

BAD WEATHER DELAYS FLIGHTS

A total of 16 Macau-bound flights have been diverted to airports in Shenzhen or Hong Kong

P2



LOCAL STUDENTS' PAINTINGS SENT TO CAMBRIDGE

P3



CHINESE ACTIVIST MORE DETERMINED AFTER LOCKUP

Li Tingting, an openly lesbian campaigner for women's issues, has been at the center of an outcry over the detention of activists

P11

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA's Central Bank said yesterday that it will cut its bank reserve requirement ratio by 1 percentage point to stimulate more lending into a slowing economy. *More on p10*

AFGHANISTAN An Afghan police chief says insurgents armed with guns and explosives have entered a police station in the southern city of Lashkar Gar after a suicide bomber detonated explosives at the gate of the compound allowing the others to gain entry.



NEPAL on Saturday marked the anniversary of Mount Everest's deadliest avalanche with a memorial and a government announcement that it will set up a welfare fund for mountaineering and trekking workers in the Himalayan nation. The April 18, 2014, avalanche killed 16 Sherpa guides who were carrying their loads just above Everest's base camp.

More on backpage

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FINANCIAL TIMES

N Korea and Russia deepen ties as sense of isolation grows

F1

Hundreds feared dead in Mediterranean shipwreck

P15



Rosário prioritizes public works and vehicle control in long task list

P5 POLICY ADDRESS

Property developer allegedly sues New Macau

Several New Macau Association (ANM) members have been summoned by the Judiciary Police, allegedly for assisting an investigation into a libel lawsuit, according to a post on the association's Facebook page last Saturday. Last September, the property developer Companhia de Construção e Investimento Ho Chun Kei Limitada, who was involved in the urban development dispute in northern Taipa, took legal action against Jason Chao, the former president of the group, and Bill Chou, an outspoken scholar and ANM member, for raising groundless accusations about the property company. According to the association, the company also requested civil claims amounting to one million patacas in the case, which was what the current president of the association Sulu Sou called a deeply premeditated amount, as it was even higher than the total assets of the group. The ANM post stressed that the association would handle land disputes with caution in future, as the issues might lead to clashes with financially powerful property developers. However, ANM also claimed that the libel lawsuit would not deter the association from "pursuing justice."

False ceiling collapse injures two workers

The sudden collapse of a false ceiling at the Studio City construction site on the Cotai Strip has left two workers wounded, with two others trapped under the rubble. The accident happened at around 3 p.m. when the 30 by 10 meter ceiling collapsed from a height of around 5 meters to the ground. Ambulances were quick to arrive on site and attend to the injured, who sustained wounds to the arm and the waist. The two construction workers still stranded under the rubble were reported to be unharmed.

Judge says FBI ruse violated rights of Vegas hotel guest

Ken Ritter, Las Vegas

The FBI violated the rights of a wealthy Malaysian businessman when agents posed as Internet repairmen to get into his Las Vegas suite to search for evidence of wrongdoing during the World Cup soccer tournament last summer, a federal judge ruled Friday.

His ruling threw out evidence collected last July from Wei Seng "Paul" Phua's high-security luxury villa at Caesars Palace. "The government violated the defendant's Fourth Amendment rights" against unreasonable searches and seizures, U.S. District Judge Andrew Gordon said in a bluntly worded decision.

Phua's attorneys said they were stunned to learn that investigators enlisted a Caesars contractor to shut off Internet access so agents disguised as repairmen could enter with hidden cameras. "Law enforcement can't break something in your house and pose as repair people to get inside,"



Phua walks into federal court in Las Vegas

defense attorney David Chesnoff said.

The defense lawyers accused the FBI of deceiving a magistrate judge who granted a search warrant by failing to disclose the tactics used to find probable cause and leaving any reference to the ruse out of investigative reports.

Officials with the FBI referred messages seeking comment to

the U.S. attorney's office in Las Vegas, which didn't immediately respond. Gordon's 22-page ruling effectively guts the criminal prosecution of a man authorities characterized as a top member of an Asian organized crime syndicate who flew to Las Vegas last summer on his private jet after having been arrested and charged with operating an illegal sports betting business in Macau.

The decision, however, doesn't kill the case outright. Prosecutors said some USD13 million in bets had been wagered before the FBI, working with Nevada gambling regulators, raided three Caesars Palace villas where Phua, his son and several other people were staying. Agents seized computers, cellphones and cash.

