added.

Not only the quality of life, but also the city's social structure is indicated as a mismatch when paired with the SAR's economic status. However, an optimization of social structure, especially by increasing the middle-class, didn't have much representation in the Policy Address.

Scholars pointed out that some good ideas being proposed in previous years' Policy Addresses couldn't see effective implementation. Professor Luo Weijian from the University of Macau's Faculty of Law argued that a lack of in-depth studies in public administration is often a reason for this.

"For example, for the Light Rail Transit, there's a consensus to build it, but residents have strongly rejected the proposal for it to run on the ground, and have opted to spare the already-small land space in Macau. But the government insists on not changing the plan to build underground. All those disputes would have been avoided, if the government had conducted thorough studies first," he said.

The professor also recognized that the 2015 Policy Address responded to hot topics in the legal area, such as amending the Legislative Assembly's indirect election regime, but reiterated that they need to follow up these proposals with in-depth studies. Moreover, scholars have called for a more pragmatic attitude

The 2015 Policy Address carried on the 'Chui style.' It covered everything, but is tepid

LOU SHENGHUA

in the work of governmental departments.

Professor Huang Mingjian of the Macau University of Science and Technology recalled that the Environmental Protection Law was enacted 24 years ago, and doesn't even emphasize the concept of sustainable development. He urged the Environmental Protection Bureau to shift its concept, and become more proactive.

"The 2015 Policy Address carried on the 'Chui style.' It covered everything, but is tepid. It responded to society's concerns, but whether it can solve those problems, people don't have enough confidence. The next stage is to see how the government acts in response," said Professor Lou Shenghua of IPM's School of Public Administration.

Commissioner wants Macau to join 'Belt and Road Initiatives'

MACAU should take full advantage of the country's diplomatic resources, especially to grasp the opportunities brought by the national strategy of implementing the "Belt and Road Initiatives," explained the Commissioner of the PRC's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Macau, Hu Zhengyue.

Chief Executive Chui Sai On has recently expressed Macau's intention to join the Initiatives, which aim to strengthen regional cooperation by developing the "Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road." In response, Hu made assurances that Macau's attempt to participate would certainly be backed by the



Hu Zhengyue

whole country and the Central Government.

"The Belt and Road involve a total of 68 countries and regions. The Belt mainly runs in a Europe direction; and the Road mainly faces Southeast Asia. Speaking of Southeast Asia, that's where Macau's advantages stand out," he told reporters yesterday on the sidelines of a spring tea gathering that was hosted

for media at the Commissioner's Office.

"I hope Macau can do more on that. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Central Government will back it with full support," he assured.

The Commissioner said that China is determined to carry out the Belt and Road Initiatives, and will release a specific plan within a few days. "There will be a chapter dedicated to Hong Kong and Macau in the strategy," he revealed, adding that a very comprehensive elaboration will be presented at the upcoming Boao Forum for Asia.

Mr Hu also stressed that Macau has the financial resources, connections and advantages to play a role

in the Initiatives, and it shouldn't miss out on the opportune moment, if it is to grow bigger and diversify its economy.

"Macau has the right conditions over all aspects to go global and to join in on regional cooperation. [The SAR] should make good use of the country's diplomatic resources and the opportunities brought by the strategic process of the country's foreign cooperation," he said. "I think Macau can not only do this, but should also be [encouraged by] the Belt and Road Initiatives. The country will also provide strong support and create various conditions for [Macau's implementation of the initiatives]." **BY**

Number of imported workers rises to over 170,000



The number of non-resident workers in Macau reached 173,358 in February (1,296 more than in January), according to data released by the Human Resources Office. Non-resident workers come mainly from China (112,110), the Philippines (22,154) and Vietnam (13,921).

New HKMAO deputy chief on the horizon

A new deputy chief for the State Council's Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office (HKMAO) will be appointed in the next few weeks, when the incumbent HKMAO head Wang Guangya turns 65, which is the mandatory retirement age for ministers. According to the South China Morning Post, Wang Zhimin, who is currently the deputy director of the central government's liaison office in charge of works related to youth in HK, will replace Xu Ze, who will turn 61 in October. A mainland official who is familiar with Hong Kong affairs told the HK newspaper that the current HKMAO director would remain in his position until the blueprint for the 2017 chief executive election in Hong Kong comes out this summer. The newspaper also quoted Chan Wing-kee, a member of the Standing Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, who said that during the "critical moments of political reform," the central government would not make changes to the leading post in charge of monitoring Hong Kong's affairs.

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AFTER being recently awarded a 4G operating license, CTM is now putting in its "full effort" to build the 4G network and views 4G as "a key development project." The telecom company announced yesterday, during a media lunch held at the Macau Tower, that it will invest up to MOP1.6 billion in the next three years for network expansion. Of this sum, 600 million is to be allocated to the 4G project and MOP200 million to an integration project that will enable the 3G network to cope with the development of the 4G services. After that project is completed, the 3G network is expected to run twice as fast.

"We are working day and night for the preparation [of the 4G network]," said CTM's chief executive officer Vandy Poon, adding that the target for this year is full coverage of the territory, even though the contract only demands a 50 percent coverage in 2015. The service tariffs have not been established yet, but Mr Vandy Poon said that it would be "reasonable value for money."

"It's a long-term investment. Our plan is to invest MOP600 million [in 4G] and also invest MOP200 million in 3G. (...) Once customers are used to the 4G network, they will tend to switch, so that 4G will be the dominant network."

During his speech at the lunch, Vandy Poon reviewed the telecom operator's achievements from last year. In 2014, CTM obtained a revenue of MOP4,875 million and a profit of MOP1,112 million.

The company attributes the growth to enterprise sales, Internet, mobile and leased line services. During the past year,

CTM preparing to transition customers from 3G to 4G



Vandy Poon

Once customers are used to the 4G network, they will tend to switch, so that 4G will be the dominant network

VANDY POON

CTM made investments totaling MOP519 million in various projects, including the modernization and expansion of the mobile and Internet networks.

Compared to 2013, there is a clear tendency towards increasing the number of mobile (788,616 in 2013; 813,978 in 2014) and Internet customers (152,291 in 2013; 161,737 in 2014). On the other hand, after a period of oscillation, the number of fixed-phone customers has been decreasing since 2012 (172,126 in 2012; 168,107 in 2013; 163,266 in 2014).

With regard to other public contracts, CTM highlighted

in a press release distributed during the media event, that it has become the contractor for the government-owned Macau Basic Television Channels Limited. The company, which was created to ensure the transmission of a basic 49-channel television package, had a MOP10 million budget in the first year. According to information released one year ago by the Bureau of Telecommunications Regulation (DSRT), before the creation of the company, the public antenna companies were retransmitting the signals, whilst now they "only do the con-

nections to the interior of residential units." CTM's role, on the other hand, related to installing systems and providing maintenance services, as well as providing the network, DSRT stressed.

Another public tender won in 2014 by CTM was the operating contract for the "WIFI Go" wireless broadband system. The company increased the number of Wi-Fi hotspots all over the region to the point where they now exceed 500.

Vandy Poon also commented on last week's cyber-attack that affected CTM's Internet network: "It was a very rare type of attack, and we need to confirm the source of the attack. We have been investing a lot into the network's security." The CEO added that, at the time of the attack, CTM's firewall was "working properly," and therefore, "successfully prevented malware from entering Macau." "It worked, but the side effect slowed down Internet speed," he concluded. **PB**

Partnership with MacauPass to change lifestyle

CTM has signed an agreement with MacauPass and MOME as part of plans to develop a mobile payment service. Yesterday the telecom operator set up a demo zone, where it was possible to make a transaction by simply touching a smartphone on a MacauPass reader, as if

using a smart card.

According to Vandy Poon, the project aims to "integrate the MacauPass into a mobile account, in order to be able to use it on a mobile phone." This way, the mobile could become a "mobile wallet." In addition, CTM will set up Wi-Fi hotspots

on all bus routes that are operated by Transmac to let passengers enjoy internet access while on a move. The project is expected to become operational this year. "It will change the lifestyles of citizens and service users in Macau. It's a very powerful application," Vandy Poon said.

GAMING

Fitch Ratings lowers forecast for casino revenue

FITCH Ratings has lowered its 2015 forecast for Macau gaming revenues, citing credit availability and the recent smoking and visa restrictions as contributing factors, news website GMA News reported.

"We believe there is some risk that the visa and smoking rules will become more restrictive,

and that new casino openings may not gain the full allocation of table games," the debt watcher said in a statement, quoted by GMA News.

In addition, Fitch noted that competition for VIP customers is also influencing Macau's gaming revenues. "We revised the forecast down to negative 22 percent from

negative 4 percent. February gaming revenues were down 49 percent on a year-on-year basis, and 18 percent on a month-on-month basis," it added.

The global rating agency also said that its revised forecast included March's estimated 40-percent month-to-date year-on-year decline, although

they're expecting Macau to perform better in the near future. "We expect some recovery in the coming months, as premium mass and VIP players avoided the New Year crowds in Macau," the agency said.

Furthermore, Fitch highlighted that revenue from VIP services is booming in other regions:

"VIP volume increased by 74 percent in the 2H14 at Echo's and Crown's properties in Australia. Echo disclosed that its credit extensions increased 124 percent at its Sydney property in that quarter. NagaWorld in Cambodia grew its VIP volume in 2H14 by 47 percent. Much of the growth came from China."

Fitch added that the revision could also be attributed to some operators outside Macau who are more aggressive in direct lending. For instance, the agency recognized that lower gaming tax rates recorded in Australia and across South-East Asia "allow higher VIP junket commissions relative to Macau."