Gordon called the evidence collected from Phua's suite "fruits of an unconstitutional search," and said it can't be used if the government presses forward with charges that Phua operated an illegal gambling business and transmi-

tted wagering information. The two charges each carry a penalty of up to seven years in prison.

Phua's lawyers also disputed allegations that their client had criminal ties. Federal prosecutors conceded mistakes but argued that the government did nothing malicious and had not violated Phua's constitutional rights.

Prosecutor Kimberly Frayn argued that Internet service isn't an essential service like electricity, air conditioning or water, and that people in the Caesars Palace villas weren't compelled to invite in the agents disguised as repairmen.

Phua, 50, was the last remaining defendant among eight people arrested in the case, including his son Darren Wai Kit Phua, 23. Darren Phua was the last of six defendants to plead guilty to lesser charges, forfeit large amounts of money and return to Asia under plea deals banning them from travel to the U.S. for five years. Charges against one defendant were dismissed. **AP**

Thousands of local passengers affected by bad weather

A total of 16 Macau-bound flights have been diverted to airports in Shenzhen or Hong Kong, while around 12 flights ready to take off were called off or delayed over the weekend as the city's visibility was greatly impacted by the inclement weather.

It was reported that more than 1,800 passengers were on board the diverted flights, and the cancellation or delay of those flights has left 2,800 passengers stranded at the airport, according to the Macau Daily News

(also known as "OuMun").

The authorities at the meteorological department told media that the combination of strong air currents from the south and a low cloud-base height was the main culprit for the flight delays, diversions and cancellations on Saturday. Chaos unfolded in the airport hall as distraught passengers scrambled to fix their flights at the only two counters available.

The incident has also caused massive

crowding at the airport as some of the passengers were forced to spend the night there after failing to book hotel rooms. The Civil Aviation Authority backed the decision of the pilots of the affected flights to land at the neighboring cities' airports, saying it was the "right move" to prioritize safety.

Among the 16 flights diverted, 13 returned to the city yesterday, with two delayed and another one cancelled yesterday, according to media reports. **Staff reporter**

The Macau International Film and Video Festival (MIFVF) organized the competition "48 Rush Hours" last weekend, asking film makers to create a 3-minute video in just 48 hours using any kind of shooting equipment, as a challenge of creativity and skills.

The topic, "Journey", was announced last Friday to 57 applicants who had to produce and deliver a video before Saturday at 10 a.m. Twenty nine productions were submitted and the Grand Prize went to "Love Journey of a Turtle," by Leong Wai Man. Four Distinction Prizes were granted to "Concrete Jungle," by Loi Chon Pang, "The Bicycle

ARTS

Leong Wai Man wins '48 Rush Hours'



Diaries," by Filipa Queiroz, "Live Turning Point," by Lo Hoi Fong and "On The Street," by Can Can.

The films were assessed by three judges, namely António Caetano Faria (local director), Wei Jiang

(lecturer at the Beijing Normal University-Hong Kong Baptist University) and See Kam Chan (UMAC assistant professor), who came up with their best picks.

According to a press release

issued by the Macau Cultural Centre, "all three juries considered the productions this year as having great diversity and more mature filming techniques, though the narration skills should be worked on." The video challenge, they pointed out, "is an excellent exercise and platform for young directors to consolidate their skills and show their creativity."

MIFVF 2015 continues with a string of educational events next week, followed by the Macao Indies, running from May 12 to 17.