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ENTERTAINMENT

Venetian hosts star-studded film awards ceremony

SCORES of stars and celebrities from more than six Asian countries descended on Macau as the city hosted the presentation ceremony for the ninth Asian film awards at the Venetian Theatre last night. This year, 74 nominees from 42 films and eight countries were competing in 14 categories. The winners were recognized for their cinematographic efforts and contributions over the previous year.

The title of best director fell upon Hong Kong's Ann Hui for the "The Golden Era." Winning the committee of judges' hearts, she grabbed the award over five other contenders. The lady, relaxed throughout the night, told media afterwards that "half of the award should be for the movie's scriptwriter as he deserves half her success."

"Blind Massage," a Chinese and French film directed by Lou Ye and based on Bi Feiyu's novel, was rated the best movie of the year in the ceremony after sweeping seven accolades and awards from the Golden Horse Awards and the Berlin International Film Festival respectively. The film also notched up a best cinematographer award for its skilled cameraman, Zeng Jian.

Liao Fan, a mainland Chinese actor, took away one of the most controversial titles - the best actor - with ease. The 41-year-old told media afterwards during a backstage session that he was looking forward to more different challenging roles in the future. Posing in front of numerous flashing cameras, the award-winning actor seemed confident and proud of his outstanding performance in the movie, "Black Coal, Thin Ice", which depicted how a policeman grew subtly affectionate towards a woman involved in the crime he was investigating. The storyline of the film, devised by Diao Yinan, also received the jury's favor, claiming the "Best Screenwriter."

Also one of the most anticipated awards, the best actress



The AFA Academy aims to promote, develop and enrich Asian cinema, its talents and audiences by organizing the AFA and a diversity of other events

accolade, was granted to Bae Doo-na, 36, for her portrayal of a police academy instructor in "A Girl at My Door." To her surprise, the Korean actress was left dumbfounded in her seat when she heard her name being called by the award's presenter, famous Hong Kong

singer Aaron Kwok. Earlier, on the red carpet before the ceremony, the award-winning actress, dressed in a light orange full-length gown, revealed that she hadn't prepared herself for such a great honor as she didn't even have her acceptance speech ready in advance.

The best supporting actor award also went to the mainland Chinese actor, Wang Zhiwen, who was absent from last night's award ceremony after abruptly falling ill the night before. His impressive performance in the movie "Golden Era" earned him unanimous recognition from the jury committee.

The Japanese actress, Ikewaki Chizuru, likewise won the best supporting actress title with her excellent acting in the romance, "The Light Shines Only There." The delighted actress told the media afterwards that she highly regarded every single opportunity bestowed to her,

and she would always bring her best to the audience.

Last night also witnessed a newborn star rising as Zhang Huiwen, also from China, received a "Best Newcomer" prize for her noteworthy performance in the movie "Coming Home."

Meanwhile the comedy film directed by Jiang Wen, "Gone with the Bullet", also competing among four contenders, swept a total of three awards last night including "Best Visual Effects", "Best Production Designer" and "Best Costume Designer".

Mikey Mcleary, a Mumbai-based songwriter, displayed his talent in "Margarita, with a Straw" and was thus awarded "Best Composer" at the ceremony. Besides this, the "Best Editor" award went to Gareth Evans for his sophisticated editing skills shown in "The Raid 2: Berandal."

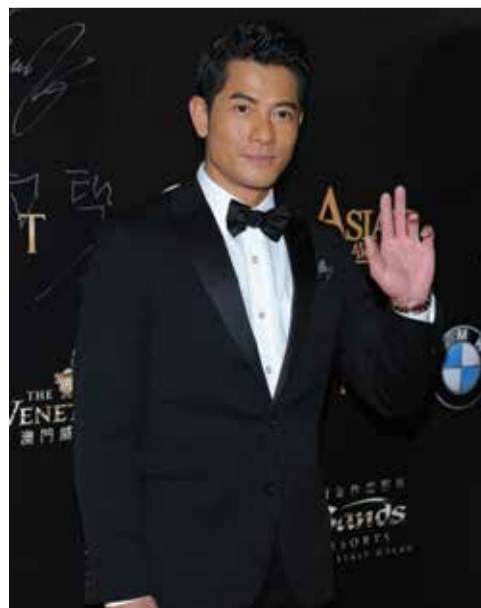
In recognition of Im Kwon-taek's lifelong contribution to the film industry, the venera-

ble Korean director was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award. Revered as the godfather of Korean cinema, the 79-year-old has been active in cinema for over half a century. The versatile Japanese artist Nakatani Miki similarly received the "Excellence in Asian Cinema Award" for her exemplary endeavors in the cinema industry.

Founded by the Hong Kong International Film Festival, Busan International Film Festival and Tokyo International Film Festival in late 2013, the AFA Academy aims to promote, develop and enrich Asian cinema, its talents and audiences by organizing the AFA and a diversity of other programs across Asia through working closely with film, arts and culture partners from around the world. This was the second consecutive year the award ceremony was held in the city since its previous destination of Hong Kong in 2013. **Staff reporter**



Bae Doo-na



Aaron Kwok



Ann Hui



Jermaine Jackson

Yoga Rusmana and Eko Listiyorini

COFFEE farmers in Indonesia, the world's third-biggest producer of the robusta variety used by Nestle SA, will probably harvest a record crop in the season starting April after rains boosted yields.

Production may increase 18 percent to 650,000 metric tons from 550,000 tons a year earlier, the median of five trader estimates compiled by Bloomberg shows. That would exceed the all-time high of 630,000 tons in 2009-2010 and matched in 2012-2013, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture data.

The unprecedented harvest in Indonesia will add to global supply, potentially pressuring prices. A survey this month showed production could increase to a record in Vietnam, the largest robusta grower. Crop prospects have also improved in Brazil, the second-biggest robusta producer and the top supplier of arabica beans favored by Starbucks Corp.

"There's fresh optimism that output will rise," Theng Hong Sioe, a deputy chairman at the Association of Indonesian Coffee Exporters and Industries, said by phone on March 19. "The weather is quite favorable, it's not too wet or too dry. Hopefully there's no adverse weather that could hurt the crop."

The global harvest will expand 7 percent to 152.8 million bags in 2015-2016 and cut the shortage to 1.4 million bags from 8.9 million bags this year, Volcafe Ltd. said last month. Output in Indonesia may climb to 10.9 million bags, it said. A bag weighs 60 kilograms.

Rabobank International says the deficit will shrink to 1.6 million bags from 6 million bags and Indonesia will harvest 12.3 million bags from 9.3

Coffee harvest in Indonesia expanding to record on rainfall



Workers inspect coffee beans at a PT Taman Delta Indonesia facility in Semarang, Java, Indonesia

million bags a year earlier.

"We have seen a slightly better weather pattern during the development of the 2015-2016 crop, although still far from perfect weather," said Carlos Mera Arzeno, senior commodities analyst at Rabobank in London. "In any case, after a low crop in 2014-2015, trees should have more energy for the 2015-2016 crop. Rainfall during the harvest will impact quality but it will hardly impact volumes," he said in an e-mail March 23.

Forecasts in the Bloomberg survey ranged from 630,000 tons to 690,000 tons. Crops may have suffered in some areas because of heavy rains

in late 2014, according to Moenardji Soedargo, chief operating officer of PT Aneka Coffee Industry, an exporter in Sidoarjo, East Java.

The crop is "not entirely in an ideal condition," Moenardji said in a text message on March 23. "Heavy rain at the end of last year knocked off small cherries, especially on the highlands of southern Sumatra. Production may not be at its best," he said, predicting a crop of 630,000 tons.

Showers will continue in Sumatra and Java over the next several days with heavier rains moving into Sulawesi, MDA Weather Service said in a March 19 report. Moisture

remains short in north Sumatra and sufficient in other regions, it said. The state-run meteorological agency predicts a normal dry season across Indonesia starting April.

"Yields look quite promising," Sunyoto, a 64-year-old farmer in Way Tenong, West Lampung, said by phone March 10. His plantation may produce 1.5 tons to 2 tons per hectare, up from 0.8 ton to 1 ton last year, he said.

The provinces of Lampung, Bengkulu and South Sumatra are the main robusta producers. The region known as the 'Golden Triangle' represents about 75 percent of the country's output. Beans from

the area are shipped from Panjang port in Lampung. Arabica grows mostly in northern Sumatra and Java and was 16 percent of the total harvest in 2014-2015, USDA data show.

Daily deliveries to warehouses in Bandar Lampung averaged 240 tons a day, similar to the pace in February, said Mochtar Luthfie, head of research and development at Lampung's chapter of the exporters association. The export-grade robusta was offered at about 23,000 rupiah (USD1.77) per kilogram in Lampung last week, Theng, the group's deputy chairman said.

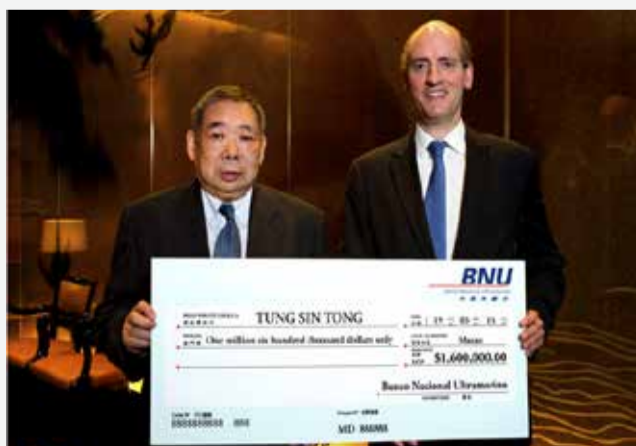
A smaller crop in the season ending this month means traders are competing to secure beans they need for contractual deliveries in the next two to three months, said Luthfie in an interview in Bandar Lampung on March 10.