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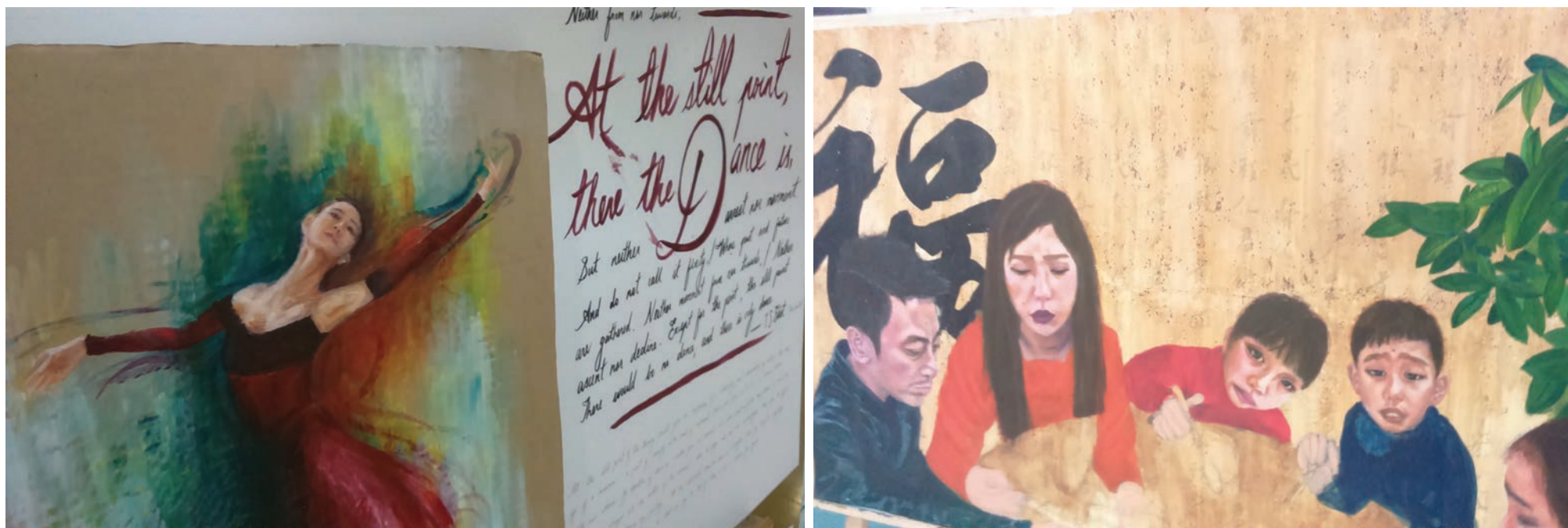
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THE student works from the latest annual art exhibition organized by the Macau Anglican School (MAC) have been sent off to England's Cambridge University for assessment.

The paintings showcased at the common area on the school building's fifth floor were actually course work by the senior students. They are enrolled in art courses linked to Cambridge University's educational system, whose Cambridge International General Certificate of Education (IGCSE) has been integrated into the school's curriculum. Artworks from those courses were sent to the prestigious British university last week.

Wendy Choi, a form six student and aspiring professional dancer, candidly expressed her satisfaction with her art piece from last year, and once again devoted her artistic coursework to a dancing-related topic. "I would like to express the movement while dancing [through this painting] because a lot of times people only admire the beauty of dancing, yet nobody sees the genuine dynamic there," said the student. She continued: "I

ANGLICAN SCHOOL ART EXHIBITION

Local students' paintings sent to Cambridge

intended to highlight it with the color of purple, and some parts are seen as obscure, so it seems to be emerging from the background, enveloped in movement."

The seemingly colorful painting, in which a giant pistol pointing at the head of a grouchy man, was created by the Macanese student Albertino, who told the Times that it was a reflection of his mental struggles with personal issues in daily life.

"It means [...] I am trying to escape reality, to go back to the memories, like the happy moments I used to have. And the gun is the reality, stress, and the issues that make me unhappy and make me try to escape back into the memories," said the Macanese student, adding that the colorfully messy back-

ground loaded with different heads were the "happy moments and people" in his life.

Another abstract painting records the endless, yet youthful adventure through the city of Cassidy James Lichtenstein, a devout fan of bicycle motocross. "So basically I included different factors into my painting, like the places where I BMX, the movement and the speed of the BMX. My point is we don't stop even if it's a stop, and we keep going past the stop signs," said the senior student, who also mentioned during the interview that he would like to continue his passion for art after school by joining the marketing and advertising industry.

The household story, "A frog in a well", was local stu-

dent Kimberly's theme for her painting, which also depicts her innermost desire to venture out of the city and into the world. "The parents of the frog inside the painting say there are lots of monsters outside, and you will likely starve or drown. It's a lot safer to stay in this ordinary world without anything," said the schoolgirl, referring to the world described inside the painting as the city we dwell in.

The concept of family varies from one person to another. To Choi Peng, who very much values her family members, a Chinese reunion dinner is the perfect topic to depict. The entire dinner scene was created from her own perspective, with a large calligraphic Chinese character drawn, which, according to her, carried an

ancient meaning of "giving and taking." Aside from that, the schoolgirl added a special touch to her painting with dried tea leaves applied on its surface to give the piece a traditional Chinese feel.