"The supply is really tight," Luthfie said. "Exporters with limited stocks are forced to buy from other traders even at higher prices," he said, adding that the harvest may start in May in Lampung.

Shipments declined to 382,000 tons in 2014 from 432,000 tons a year earlier because of higher domestic consumption, according to Irfan Anwar, chairman of Association of Indonesian Coffee Exporters and Industries, at conference in Jakarta on Tuesday. He estimated local use may rise to 350,000 tons in 2015 from about 300,000 tons in 2014 and 190,000 tons in 2010. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

BNU DONATES MOP1,600,000 TO TUNG SING TUNG



BNU donated MOP1,600,000 to Tung Sin Tong in a ceremony chaired by Mr. Chui Sai Cheong, President of Tung Sin Tong and Mr. Pedro Cardoso,

CEO of BNU.

Established in 1892, Tung Sin Tong has been a leading charity organization in Macau, providing free medical servi-

ces and education for citizens in need.

In order to collect more funds for charity, BNU and Tung Sin Tong launched the Tung Sin Tong Visa credit card in 1999, where BNU donates 1% of customers' retail spending on this affinity credit card to Tung Sin Tong.

No annual fee is charged to Tung Sin Tong Visa Card holders.

In 2012, BNU launched the Tung Sin Tong Platinum Affinity Card.

Since the inception of this donation scheme, BNU has contributed more than MOP10.4 million to Tung Sin Tong, in an example of cooperation between the financial sector and a non-profit organization.

SHERATON MACAO HOTEL CONTINUES TO CULTIVATE LOCAL TALENT FOR THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY



Sheraton Macao Hotel, Cotai Central, hosted an official ceremony on Monday, March 23, to mark the completion of working rotations and recognize student achievements for year 2013 and year 2014 participants in the Sheraton Macao Professional Development Scheme. As well as students and parents and high school

principals, the hotel group also invited Professor Aliana Leong, Vice President of Macau City University; Ms. Rachel Chan, General Manager, Human Resources of Sheraton Macao Hotel, Cotai Central and The St. Regis Macao, Cotai Central; and the hotel's management team.

The Sheraton Professional

Development Scheme provides Macau City University students enrolled in the Bachelor of International Tourism and Management degree program with the opportunity to gain work experience at the hotel in parallel with their academic studies. The scheme was started in 2013 and 76 students were accepted into the program.

"The Sheraton Professional Development Scheme is a fantastic opportunity for travel and tourism students to gain firsthand experience of working in a busy, fast-paced hotel environment, all whilst having their tuition fees subsidized," said Rachel Chan, General Manager of Human Resources, Sheraton Macao Hotel and The St. Regis Macao, Cotai Central.

MOZAMBIQUE

New dams add 3,600 megawatts of power production

CONSTRUCTION of five new hydroelectric dams in Mozambique and the expansion of the Cahora Bassa facility will increase the potential of the country's energy production by around 3,600 megawatts, involving investments of over USD7 billion.

Power consumption in Mozambique is increasing by an average annual rate of 82 megawatts (about 14 percent), according to the Ministry of Planning and Development (MPD), and expansion of the energy sector is one of Mozambique's greatest economic challenges, given the growing industrial requirements across the country.

It is in this context that in the Government 2015-2019 Five-Year Plan, which will be voted by the Mozambican parliament from the beginning of April, the government noted the priority of developing various power generation projects, some of which have already secured investors and funding.

This is the case of the Lupata Hydroelectric Facility, in Tete province, with a potential to gener-



rate 416 megawatts, which will require an investment of about US\$1.072 billion, implemented by a consortium of companies including Hydroparts Holding and Cazembe Holding, both registered in Mauritius, and state power company EdM and Sonipal of Mozambique.

Also in Tete province and along the Zambezi River, the Boroma Hydroelectric Dam will have an installed capacity of 210 megawatts, and will

be carried out by Rutland Holding, of Mauritius, EdM and Sonigal, which will need to invest US\$572.5 million in the project.

Added together, the two projects are likely to create more than 4,000 jobs, according to the Mozambique Centre for Investment Promotion, through which the investments were made in 2014.

The guidelines for government policy also give priority to starting cons-

truction of the Mphanda Nkuwa dam, about 70 kilometres northeast of the city of Tete and 61 kilometres southeast of the Cahora Bassa dam, a project with a generation potential of 1,500 megawatts, which has an estimated cost of US\$4.2 billion.

Already awarded to Camargo Corrêa (40 percent), of Brazil, Insitec (40 percent) of Mozambique, and EdM (20 percent), the dam should be

completed in 2017, according to the Integrated Programme of Investments of the MPD, revised in June 2014.

In this document, the MPD also outlined the construction of the Lúrio Hydroelectric Plant in Nampula, citing a generating capacity of 180 megawatts and an investment cost of about US\$480 million, but for now, the project has no known investors.

The situation is similar

with the Alto Malema Hydroelectric dam, also in Nampula province, with a potential to generate 60 megawatts, which is included in the five-year government programme.

The government has also noted the progress of the second phase of Cahora Bassa (HCB), the project also called Cahora Bassa Norte, construction of which will increase in the power generation capacity of the project by 1,250 megawatts, from 2,075 megawatts at the moment.

The project is estimated to cost about US\$700 million, according to estimates from the MPD.

HCB's shareholder structure includes the Mozambican state with a 92.5 percent stake, while Portuguese power grid company REN, which itself is 25 percent owned by the State Grid Corporation of China (SGCC), owns the remaining share of 7.5 percent.

Mozambique currently has a production capacity of about 2,300 megawatts of power. An HCB is the facility that produces the largest amount of electricity in the country.

Much of the dam's production (about 75 percent) is exported, particularly to Zimbabwe and South Africa, a country whose national power company Eskom, has an agreement with HCB for the annual purchase of 1,100 megawatts, valid until 2029.

MDT/Macauhub

ANGOLA

Drop in oil prices is an economic challenge

THE Secretary of State for cooperation of the Angolan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Angela Bragança, said in Luanda that the recent drop in oil prices of around 60 percent in the last six months is an economic challenge for Angola.

Speaking at a meeting with members of the business mission of the USA-Angola Chamber of Commerce, Bragança said that this had a great impact on tax revenues and led the government to adopt a state budget for 2015 with public spending cuts.

She said the measure aimed to preserve currency and price stability and economic and social growth.

Bragança stressed that alongside economic and social activities the Angolan government is conducting a tax and public finance reform programme to



Angola's Jose Maria Botelho de Vasconcelos, Minister of Petroleum

increase revenue collection.

The Secretary of State said attracting foreign investment to Angola's economy was one of the foundations for develop-

ment, which will focus primarily on transfer of technology and "know-how," industrialisation, agriculture and natural resources. MDT/Macauhub

Cape Verde wants low cost flights

THE Government of Cabo Verde (Cape Verde) is "completely open" to low cost flights and plans to boost an agreement with the European Union (EU) with this in mind, said the Cape Verdean Minister of Infrastructure and the Maritime Economy, Sara Lopes.

Lopes, who was speaking to Portuguese news agency Lusa on the sidelines of the Fifth Community Meeting of Lusophone Civil Aviation Authorities (CAACL), in Praia, argued that competition and economic freedoms, for an island and small country like Cape Verde, will only bring advantages.

"Cabo Verde is completely open. We have been proposing a vertical agreement to the European Union for some time. We started with some

shyness, but we want to intensify this dialogue, because we think that a small country like Cabo Verde, with such a small scale, will only gain with air freedom," he said.

In addition to flagship airline TACV, only four airlines – TAP, TAAG, Air Senegal and Royal Air Maroc – offer scheduled flights to the islands.

"Currently, Cabo Verde only has daily direct connections to Lisbon. We have no more. This indicator should raise questions at all levels. It is a very low level of accessibility and we have to solve this in the coming years. We believe that 'low cost' is the solution also to increase our tourism and our consumer market," concluded the Minister of Infrastructure and Maritime Economy, Sara Lopes. MDT/Macauhub

Beijing's influence set to climb as US thwarted on new bank

SEVEN decades after the end of World War II, the international economic architecture crafted by the U.S. faces its biggest shakeup yet, with China establishing new channels for influence to match its ambitions.

Three lending institutions with at least USD190 billion are taking shape under China's leadership, one of them informally referred to as a Marshall Plan - evoking the postwar U.S. program to rebuild an impoverished Europe. Also this year, China's yuan may win the IMF's blessing as an official reserve currency, a recognition of its rising use in trade and finance.

China's clout has been expanding for decades, as its rapid growth allowed it to snap up a rising share of the world's resources, its exports penetrated global markets, and its bulging financial assets gave it power to make big individual loans and purchases. Now, the creation of international lending institutions is leveraging that economic influence closer to the political and diplomatic arenas, as U.S. allies defy America to back China's initiative.

"This is the beginning of a bigger role for China in global affairs," said Jim O'Neill, U.K.-based former chief economist at Goldman Sachs Group Inc., who coined the term BRICs in 2001 to highlight the rising economic power of Brazil, Russia, India and China.

Chinese President Xi Jinping's vision of achieving the same great-power status enjoyed by the U.S. received a major boost this month when the U.K., Germany, France and Italy signed on to the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. The AIIB will have authorized capital of \$100 billion and starting funds of about \$50 billion.

Canada is considering joining, which would leave the U.S. and Japan as the

BLOOMBERG



Pedestrians holding Chinese national flags walk past the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. China's clout has been expanding for decades

only Group of Seven holdouts as they question the institution's governance and environmental standards. Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott's cabinet approved negotiations to join too.