Truly touched by the students' creative products, course instructors Paulo Bishop and Anne Cameron believe that students just have to follow their hearts and not focus on accuracy when it came to creating art. "Each student has their unique, personal vision and dreams. As teachers, our ambition for them is to put their whole hearts into their work and to realize their ideas and ambitions," both said. Mr Bishop and Ms Cameron were responsible for developing the students' skills, techniques and research ability. **Staff reporter**

STATISTICS | TELECOMMUNICATIONS

159,900 households connected, more smartphone users



AROUND 159,900 households were connected to the Internet in 2014, accounting for 84.3% of the total number of households in Macau. According to information from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC), this number is up by 1.7 percentage points year-on-year.

The data indicated that the percentage of households using mobile broadband to access the

Internet increased by 7.2 percentage points year-on-year to 87.1%, driven by the popularity of smartphones. Meanwhile, households using a fiber-optic broadband connection almost doubled, at 17,700.

For members of the population aged 3 and above, the rate of Internet usage was 69.8 percent, up by 4.0 percentage points year-on-year. The highest rate of Internet usage was

that of members of the population aged 15-24, at 95.9 percent. Moreover, 93.4 percent of Internet users accessed the internet daily, up by 2.4 percentage points year-on-year.

Regarding the purpose of using the Internet, 86.9 percent used it for communication, 75.6 percent for web entertainment and 13.8 percent for shopping. The median online shopping spending amounted to MOP1,000 in the

fourth quarter of 2014, up by 33.3 percent year-on-year.

DSEC further indicated that 153,700 households possessed computer equipment. The rate of computer usage for members of the population aged 3 and above dropped by 1.1 percentage points year-on-year to 60.6 percent, owing to the greater variety of functions available on mobile phones and other devices.



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POLICY ADDRESS | TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS

Secretary prioritizes public works and vehicle control in long task list

Brook Yang

THE Legislative Assembly (AL) concluded its plenary meeting debates on the government's 2015 policy objectives regarding transport and public works last Friday, where lawmakers put forth concerns and suggestions over a wide range of issues; including the delays in public works, old neighborhood redevelopment, environmental facilities, traffic control, telecom services, and the allocation of land resources.

Facing an area with seemingly endless problems, the Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, agreed on many of the suggestions but also avoided making further commitments. "Now there's a concept in Macau: any problem that appears would be pushed to the government," he responded, stressing that the secretariat he leads is taking on more responsibilities than it can cope with, and that he would prioritize not stalling the construction of public works.

In response to lawmakers' expectations that the construction of the new hospital complex in Coloane does not fall victim to further delays, the Secretary said he would not tolerate nor disregard the stagnation in public works. "This is one thing I'll definitely deal with: whether it's one month or two months [of stagnation], I will definitely handle it; if we cannot solve it, why not count bills with the contractor?"

The absence of a safety and quality system certification [QS] in Macau's public works also raised debate, as well as the weakness in the current bidding system. Lawmaker Mak Soi Kun indicated that the authorities should classify contractors into different levels and categories, rather than allowing all contractors to bid for a project for which they may not possess the expertise. He further suggested the government take the lead to introduce green architecture and construction materials in order to reduce pollution. In response, the Secretary said he agreed with all of these opinions, but was still unable to spare resources.

Lawmakers also concentrated inquiries on the redevelopment of Macau's old neighborhoods. Several of them indicated that the responsible committee had been established ten years ago to commit planning studies, but no substantial steps have



yet been made. Lawmaker Lam Heong Sang also warned that the redevelopment cannot be made for the profit of real estate developers.

In response, the secretary said that the initiative will be carried out under the Chief Executive's "urban renewal" concepts, and a new committee will be established to take over. "Compared to the concept of 'old neighborhood restructuring,' the new concept allows buildings – whether in the old or new districts – to be renovated or rebuilt, based on the property owners' consensus," he explained. He also clarified

that the government intends to limit the threshold of eligible buildings to the age of 30, but a specific plan has yet to be made. In addition, he revealed that a new round of public consultations will be launched on planning the five new reclamation zones.

Regarding lawmaker Si Ka Lon's urging for the integration and elevation of the Border Gate area, the Secretary replied that, "there's not much space to cast."

"But this is still mostly subject to the public ownership. If this cannot be done, how does the government expect to im-

plement the urban renewal that involves many private ownerships?" questioned the lawmaker.