"China's economic rise is acting as a huge pull factor forcing the existing architecture to adapt," said James Laurencson, deputy director of the Australia-China Relations Institute in Sydney. "The AIIB has shown the U.S. that a majority in international community support China's aspirations for taking on greater leadership and responsibility, at least on economic initiatives."

The new China-backed institutions - the infrastructure bank, a \$50 billion development bank in conjunction with fellow BRICS nations and a \$40 billion fund to revive the ancient Silk Road trade route - are being set up after years of frustrated attempts by China and other emerging nations to revamp the existing international fi-

CHINA SAYS PROPOSED ASIAN BANK MIGHT HAVE BRANCHES ABROAD

CHINA SAYS its proposed Asian bank might have regional offices in other countries in a new move to mollify concern it will be a Chinese political tool. A deputy finance minister, Shi Yaobin, said yesterday on his ministry's website the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank will be based in Beijing but its members will discuss whether to open branch offices. China proposed the bank in 2013 to finance

construction of roads and other infrastructure. Washington has expressed unease it might undercut the World Bank and other institutions. Britain, France and Germany have joined India, New Zealand and other Asia-Pacific governments in saying they want to become members. Beijing has pledged most of the initial USD50 billion in capital but Shi said its ownership stake would decline as others contribute.

ancial institutions to better reflect the shape of the global economy.

A key sticking point is the U.S.'s failure for more than four years to approve shifts in the International Monetary Fund's ownership structure, which would give emerging markets more influence and install China as the third-largest member nation, up from sixth. The changes have been held up by the refusal of the U.S. Congress to ratify them, even though the White House and governments around the world support them.

The U.S. still has veto power on major decisions made by both the IMF and the World Bank, and a lock on selecting the president of the World Bank. Both institutions are increasingly unrepresentative and undersized compared with demands they face.

"The real tragedy is, compared to the billions we spend on defense to support U.S. global leadership, Congress

undermined it by refusing to provide the chump change needed to reform the IMF," said David Loevinger, former U.S. Treasury Department senior coordinator for China affairs and now an analyst at TCW Group Inc. in Los Angeles. "Congress can abdicate its international responsibilities. What it can't do is stop China from playing a bigger role in managing the global economy."

Regarding the new infrastructure bank, U.S. Treasury Secretary Jacob J. Lew told lawmakers last week the administration is concerned that the institution may not adhere to the same standards as other international financial institutions.

"Will it protect the rights of workers, the environment, deal with corruption issues appropriately?" Lew said at a House Financial Services Committee hearing in Washington. "Anyone joining needs to ask those questions

at the outset. And I hope before the final commitments are made, anyone who lends their name to this organization will make sure that the governance is appropriate."

Part of China's international-development push stems from economic self-interest. With much of the nation's almost \$4 trillion in foreign-currency reserves earning

This is the beginning of a bigger role for China in global affairs

JIM O'NEILL
FORMER CHIEF ECONOMIST AT
GOLDMAN SACHS

little, "they see this as an opportunity to improve their rate of return over Treasuries," said Nicholas Lardy, who's studied China for more than three decades and is a senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington.

Andrew Polk, Beijing-based economist at the Conference Board, said China's push to set up these new institutions is driven by its desire to "stoke markets" to which it can export industrial overcapacity.

China plans to spend \$40 billion to revive the centuries-old Silk Road trade route between Asia and Europe, an idea raised by Xi in a 2013 speech in neighboring Kazakhstan.

Some analysts have likened the plan to the postwar effort to help Europe that helped establish the U.S. as a regional economic power. A detailed plan may be unveiled at China's Boao Forum conference that started yesterday, where Xi is scheduled to speak, according to Australia & New Zealand Banking Group Ltd.

Announced in July, the BRICS' New Development Bank, to be based in Shanghai with initial capital of \$50 billion, is the third building block of a China-centered international economic architecture. In addition to the original four BRIC nations, the fifth country is South Africa.

The increasing influence of the world's second-largest economy has extended to the existing institutions. The IMF in late 2015 will conduct its next twice-a-decade review of the basket of currencies its members can count toward their official reserves. IMF chief Christine Lagarde said in Beijing this week that the yuan "clearly belongs" in the basket and the fund would work with China to that end. **Bloomberg**

AUSTRALIA GIVES CONDITIONAL SUPPORT TO BEIJING-PROPOSED BANK

AUSTRALIA'S PRIME minister said yesterday that he supported the proposed development of a Chinese-backed Asian regional bank as long as it was transparent and not run by a single country. Prime Minister Tony Abbott said Australia would announce its decision about joining within a few days. He said he expected skeptical countries including the United States and Japan would

also join if China gave the required assurances. Abbott said he was having ongoing conversations with President Barack Obama and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, both close allies, about the bank. He said Australia would join if it's confident the institution will have transparent governance and clear accountability with decisions made by a multination board.

Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

CHINA yesterday rejected growing international calls for the release of five women's rights activists and accused critics of violating the country's judicial sovereignty by appealing for the women's freedom.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying defended China's legal system but said she had no specific details about the women's cases.

"No one has the right to ask China to release relevant persons, so we hope that relevant people will stop interfering in China's judicial sovereignty in such a manner," Hua told reporters at a regularly scheduled news briefing.

The five have been held in a Beijing detention center for almost three weeks, accused of creating a disturbance by planning to display posters raising awareness of sexual harassment to mark International Women's Day on March 8.

Beijing police yesterday said they had no information about the cases.

If convicted, Wei Tingting, Li Tingting, Wang Man, Zheng Churan and Wu Rongrong could be sentenced to up to three years in prison. Five others detained at the same time have since been released.

Lawyers for the women say they are being held under harsh conditions, are subject to lengthy interrogations and have been denied access to legal counsel.

The detentions have fed fears that Chinese authorities are clamping down on public speech and dissent.

U.S. ambassador to the U.N. Samantha Power strongly criticized the detentions in a sta-



Indian women's rights activists wearing masks of five women's rights activists formally detained in China after Women's Day crackdown, hold placards with their names, to express their solidarity and demand their immediate release

Gov't rejects calls for release of women's rights activists

tement Friday. Power said the charge of "creating a disturbance" was a pretext for stifling their attempts to pressing social problems.

"If China is committed to advancing the rights of women, then it should be working to address the issues raised by the

women's rights activists, not silencing them," Power said.

The European Union has also called for their release, saying their right to demonstrate peacefully — a right not generally acknowledged in China — had been violated.

"We expect the Chinese autho-

rities to release them without delay and to allow them immediate access to legal assistance and to their families," the EU statement said.

Activists on social media have also spearheaded a campaign demanding their release and at least one protest over the issue has

been staged outside the Chinese Embassy in Washington, D.C.

China's restrictions on free speech and assembly and allegations of gender discrimination have also been highlighted by rights groups opposed to Beijing's bid to hold the 2022 Winter Olympic Games. **AP**

Lee Kuan Yew's ancestral residence sparks memories

Avillage over 500 kilometers from the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou that nestles in mountains is attracting visitors in search of a glimpse into the life of late Singapore leader Lee Kuan Yew.

A brick and wood residence, located in Dabu County under the city of Meizhou in Guangdong Province, constructed in the traditional Chinese style, with a grey tiled roof and ink paintings on the walls, is the ancestral home of the late leader. It was built in 1884 by his great-grandfather who was born in Dabu in 1848.

Since Lee Kuan Yew's death, many memorials have been organized by local villagers. Evidence of these private events can be seen in the house's main hall - on the wall is a portrait of Lee during his time as a student



File photo taken on Nov.12,1978 shows Lee Kuan Yew (front, L) welcoming then Chinese Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping (front, R) in Singapore

in Britain, and candy and rice wine have been left on a square table.

Chiu Kin-leung, from Malaysia, returned to his ancestral home in Dabu County Monday to see relatives and paid a visit to

Lee's ancestral residence.

"He is a great man, and the Hakka [a subgroup of China's Han ethnic group] people are proud of him," he said.

Villager Li Wenying, 76, said people from across Chi-

na and foreign countries including Singapore and Malaysia visit the house.

In the mid-19th century, across Southeast Asia the rubber, palm and mining industries were being heavily developed. Many peo-

ple in Dabu County, where there was a lack of arable land, chose to emigrate to find work.

Chen Peixian, head of the county's overseas Chinese affairs bureau, said over 300,000 ethnic Hakka lived in Singapore, and about 70 percent were originally from Dabu.

Every year, many Hakka travel to Dabu from Singapore to pay respects to their ancestors, he said.

The Lee ancestral residence has accommodated four generations of the family of Lee Kuan Yew's cousin, Li Fensen. The Li family name is spelled Lee in areas such as Hong Kong and Singapore.

Li's son Li Quintai said friends of Lee Kuan Yew's father came to Dabu to look for the ancestral home in 1987.

Since then, Li Fensen has received money from Singapore, according to Li Quintai.

"The money was intended to support our family and restore the house," he said.

At the end of 2007, a local government initiated renovation project was carried out at the residence; an exhibition showcasing Lee Kuan Yew's life was also installed.

In 2013, Meizhou City established a Hakka cultural and ecological protection demonstration zone in Dabu. The residence was declared a city-level cultural protection site in 2014.

With an investment of 40 million yuan (USD6.4 million) by the Dabu county government, a tourist area featuring the Lee ancestral residence is under construction. **Xinhua**

Jeanette Tan, Singapore

SINGAPORE

Lee Kuan Yew lies in state as citizens bid farewell

SINGAPOREANS stood in silence yesterday as Lee Kuan Yew's coffin traveled on a ceremonial gun carriage a short distance from the presidential palace to Parliament, where thousands waited for hours to pay respects to the city-state's founder before a funeral this weekend.