Regarding solutions to the

city's traffic delays, lawmaker Leonel Alberto Alves stressed that the Secretary "needs courage to make a choice." In response, Rosário said that controlling the number of vehicles is "an unavoidable measure to be implemented sooner or later." He announced that this year will see a raise in both driving taxes and car parking fees, and monthly passes at public car parks will be gradually replaced with charges by the hour.

The Secretary also agreed with the lawmakers' opinion on revising the taxi licensing scheme. He pointed out that about half of the current taxi licenses were granted permanently, implying that "they can be inherited by the owners' sons and grandsons."

Environmental facilities for the city's waste disposal have also drawn a lot of questions. Rosário replied that the mounting pile of refuse exceeds Macau's disposal capacity. "If I tell you the truth of it, you might not be able to sleep at night," he told the AL. "Every year there are 4 million cubic meters of construction waste; every day it takes 1,000 trucks [to move]; the construction waste landfill near the airport is dozens of meters high. This is a very critical issue."

LRT CONSTRUCTION COSTS GOV'T MOP9 BILLION

THE SECRETARY revealed that the government has spent approximately MOP9 billion so far on building the Light Rail Transit (LRT) system. At last Thursday's AL debates, Rosário apologized for being unable to give a conclusive answer as to how much more time and money the LRT con-

struction would require. Facing lawmakers' questioning the next day regarding the future budget, Rosário explained that the government may need to re-start the construction of the LRT superstructure from tendering, "thus it's hard to define the completion date and cost."

Rosário pledges to streamline administrative procedures

THE Secretary for Transport and Public Works announced at Friday's AL debate that as part of the new buildings' acceptance procedure, officials must give direct and instant answers on-site to enhance administrative efficiency. The secretary further pledged to improve the approval procedures for construction projects and public housing applications, as well as streamlining the number of departments.

Regarding the bureaucratic procedure of accepting newly completed constructions, Rosário said a decision was made Friday morning in his departments' joint meeting that, "from now on, in terms of the acceptance procedure, if there's a problem found on site, [the inspector should] write

down an opinion immediately; if there's no problem, [the inspector should] sign the confirmation immediately."

"If the person doesn't have the ability to sign the acceptance or to find problems, this person shouldn't be sent to do the inspection and acceptance; if one person cannot make the decision, call two or three," he said, acknowledging that some officials in his area tended to avoid assuming responsibility.

Rosário said the culture of shirking responsibilities within his departments might need time to gradually improve, and that he has requested for all department representatives attending a meeting to "have something to say," rather than remaining silent when explanations are demanded.

He further revealed that the structure of his secretariat will be halved, starting with the smaller departments. As "there are overlaps in those departments' functions, and it is very difficult to deal with fifteen departments at the same time."

The secretariat also intends to seek greater efficiency in other administrative procedures. According to the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) director, Li Canfeng, there are over 2,000 applications for decoration permits submitted annually to both the DSSOPT and the Macau Government Tourist, with approvals pending a Fire Services consult. Li said an inter-departmental group has been set up to explore how best to avoid overlapping duties.

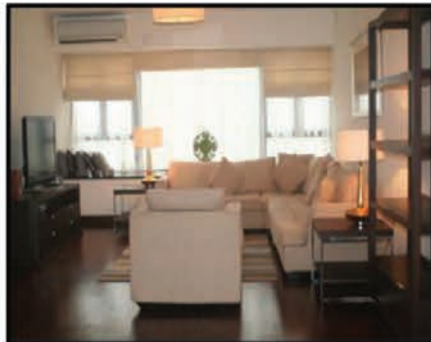


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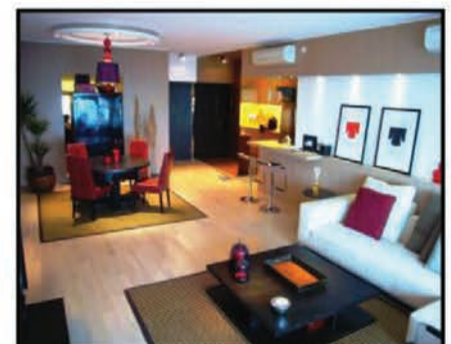


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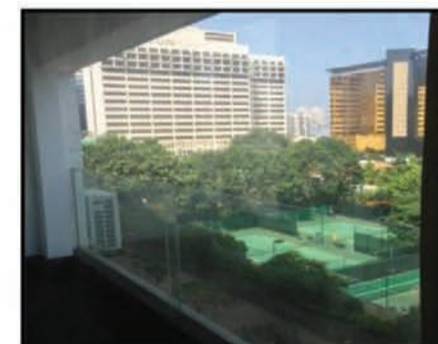