Lee, 91, died Monday at Singapore General Hospital after more than a month of battling severe pneumonia. The government declared a week of mourning for the leader who is credited with transforming the resource-poor island into a wealthy finance and trade hub with low crime and corruption in a region saddled with graft, instability and poverty.

Hundreds of mourners lined the street outside the presidential palace, where Lee's remains lay at a two-day private wake, as the carriage with his coffin draped with a Singapore flag in a glass case was escorted by Singapore's prime minister and his eldest son, Lee Hsien Loong, and other children.

Many raised smartphones to record the procession and some were heard chanting Lee's name



Members of the public take pictures and shout "Thank you, Mr Lee!" as the coffin of Singapore's founding father Lee Kuan Yew leaves Istana, or Presidential Palace on a ceremonial gun carriage to lie in state at parliament

quietly and others applauded. Roads nearby were closed despite peak-hour traffic.

Outside Parliament, people formed a line several kilometers long to view Lee's body, some carrying umbrellas to protect against the tropical sun. Many waited several hours for a chance to get in.

"He has contributed all his life for the country and we respect him for what he has done. Look at Singapore now, without him, we are not here today," said Irene Kang, who came to pay her respects.

Lee will lie in state in ahead of a state funeral at the National University of Singapore on Sunday.

Among those attending will be Southeast Asian heads of state and Prime Ministers Narendra Modi of India and Tony Abbott of Australia. AP

THAILAND

Seafood firm drops supplier named in slavery report

THAILAND'S biggest seafood company said yesterday it has cut ties with a supplier named in an Associated Press report after determining it might be involved with forced labor and other abuses.

The statement by Thai Union Frozen Products follows a year-long investigation that linked severe abuses on Southeast Asian fishing trawlers to dinner tables in the U.S. and around the world.

"Thai Union embraces AP's finding," the company said in a statement that calls the use of slave labor "utterly unacceptable." Thai Union said the supplier was "terminated" immediately.

The statement did not list a specific company, and Thai Union declined further comment.

The AP interviewed dozens of current and former slaves who were working on trawlers in and around Benjina, a remote island village in Indonesia. Many said they



Imprisoned Thai and Burmese fishing boat workers sit inside a cell at the compound of a fishing company in Benjina, Indonesia

were tricked, kidnapped or sold. They described working up to 22 hours a day, beatings and, in the worst cases, death at sea. AP journalists followed a large shipment of slave-caught seafood by satellite to a Thai port town, where trucks picked up the fish and redistributed it to dozens of companies and the country's largest fish market.

Thai Union Manufacturing Co. is a subsidiary of Thai Union Frozen Products PCL, Thailand's largest seafood corporation, with USD3.5

billion in annual sales. It owns Chicken of the Sea and is buying Bumble Bee, although the AP did not observe any tuna fisheries. It also is the maker of some of the most popular brands of canned pet food, including Fancy Feast, Meow Mix and Iams.

"Consumers can rest assured that our current products are not tainted with the alleged trade supplier," Thai Union said. "This is to prove that Thai Union takes the issue of human rights violation extremely seriously."

AUSTRALIA

230 suspected jihadis prevented from leaving

Rod McGuirk, Canberra

COUNTERTERRORISM squads have prevented 230 suspected jihadis from departing Australian airports for the Middle East this month, including at least three teenage boys, officials said yesterday.

Officials had previously announced that two Sydney-born brothers, aged 16 and 17, were intercepted at Sydney International Airport on March 8 attempting to board a flight for Turkey without their parents' knowledge. The siblings were returned to their families and were to be charged.

Within a week, a 17-year-old boy was intercepted at the same airport on suspicion that he was headed for a Middle Eastern battle, Border Protection Minister Peter Dutton said yesterday.

The boy was also returned to his family, but remains under investigation, Dutton said.

Since counterterrorism units were attached to eight Australian airports in August, 86,000 travelers have been questioned and 230 people prevented from flying on suspicion that they were headed for the battlefields of Iraq and Syria to fight with groups including Islamic State, Prime Minister Tony Abbott told Parliament.

Experts disagree about why the Islamic State had been so effective recruiting in Australia, which is widely regar-



Australia's Prime Minister Tony Abbott speaks about the nation's new anti-extremism strategy during a question time at Parliament House in Canberra

ded as a multicultural success story, with an economy in an enviable 24th straight year of continuous growth.

The London-based International Center for the Study of Radicalization and Political Violence reports that between 100 and 250 Australians have joined Sunni militants in Iraq and Syria. The center estimates that about 100 fighters came from the United States, which has more than 13 times as many people as Australia.

Abbott said his government was investing more on border security and on countering extremism.

"It is absolutely critical that the people of Australia appreciate that the death cult is reaching out to vulnerable and impressionable young people," he said, referring to the Islamic State group. "The death cult is reaching out, seeking effectively to brainwash people online." AP

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ITALY

High court deciding fate of 'very worried' Amanda Knox



Amanda Knox's Italian ex-boyfriend Raffaele Sollecito, right, arrives at Italy's highest court building, in Rome

Colleen Barry and
Frances D'Emilio, Rome

ITALY'S high court took up the appeal of Amanda Knox's murder conviction yesterday, considering the fate of the "very worried" American and her Italian former boyfriend in the brutal 2007 murder of Knox's British roommate.

So many journalists and trial-watchers were on hand for the

final arguments in the murder of Meredith Kercher that the judges moved the hearing into the largest available courtroom in the Court of Cassation.

The judges could decide to confirm the convictions and 28½-year sentence for Knox and 25-year sentence for her ex-boyfriend Raffaele Sollecito, which would then raise extradition questions for Knox since she is free in the U.S.

The court could decide to throw out the convictions and order a third appeal trial. Less likely, it could overturn the convictions without ordering a retrial, tantamount to an acquittal.

To date, the high-profile legal saga of Knox and Sollecito have produced flip-flop guilty-then innocent-then guilty verdicts, polarizing observers in three nations. Knox has been portrayed alternately as a victim

of a botched investigation and shoddy Italian justice, or a promiscuous predator who falsely accused a Congolese bar owner of the murder.

Knox, who has maintained her innocence throughout, was awaiting the ruling in her hometown of Seattle. She is "worried, very worried," said her attorney, Carlo Dalla Vedova, who said a decision was expected late yesterday or today.

Asked if he would call Knox with the court's decision even if it came in the middle of the night in the U.S., Dalla Vedova said: "I don't think she's sleeping much."

Television crews mobbed Sollecito as he made his way into the courthouse, where he huddled with his attorney before the hearing began.

"I'm here all day, also tonight," he said.

His attorney, Giulia Bongiorno, said she hoped the court would annul the guilty verdicts, saying the ruling was "littered with errors and absolutely littered with contradictions and by an illogical motivation."

Kercher, a 21-year-old student from Britain, was found dead Nov. 2, 2007, in the apartment that she shared with Knox in the idyllic hillside town of Perugia where both women were studying. Her throat was slashed and she had been sexually assaulted. **AP**

DEATH PENALTY

Utah's adoption of firing squads bucks global trend

UTAH'S decision to reintroduce the firing squad as an execution method if lethal injections drugs are unavailable bucks an international trend.

Utah's governor has signed a law that makes his state the only one to allow firing squads for carrying out executions if no lethal injection drugs are available. Utah and Oklahoma are the only states which allow for the firing squads. However, Oklahoma would allow them only as a last resort, if all other methods are ruled unconstitutional. The U.S. is the only country in the Americas to allow the use of firing squads in civilian cases besides Cuba.

Many countries that use firing squads usually reserve them for military cases or during war time. An exception is Indonesia which is preparing to execute 10 drug smugglers, nine of them foreigners, by firing squad after judicial reviews are complete.

China, where thousands of people are believed to be executed each year, traditionally used firing squads. But in recent years China has begun using lethal injections and that is now believed to be the main technique. The exact number of executions in China is a state secret, but it is thought to be the most in the world.

Firing squads remain the preferred method of execution in Somalia and Equatorial Guinea and are known to have been used in Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. North Korea is believed to use them.

According to Amnesty International at least 778 executions, excluding China's, were carried out around the globe in 2013 — the last year for which numbers were available — compared to 682 in 2012. The organization did not provide a breakdown of executions methods.

At least 1,927 people were known to have been sentenced to death in 57 countries in 2013, up from 1,722 death sentences in 58 countries in 2012, according to Amnesty. **AP**

YEMEN

President flees his house in Aden as rebels near

Ahmed Al-Haj, Sana'a

YEMEN'S embattled president fled his palace in Aden for an undisclosed location yesterday as Shiite rebels offered cash bounty for his capture and arrested his defense minister.

President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi left just hours after the rebels' own television station said they seized an air base where U.S. troops and Europeans advised the country in its fight against al-Qaida militants. That air base is only 60 kilometers away from Aden, the port city where Hadi had established a temporary capital.

Witnesses said they saw a convoy of presidential vehicles yesterday leaving Hadi's palace, located at the top of a hill in Aden overlooking the Arabian Sea.

Presidential officials said Hadi was in an operations room overseeing his forces' response. They declined to say where that facility was located. The officials spoke on

condition of anonymity as they weren't authorized to brief journalists.

The advance of the Shiite rebels, known as Houthis, threatens to plunge the Arab world's poorest country into a civil war that could draw in its Gulf neighbors. Already, Hadi has asked the United Nations to authorize a foreign military intervention in the country.