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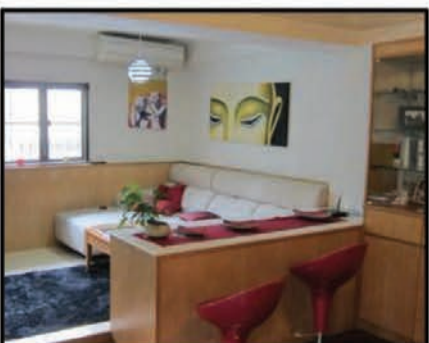


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Nissan's Infiniti to expand mainland dealer network



Roland Krueger, president of Infiniti. A challenge facing automakers in China is the slowing rate of growth, which will intensify the scrutiny on future investments, said Krueger

Jie Ma and Yukiko Hagiwara

NISSAN Motor Co.'s Infiniti premium brand plans to increase the number of dealerships it has in China by about 40 percent this year, with room to add more outlets in future, said its new brand chief.

Infiniti will have 110 to 120 dealerships in China by the end of this year, up from about 85 currently, said Roland Krueger, a former BMW executive who was hired by Nissan CEO Carlos Ghosn last year to head the brand.

"I believe that speed counts," Krueger said in an interview in Shanghai ahead of the city's auto show starting next week. "We need to be aware the developments especially in China are very, very fast."

Nissan is stepping up competition with Volkswagen AG's Audi, Bayerische Motoren Werke AG and Daimler AG's Mercedes-Benz as the Japanese automaker aims to capture 10 percent of the global market for premium cars by 2020. The company started to make its premium marque in China with a local partner last year, helping Infiniti's global sales surge to a record in the January-March quarter.

A challenge facing automakers in China is the slowing rate of growth, which will intensify the scrutiny on future investments, said Krueger. Even so, Infiniti has to be "very fast" in all aspects of its operations including partnership with the dealers in order to keep up and even stay ahead of market developments in the country, he said. **Bloomberg**

Zhou says China has room for monetary easing; may not use it

Bonnie Cao

CHINA'S central bank Governor Zhou Xiaochuan said the world's second-largest economy has scope compared with other nations to ease its monetary policies though won't necessarily take advantage of it.

"We have room in the reserve ratio and our interest rates are not zero yet," Zhou, 67, said in a brief interview Saturday in Washington, where he was attending the International Monetary Fund's spring meetings. "There is definitely room. But we need to adjust carefully. It doesn't mean we will have to utilize it or fully utilize the room."

Banks including Macquarie Group Ltd. and HSBC Holdings Plc flagged the need for further stimulus after China's economy expanded last quarter at the slowest pace since 2009 and industrial-production gains in March were the slowest since November 2008. An economy-wide inflation indicator turned negative last quarter for the first time since 2009, suggesting room for easing.

Premier Li Keqiang last month said policy makers will step in to support the economy if jobs and wages are hurt by the slowdown, while Zhou previously said the nation needs to be vigilant about deflation risks



Zhou Xiaochuan, governor of the People's Bank of China, attends a news conference in Beijing

and policy makers have "room to act."

China is battling a property slump, excess industrial capacity, local-government debt and capital outflows, with the economy last year expanding at the slowest pace since 1990. The nation is among at least 30 countries that have loosened monetary policy this year as lower commodity prices give room to stimulate.

Gross domestic product rose 7 percent in the three months through March from a year earlier, while industrial production last month increased by 5.6 percent, after a 6.8 percent rise in the first two months of the year.

In a statement at the mee-

tings in Washington taking place from Friday until yesterday, Zhou said that while China's economic expansion is slowing, it's still within a "reasonable range" and employment growth remains stable.

He reiterated that China will pursue "prudent" monetary policy and said it will adjust "adaptively" according to the economy and inflation, according to the statement posted on the PBOC's website.

One hurdle that may curb the extent of any monetary stimulus is China's surging stock market, which took off after the central bank cut interest rates in November. Another may be reticence to reignite debt risks and a repeat of the 2009 stimulus

binge.

Zhou and the Chinese government have been pressing the IMF to include the yuan in its Special Drawing Rights basket of currencies regarded as global reserve currencies. IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde has said that "we welcome and share this objective."

Zhou, in Saturday's interview, declined to speculate on when the yuan, also called the renminbi, would be added to the basket.

The IMF this week indicated it may be abandoning its long-held view that the Chinese exchange rate is undervalued.

"The market should be the judge of the renminbi's value rather than us," Zhou said. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

CEM HOLDS LUNCH GATHERING FOR SENIOR CITIZENS FOR THE 11TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR



CEM and Pak Tai's Birthday Organizing Committee jointly held a lunch gathering at Largo de Camões in Taipa (in front of the Pak Tai Temple) at 12:00 noon Friday. 300 senior citizens from Taipa and Coloane gathered together with CEM Ambassadors

Team members to enjoy the luncheon.

Shi Yulin, CEM Executive Director, said in his speech that as respecting the elderly is a virtue in Chinese tradition, CEM has been actively extending care to the community and giving back to society,

especially with respect to the elderly. CEM Ambassadors Team members regularly visit the elderly and provide free safety checks and repairing services of electrical installations for underprivileged families, people with special needs and elder citizens living alone.

Since 2005, CEM has been celebrating Pak Tai's Birthday with senior citizens from Taipa and Coloane with the support of the Pak Tai's Birthday Organizing Committee and CEM Ambassadors Team. To take care of their health, doctors and nurses from the CEM Occupational Health Services Centre volunteered to measure the blood pressure of the participating elderly before the lunch. CEM also gave away food gift packs and Laisées to the senior citizens.

MGM MACAU WINS SIXTH CONSECUTIVE TTG CHINA TRAVEL AWARD

For the sixth consecutive year, MGM Macau has been awarded the prestigious Best Business Hotel in Macau accolade at the TTG China Travel Awards. The hotel has received the award for the past five years, after winning the Best New Hotel in Macau in 2009.

"I would like to thank TTG China and the industry professionals for their votes. Above all, I would like to give my sincere appreciation to our teams for their continuous dedication and efforts," said Ms Irene Wong, Vice President of Sales, Public and Community Relations.

"We are honored to receive this award for the sixth consecutive year, as we demonstrate our commitment to pro-



viding high standard of service. This award serves as an assurance from the industry elites, to our quality service and the manifold experiences found at our property. MGM

Macau is a hotel with diversified and luxurious offerings fit for business and leisure purposes," she adds.

Inaugurated in 2008, the 8th Annual TTG China Travel Awards 2015 presentation ceremony took place at the Grand Kempinski Shanghai on April 16, honoring the best of Greater China's travel industry in a host of sectors including hotels and resorts, serviced residences and the travel services segments throughout the region. The winners were selected based on votes by trade professionals and elite destination management readers of all TTG publications, reflecting the assessment and acknowledgement from an industry perspective.

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ANGOLA

Company signs investment agreement worth USD5b

ANGOLAN company Organizações Ribeirinho has become the largest investor in Angola to sign a contract with the National Agency for Private Investment (ANIP) for an investment of USD5 billion, Angolan news agency Angop reported.

The investment contract signed Wednesday with ANIP is for construction of 60,000 social housing units in eight provinces of Angola over the next 15 years, with funding from Canada and contracts handed over to Angolan, American and Italian companies.

Director-General Hernâni Ribeirinho said on the sidelines of the signing of the investment contract with ANIP that the company would build social housing for sale in the provinces of Luanda, Lunda Sul, Kwanza Sul, Huambo, Huíla, Malanje, Moxico and Zaire.

On Wednesday, the National Agency for Private Investment signed 13 private investment contracts to the amount of US\$5.25 billion, the second-largest of which, for US\$9.4 million, was signed with Hua Dragão - Comércio Geral, for construction of a logistics distribution center. **MDT/Macauhub**

MOZAMBIQUE

World Bank may revise economic growth forecast



Women dressed in traditional costumes, Mozambique

THE World Bank may revise its growth forecast for Mozambique's economy downwards from 7 percent to 6.5 percent due to natural disasters this year and to contained public spending. The World Bank's chief in Mozambique, Enrique Blan-

co Armas, said Thursday in Maputo that despite this forecast slowdown, Mozambique's economy will grow this year above the African average (which is 4 percent,) against 4.5 percent last year, mainly due to the drop in oil prices.

"In any event, growth of 7 percent currently expected for Mozambique is relatively high and higher than the average of Africa," said the chief economist of the World Bank in Mozambique.