Yemen's state television broadcaster, controlled by Houthis, made an offer of some \$100,000 for Hadi's capture. Officials meanwhile said that the country's Defense Minister Maj.-Gen. Mahmoud al-Subaihi and his top aide were arrested in the southern city of Lahj, where fighting with Houthi forces was ongoing, before they were transferred to Sana'a.

Already, military officials said militias and military units loyal to Hadi had "fragmented," speeding the rebel advance. They said the rebels were fighting Hadi's allied forces on five different fronts yesterday.



President of Yemen Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi

Mohammed Abdel-Salam, a spokesman for the Houthis, said that their forces were not aiming to "occupy" the south.

"They will be in Aden in few hours," Abdel-Salam told the Houthis' satellite Al-Masirah news channel.

Early yesterday, Al-Masirah reported that the Houthis and allied fighters had "secured" the al-Annad air base, the country's largest. It claimed the base had been looted by both al-Qaida fighters and troops loyal to Hadi. **AP**

Greg Keller and Lori Hinanat, Seyne-les-Alpes

GERMANWINGS TRAGEDY

France cracks open plane's black box, seals off crash site

FRENCH investigators cracked open the badly damaged black box of a German jetliner yesterday and sealed off the rugged Alpine crash site where 150 people died when their plane slammed into a mountain.

The cockpit voice recorder was being mined by investigators for clues into what sent the Germanwings Airbus 320 into a mid-flight dive Tuesday after pilots lost radio contact over the southern French Alps during a routine flight from Barcelona to Duesseldorf.

Helicopters surveying the scattered debris lifted off at daybreak, and crews traveled slowly over land to the remote crash site through fresh snow and rain, threading their way to the craggy ravine. Bereaved families and the French, German and Spanish leaders were expected later yesterday.

"The black box is damaged and must be reconstituted in the coming hours in order to be useable," French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve told RTL radio.

Key to the investigation is what happened the two minutes of 10:30 a.m. and 10:31 a.m., said Segolene Royal, a top government minister who-



A rope hangs from a rescue helicopter flying past debris of the Germanwings passenger jet, scattered on the mountainside, near Seyne les Alpes, French Alps

se portfolio includes transport. From then on, air traffic controllers were unable to make contact with the plane.

The voice recorder takes audio feeds from four microphones within the cockpit and records all the conversations between the pilots, air traffic controllers as well as any noises in the cockpit. The flight data recorder, which Cazeneuve said had not been retrieved yet, captures 25 hou-

The victims included two babies, two opera singers and 16 German high school students

rs' worth of information on the position and condition of almost every major part in a plane.

Royal and Cazeneuve both emphasized that terrorism is considered unlikely in the crash that scattered shards of pulverized debris across several hectares.

The crash left pieces of wreckage "so small and shiny they appear like patches of snow on the mountainside," said Pierre-Henry Brandet, the Interior Ministry spokesman, after flying over the debris field.

Investigators retrieving data from the recorder will focus first "on the human voices, the conversations" followed by the cockpit sounds, Transport Secretary Alain Vidalies told Europe 1 radio. He said the government planned to release information gleaned from the black box as soon as it can be verified.

Germanwings said 144 passengers and six crew members were on board the flight. The victims

included two babies, two opera singers, an Australian mother and her adult son vacationing together, and 16 German high school students and their two teachers returning from an exchange trip to Spain.

"Nothing will be the way it was at our school anymore," said Ulrich Wessel, the principal of Joseph Koenig High School in the German town of Haltern.

"I was asked yesterday how many students there are at the high school in Haltern, and I said 1,283 without thinking — then had to say afterward, unfortunately, 16 fewer since yesterday. And I find that so terrible," he added.

The plane, operated by Germanwings, a budget subsidiary of Lufthansa, was less than an hour from landing in Dueseldorf when it unexpectedly went into a rapid eight-minute descent. The pilots sent out no distress call, France's aviation authority said. AP

2015MIECF Macao International Environmental Co-operation Forum & Exhibition 2015年澳門國際環境合作發展論壇及展覽. GRAND OPENING 26-28/3/2015. 綠色經濟 清新空氣 綻放商機 GREEN ECONOMY Solutions for Clean Air. Host: 中華人民共和國澳門特別行政區政府 Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. Highlights of the Official Events: 26/3/2015 (Thursday) 10:00-11:30 Opening Ceremony for 2015MIECF Keynote Speech: Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland The Venetian Ballroom. 27/3/2015 (Friday) 09:00-18:00 Green Showcase (Trade and Professionals Only) & Green Matching Expo Hall A. 28/3/2015 (Saturday) 09:00-17:00 Green Public Day Expo Hall A. 2015MIECF Keynote Speaker: Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland. Programme of Seminars & Presentations: 27/3/2015 (Friday) 10:00-11:50 "Smart City Energy Conservation Digital Era" Forum. Programme of Concurrent Events: 26-27/3/2015 (Thursday & Friday) 14:00-19:00 Carbon Forum Asia. 28/3/2015 (Saturday) 09:00-17:00 1st International Conference on Promotion and Education of Green Enterprise and Green Management.

what's ON

MIFVF 2015 – THE VOICE OF WATER

TIME: 7:30pm

VENUE: Macau Cultural Centre Small Auditorium

ADMISSION: MOP60

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2870 0699

HOMAGE TO MASTERS WHO INSPIRED US –
WORKS BY 10 HONG KONG
AND MACAU ARTISTS

TIME: 12pm-7pm (Closed on Tuesdays)

UNTIL: May 10, 2015

VENUE: Ox Warehouse,

corner of Avenida Do coronel Mesquita

and Avenida Do Almirante Lacerda

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2853 0026

'THE INNER LIGHT: CONTEMPORARY NIHONGA
BY ARLINDA FROTA'

TIME: 10pm-7pm (Monday to Friday)

3pm-7pm (Saturday, closed on Sunday and

Public Holidays)

UNTIL: March 28, 2015

VENUE: Rui Cunha Foundation Gallery,

Av. Da Praia Grande No. 749, R/C, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2892 3288

ENCHANTING FLOWERS:

EXHIBITION OF MARCO SZETO'S PAINTINGS

TIME: 10am-6:30pm

UNTIL: March 29, 2015

VENUE: Calçada Da Barra No. 16 R/C LJ A,

Edif. San Chak, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2896 2820

GRAND TAIPA NATURAL PARK

PARK AND SCULPTURE ZONE: 24 hours

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

VENUE: Rampa do Observatório, Taipa

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2888 0087

MACAU FASHION GALLERY

– FASHION POP UP SHOP

TIME: 10am-8pm (Closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: May 10, 2015

ADDRESS: Macau Fashion Gallery / No. 47,

Rua de S. Roque, Macau|

Free Admission

ENQUIRIES: (853)2835 3341

Offbeat

CROWD-FUNDING CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED
FOR 'SUPER TROOPERS' SEQUEL

The comedy troupe behind the cult hit film "Super Troopers" has launched a crowd-funding campaign to help bankroll a sequel.

Broken Lizard made the 2001 police comedy and on Tuesday asked for USD2 million in contributions to get "Super Troopers 2" produced.

Broken Lizard says Fox Searchlight has agreed to distribute the sequel in North America if the comedy troupe can fund the making of it.

The call for contributions is posted on Indiegogo.com and has raised more than \$1.1 million. The campaign runs for a month. If the goal is met, shooting will start this summer.

The campaign mirrors that of the "Veronica Mars" film Warner Bros. released last year after a Kickstarter campaign.

"Super Troopers" is about five Vermont state police troopers. It made \$23.2 million worldwide.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	Documentary Series
15:00	Debate on Economy and Finance Policy Report for 2015
20:00	News
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:30	Criminal Minds S8
22:10	Brazil Avenue
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:20	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:50	RTPi Live

cinema

CINETEATRO

26 MAR - 01 APR



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



THE DIVERGENT SERIES: INSURGENT

ROOM 2

(2D) 2.30, 4.45, 9.30 pm

(3D) 7.15 pm

Director: Robert Schwentke

Starring: Shailene Woodley, Ansel Elgort, Theo James

Language: Cantonese (English and Chinese)

Duration: 119min

LOST AND LOVE

ROOM 3

2.30, 4.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Peng Sanyuan

Starring: Andy Lau, Jing Boran, Sandra Ng

Language: Mandarin (english and Chinese)

Duration: 106min

RUN ALL NIGHT

ROOM 3

7.30 pm

Director: Jaume Collet-Serra

Starring: Liam Neeson, Ed Harris, Joel Kinnaman

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 114min

MACAU TOWER

19 MAR - 1 APR

THE DIVERGENT SERIES: INSURGENT

2.30, 4.30, 7.00, 9.30 pm

Director: Robert Schwentke

Starring: Shailene Woodley, Ansel Elgort, Theo James

Language: Cantonese (English and Chinese)

Duration: 119min

this day in history

1981 'GANG OF FOUR'
LAUNCHES NEW PARTY

The Social Democrats have launched their new political party pledging to "reconcile the nation" and "heal divisions between classes".

At a crowded press conference in London, signalling the start of a massive media campaign to recruit supporters, the party outlined its hopes of breaking the political mould and of making significant gains at the next General Election.

The Gang of Four, the nick-name of the four Labour defectors who set up the SDP, outlined their hopes of winning, with the Liberals, a majority in the Commons.

Roy Jenkins, former Labour cabinet minister, David Owen, William Rodgers and Shirley Williams published a 12-point document covering elections, education and international co-operation.

The party's proposals included calls to reform the political system, environmentally friendly policies, equality of opportunity for women and ethnic minorities, and a fairer distribution of wealth.

Mr Jenkins said formulating an incomes policy would be "one of the most difficult things we have to do".

The Gang of Four describe themselves as a left-of-centre party and is the first to be run in Britain with a one-member one-vote system for policies and selection.

Dr Owen said the party offered Britain a fresh start and he said recruits were coming from other parties all the time.

"We are going to be free: we will make decisions... But they will be your decisions," he told potential members.

He accused the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of having divided the country between the North, Scotland, Wales, and the still "relatively prosperous" South East.

The four left Labour citing major differences over European and defence policies as the party has taken a sharp turn to the left under leader Michael Foot.

The opposition leader has insisted they will win no support.

But with call centres waiting to hear from future supporters and an estimated £170,000 spent on regional journeys and advertising, the SDP is determined to win over MPs and then voters.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The party joined forces with the Liberal Party to create the Liberal-SDP Alliance in autumn 1981.

It enjoyed increasing support but by the 1987 general election the Alliance was weakened by high Labour support.

After the election, Liberal Party leader David Steel proposed an official merger with the SDP and while most of the SDP's membership voted in favour of the merger, its leader David Owen remained adamantly opposed to it.

He pledged to fight the now new Social and Liberal Democrat Party (SLD).

But by 1990, the party had lost a great deal of credibility and support and the SDP was folded.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 It's way too easy for you to spin out of control today...

Taurus April 20-May 20 You're deeply idealistic, though you are usually practical enough to follow up in ways that make sense.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Try not to worry too much about what's really going on - there's at least one person who is hiding their real intentions...

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Work issues are still driving you crazy - though they could feel pretty minor. It's one of those days when work (or the search for a job) just isn't as important...

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Get all the details before you make a move today - otherwise, things are sure to fall apart once new data starts to trickle in.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You may find it easier to pick things apart than to build them up, but resist the urge unless it seems absolutely necessary.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 You feel a bit out of sorts today - not quite sick, not quite depressed, but certainly not at your best.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Conflict isn't such a bad thing on days like today - it can end up strengthening both sides, and that's good for the group as a whole.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Your frugality saves the day - even if this is the first day of your new austerity kick!

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You should see a distinct improvement in your situation today - so much so that you may wonder how things got to be so good!

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 This isn't a good day for struggle - especially against rules and restriction. Even if they seem unfair, you just end up getting in deeper if you push too hard.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 Your colleagues need some new direction quickly - can you reach out to them in a way that they can appreciate? It's a good time for you to reel them in and ensure that they all know what to expect.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

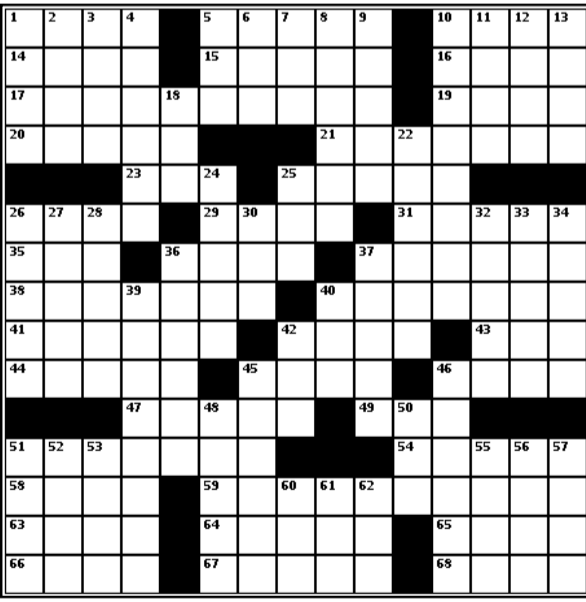
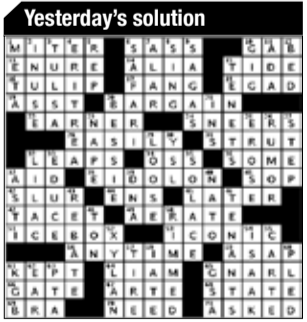
WEATHER

Table with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION. Rows for CHINA (Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, etc.) and WORLD (Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, etc.).

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Mil. school; 5- Keep an ___ the ground; 10- Straits of Juan de ___; 14- Identical; 15- Welcome; 16- Reverberate; 17- Write in shorthand; 19- King of comedy; 20- Doughnut-shaped surface; 21- Land measure; 23- Society girl; 25- Chilean pianist Claudio; 26- Architect Mies van der ___; 29- Member of a great Peruvian people; 31- Snares; 35- DDE's command; 36- Fencing sword; 37- Young woman, Down Under; 38- Rhinoplasty; 40- Chief; 41- Swarmed; 42- Cover with earth; 43- Bambi's aunt; 44- Easy ___; 45- Damon of 'Good Will Hunting'; 46- Bristle; 47- Lost; 49- Exclamation of relief; 51- Felt hat; 54- Gossip; 58- Moolah; 59- Charming; 63- Narrate; 64- Less common; 65- Dies ___; 66- Dagger of yore; 67- Bond servant; 68- 1994 Jodie Foster film;

DOWN: 1- Gal Fri.; 2- Roman censor; 3- From the U.S.; 4- Make bare; 5- Silly Putty holder; 6- Part of ETA; 7- 'Michael Collins' actor; 8- Volcanic material; 9- Alternate; 10- Given prominence; 11- Arthur Ashe's alma mater; 12- Blacken the edges of; 13- Bang-up; 18- Sugary suffix; 22- China; 24- Two-legged support; 25- Bandage brand; 26- Oscar de la ___; 27- Siouan speakers; 28- Old Testament book; 30- Kan. neighbor; 32- Actress Anouk; 33- Factory; 34- Capital city of Yemen; 36- Throws out; 37- Simmons rival; 39- Fortify; 40- Humble dwelling; 42- Noise made by a sheep; 45- Pertaining to the mind; 46- Recluse; 48- Files high; 50- Circle section; 51- Cpls.' superiors; 52- Adolescent; 53- Glamour rival; 55- Bog; 56- Track shape; 57- Winder for holding flexible material; 60- Song syllable; 61- Gun, as an engine; 62- 100 square meters;



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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

CRICKET

What to watch in the Australia vs India World Cup semi

AUSTRALIA and India have won six of the last eight Cricket World Cup titles and have developed a heated rivalry over the last decade. When the teams meet in the World Cup semifinal today at the Sydney Cricket Ground, there's bound to be some friction. Both captains have attacking mindsets in the 50-over format, and the top order of both batting lineups are stacked with free-hitting players, so there's also bound to be some entertaining and enterprising cricket.

The winner will advance to Sunday's final against New Zealand at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Here are some things to watch:

THE SLEDGE: Not a universally recognized term but widely known in cricket circles as a tactic used to distract an opposition player with banter or insulting comments, be it subtle, implied or obvious.

Australian teams are good at it. Recent series between Australia and England, and Australia and India have featured heated verbal exchanges, and players from those teams have been fined and sanctioned.

Australian opener David Warner is reported to be on his last warning before some kind of ban is imposed, and allrounder Shane Watson conceded Wednesday that he can't be far off after being fined for his part in an angry episode in the quarter-final win over Pakistan. Neither player wants to risk being suspended for the final, but there are others — paceman Mitchell Johnson jokingly volunteered — to take up the banter in the semifinal against India.

"I don't want to get fined again or get suspended so I know I'm going to have to be even more diligent with what I say, when I



Indian players celebrate after the run out of Bangladesh's Imrul Kayes, centre, during their Cricket World Cup quarterfinal

say it and how I say it," Watson said. "Based on my last fine, I am just about on my last warning."

Australian skipper Michael Clarke was asked if Warner's attitude had changed since the International Cricket Council announced a crackdown on the sledging tactics for the World Cup.

"David will be fine. He knows the rules, as we all do," Clarke said.

UNDER PRESSURE: Virat Kohli has thrived in matches against Australia, with his combative style coming to the fore. He is one of three players in the

India squad who featured in the World Cup final in 2011, so he knows all about the pressure of local expectations.

India is the only country to have won the Cricket World Cup title on home soil. Australia has won it in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Caribbean, but failed miserably in 1992 — the only previous time the tournament was staged in Australia and New Zealand.

"I'm sure they'll be under massive pressure," Kohli said in a television interview for Fox Sports. "I can understand, we played at home last time around and every ball, every player, every

over that we played of any game was really nerve-wracking."

AWAY CROWD: Rohit Sharma expects there to be more blue shirts than yellow shirts in the Sydney Cricket Ground crowd for the semifinal, with the number of India fans expected to far outweigh the number of hometown supporters.

"We've played in India a number of times and they out-support us there as well," Clarke said. "We don't need any more motivation. We know we've got the support of the Australian public. We've felt it the whole tournament, and we'll feel it

again tomorrow whether it's 30 percent of the fans here or 50 percent of the fans."

India has played Australia 14 ODIs at the Sydney Cricket Ground since 1980 for only one win — in 2008 — although it has registered wins at the venue against England, New Zealand and Pakistan.

"I thought they would have had a better success rate at the SCG than that, so that does surprise me," Clarke said. "But it probably does show how Australia loves playing in their own back yard."

ROAD WARRIORS: The India squad landed in Australia in November and went through a test series against the Aussies and a limited-overs tri-series against Australia and England without winning a match. India also lost a World Cup warmup match to Australia before starting the tournament proper with a big win over archrival Pakistan which sparked a seven-game winning spree.

"When you're away for four months, you definitely miss home, there is no doubt," Sharma said. "But we are here on a mission and the mission is to win the World Cup."

"If you look at the way the last one and a half months has gone, it's been really good, so we have to make the last four months we have spent here a reward by winning the semifinals and the finals. We don't mind for staying away for five months that way." AP

FIGURE SKATING

Americans Chock, Bates take lead in ice dancing at worlds

MADISON Chock and Evan Bates will attempt to become just the second Americans to win gold in ice dancing at the figure skating world championships after taking the lead in the short dance with a career-best score yesterday.

Chock and Bates, the reigning U.S. champions, scored 74.47 to outpace Kaitlyn Weaver and Andrew Poje of Canada in second and defending world champions Anna Cappellini and Luca Lanotte of Italy in third.

Chock and Bates will attempt to become just the second Americans to win gold in ice dancing at the figure skating world championships after taking the lead in the short dance with a career-best score yesterday.

"We've never been more prepared for an event or trained harder for an event so that gives us the utmost confidence," Bates said.

The only other Americans to win a world ice dancing title were Meryl Davis and Charlie White, who won gold in 2011 and 2013, in addition to Olympic gold last year in Sochi. The duo haven't competed since the Olympics, but were expected to take part in the world

championships opening ceremony later Wednesday.

Weaver and Poje were the favorites coming into Shanghai having won all five international events they competed in this season, including the Grand Prix Finals and Four Continents Championships.

"We've had the weight a little bit this whole season and we put it on ourselves," Weaver said. "Regardless of the result right now, we're so happy with

how we've been able to shoulder that pressure and funnel it into the performance."

Chock and Bates also led after the short dance at Four Continents in South Korea last month before Weaver and Poje came back to edge them for the gold.

"We know we can't rest," Bates said. "We have to absolutely attack the (long) program and skate as though we were coming from behind."



Madison Chock and Evan Bates of the United States

Cappellini and Lanotte have had a difficult year with health issues and fatigue after a whirlwind 2013-14 season.

"It's been hard, especially with everyone expecting things from us

because we're the world champions," Cappellini said. "We wanted to push through maybe too much. Looking back, I don't know if maybe we should have taken a little time off and recharged." AP

opinion

Vox Parva
 Benedict Keith Ip



SCOUT OATHS AND LAWS ARE MORE THAN THE "DUTY OF OTHERS"

Recently, debate over the launching of national education has been heating up throughout society.

It started on March 20 when "All About Macau", a local online media source, published news about the money that has been spent on patriotic education and activities known as "National Defense Education Camps 國防教育營". A quick count indicates that the government has spent around MOP89 million from the 2008/2009 academic year to the 2014/2015 one. On March 21, the Education Bureau published two press releases to promote the importance of the camps. In a quick response to All About Macau's article, the Scouts Association of Macau also published a statement on March 21, in which it proclaims that the outcomes of these camps are very successful, as these events attract 28,400 participants. This declaration is clearly a once-and-for-all statement that leaves no space for any further explanations. Enrolments will continue, no matter whether you like it or not.

This week also marks the opening of policy address debates, as Chief Executive Fernando Chui has appointed new heads for several secretariats. It is the first time since the handover in 1999 that the debates have had to be postponed; they are supposed to be in November right after the announcement of the policy address.

The legislative assembly hall is "harmonious" (see MDT March 25, p3). The article reveals that the government will build 4,000 more public houses, as well as adjusting policy surrounding the number of shuttles and public transport lines, paternity leave legislation, the dealers' license scheme, and the famous 9,000 patacas cash handout scheme.

As for the above-mentioned national education, nothing was said. I would say that it is permissible not to mention this issue, simply because our bureaucratic system takes time to react and respond...well, I am sure you know more about this.

If you've never learnt about the history of scouts, the tradition actually began in England. A man called Robert Baden-Powell created the system, wishing to apply certain disciplines to train the youth to become good men. The oaths of the World Organization of the Scout Movement have been modified a little bit from the three-principled utterance that is "Duty to God, Duty to others and Duty to self." With the background of the English Church, the concept of the "God" originally referred to the Christian God. However, now this part has been modified to "Adherence to spiritual principles", which includes different faiths and beliefs. That's why we can have Buddhism, Islam and many other faiths forming international scout organizations. Then after this, the invocation refers to the duty to others, which means "Loyalty to one's country in harmony with the promotion of local, national and international peace, understanding and cooperation." Some countries' scouts' oaths also articulate a duty to country.

In a public debate last week, Professor Vong Sou Kuan, Associate Professor and director of the University of Macau's Educational Research Centre, raised some points that are worth reflecting on. She referred to famous American philosopher John Dewey's saying, "Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself." Any ideas that nurture one's emotion are simply artificial, and it is not the true concept of national education. I agree with Professor Vong Sou Kuan, and I believe that we still have a lot to learn in order to prepare a better foundation to discuss this sensitive issue.

THE BUZZ US: 'CABARET' TOUR TO START IN RHODE ISLAND EARLY IN 2016

Willkommen to the road. The Roundabout Theatre Company said yesterday its touring Broadway production of "Cabaret" will start next year in Providence, Rhode Island. No casting was announced. After kicking off in January at the Providence Performing Arts Center, the tour will include stops in Los Angeles, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Miami, Las Vegas, Dallas, Cincinnati, Baltimore, New Orleans,

Houston, Louisville, Des Moines and Milwaukee. "Cabaret" centers on the world of the indulgent Kit Kat Klub in Berlin as it becomes intertwined with the world outside, which gets more precarious on the brink of World War II. The current Broadway revival, which teams up performer Alan Cumming, director Sam Mendes and choreographer Rob Marshall and the creative team from the 1998 revival, has been a hit.

'Stand by Me' among 25 records being preserved at US library



Brett Zongker, Washington

ONE of the most broadcast songs of the 20th century, Ben E. King's "Stand by Me," has been selected for preservation at the Library of Congress, along with recordings from Joan Baez, The Righteous Brothers, Steve Martin and the darker sounds of the band Radiohead.

Twenty-five sound recordings spanning from 1890 to 1999 were added yesterday to the library's National Recording Registry. Each year the library chooses recordings that are "culturally, historically or aesthetically significant."

Some of the unforgettable tunes being archived include "Ac-Cent-Tchu-Ate the Positive" from Johnny Mercer in 1944, Baez's first solo album (1960), The Righteous Brothers' "You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'" (1964) and Steve Martin's "A Wild and Crazy Guy" comedy album (1978), which broke new ground as Martin broke out of formulaic jokes and punchlines for

less predictable humor.

Upon hearing of his archive-worthy achievement, Martin deadpanned: "I could not be more proud of this honor. This means the record was probably funny."

The Library of Congress has been seeking to preserve important sound recordings for 15 years under terms of a preservation act passed by Congress.

In the 1960s, King originally intended his song "Stand by Me" for his former group, the Drifters, but he ended up recording it himself. The song is anchored by one of the best-known bass lines in history, curators said. A few years later, The Righteous Brothers were recording "Lovin' Feelin'." They thought the song was wrong for them at first but ended up with a hit.

The oldest recordings being saved are in the form of 600 wax cylinder recordings at the University of California, Santa Barbara, that were recorded by consumers in the 1890s, 1900s and 1910s as snapshots of everyday life. These are among the most endangered audio formats because their grooves are fragile and the wax decomposes over time. Another set of wax-cylinder recordings from the 1893 Chicago World's Fair captured sounds of musicians from around the world performing at the fair, giving Americans their first

exposure to "world music."

Other historic recordings chosen for preservation include radio coverage of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's funeral in 1945 and the 1953 theatrical recording of "John Brown's Body," based on a Civil War poem that proved commercially successful as a non-musical play.

Curators also deemed some more recent recordings worthy of preservation, include tunes from TV's "Sesame Street." The children's show used music as an integral part of its educational program and drew stars ranging from B.B. King to R.E.M. and the Dixie Chicks. The library chose the 1995 recording "Sesame Street: All-Time Platinum Favorites" for the registry.

Public nominations lifted Radiohead's 1997 album "OK Computer" to the curators' attention after several years, with an album's information-age dystopia characterized by corrupt politicians, psychopaths, consumerism and airline disasters.

"I sort of see it as part of a certain ongoing phenomenon in rock music that maybe begins with the Velvet Underground but also The Doors, who are on the registry this year. Pop music is not entirely positive in its outlook, shall we say," curator Matt Barton said. "I think we can say that 'OK Computer' really sums a lot of that up." AP

Station	Air quality
Roadside	50-70 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	60-80 Moderate
Ambient	45-65 Moderate

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS

SRI LANKA's president was to hold talks with the Chinese president on a trip to Beijing that appeared to be aimed at balancing his nation's relations with China and India, which are competing for influence in the Indian Ocean region.

NEPAL A Nepalese mountaineering official says a Finnish climber and his local guide died while descending from the summit of Mount Annapurna in the first casualties of the mountaineering season in the Himalayan nation.

JAPAN Despite mounting protests, Japan continues to finance the building of coal-fired power plants with money earmarked for fighting climate change, with two new projects underway in India and Bangladesh.



USA H.J. Heinz Co. is buying Kraft Foods Group Inc., creating what the companies say will be the third-largest food and beverage company in North America.

USA-AFGHANISTAN President Ashraf Ghani is expected to get a warm reception from both Republicans and Democrats on Capitol Hill — primarily because he's not Hamid Karzai.

IRAQI Shiite militias defend the central city of Samarra and its revered Shiite shrine from the Islamic State group, but many of the town's mainly Sunni residents fear both sides of the country's increasingly sectarian conflict.

UKRAINIAN president Petro Poroshenko dismisses the billionaire governor of an eastern region following a dispute pitting the tycoon against the government.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

AP Photo/The Eau Claire Leader-Telegram, Paul M. Walsh



Top clown, Eva Fox, aka "Pinky Pettles" and her husband Charley Fox, aka "Charley" (USA) perform in a skit to simulate a church setting, during a competition at the World Clown Association Convention in Reno.