Blanco Armas said Mozambique's Gross Domestic Pro-

duct (GDP) would be driven by agriculture, infrastructure and services, and that industry, including gas and coal, have an, as yet, modest contribution to the growth of the

■ The expected growth is higher than the average of Africa

economy. "Industry has been supporting the growth of Mozambique's economy in recent years, but when we look at the sectors that have contributed most they are agriculture, manufacturing and services," said Blanco Armas.

MDT/Macauhub

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Illustration by João Santa-Rita

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Central Bank to cut bank reserve requirement

CHINA has cut the amount of cash the country's lenders must set aside as reserves in the second such move in three months, stepping up stimulus after Premier Li Keqiang pledged to take action if needed to shore up growth.

The reserve-requirement ratio will be reduced by 1 percentage point effective today, the People's Bank of China said on its website yesterday. The level will decline to 18.5 percent, based on previous statements.

The move allows banks to hold onto less of their money and lend more of it out. The Communist Party-run People's Daily said the cut will release 1.2 trillion yuan (USD194 billion) into the world's second-biggest economy.

The Central Bank also said it

will cut an extra 1 percentage point for commercial banks providing agricultural financing and an extra 2 percentage points for the Agricultural Development Bank of China. It will also cut the requirement by an additional half a percentage point to eligible banks that lend a certain share of loans to agricultural borrowers and small businesses.

Gross domestic product expanded 7 percent in the three months through March from a year earlier, the least since 2009, while industrial production in March rose at the slowest rate since November 2008. An economy-wide inflation indicator turned negative last quarter for the first time since 2009, suggesting room for easing.

"The move is positive,

BLOOMBERG



China's premier Li Keqiang

showing policy makers are trying to offset the impact of potential capital outflow and stabilize the macro environment," said Helen Qiao, Hong Kong-based chief greater China economist at Morgan Stanley. "The 100 basis point cut shows the intensification of policy easing, which is war-

ranted given the sharp slowdown."

The RRR cut is the first major monetary policy adjustment since Premier Li announced a growth target of about 7 percent for 2015, which would be the slowest since 1990. Li last month said policy makers will step in if growth slows too

sharply, while central bank Governor Zhou Xiaochuan flagged room to act.

The Central Bank last cut its reserve requirement in February, when it slashed the rate to 19.5 percent for big banks and 16 percent for small- and medium-sized banks. AP/Bloomberg

Veteran journalist Gao Yu sentenced to 7 years

Christopher Bodeen and Isolda Morillo, Beijing

A Beijing court sentenced a veteran Chinese journalist to seven years in prison Friday on charges of leaking a document detailing the Communist Party leadership's resolve to aggressively target civil society and press freedom as a threat to its monopoly on power.

The sentence against Gao Yu, 71, comes amid a widening clampdown on free speech that highlights the gap between China's vision of rule of law and Western notions of civil liberties and judicial fairness. The verdict appears to confirm the authenticity of the leaked document, deemed a state secret, which had been reported since June 2013, but never was discussed openly by the leadership.

It verifies widely held assumptions about Communist Party leader Xi Jinping's distrust of any social organization outside party control.

Gao had denied the charges, which could have carried a life sentence.

Gao's lawyer Mo Shaoping said Gao was convicted of leaking state secrets by giving the strategy paper, known as Document No. 9, to an overseas media group. The document argued for aggressive curbs on the spread of Western democracy, universal values, civil society and press freedom, which the party considers a threat to its rule.

Another of Gao's lawyers, Shang Baojun, said Gao did not speak during the verdict and sentencing, but told her brother, Gao Wei, that she could not accept the result. "We will definitely appeal," Shang said.

Speaking to The Associated Press, Gao



Pictures of jailed veteran Chinese journalist Gao Yu are displayed by protesters outside Chinese central government's liaison office in Hong Kong

Wei said his sister appeared thinner and frailer than before her detention a year ago.

The court seemed to disregard the defense and heard only the prosecution, Gao Wei said, a common complaint in such cases where the outcome is usually determined before the court meets.

Police patrolled the perimeter of Beijing's No. 3 Intermediate Court, where the verdict was delivered. Journalists and foreign diplomats gathered at the court, but were denied entry to the hearing.

"We're obviously disappointed with the verdict," said U.S. Embassy First Secretary Dan Biers.

In Washington, State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf called for Gao's immediate release and for China to respect its international human rights commitments.

"The conviction of this veteran journalist is part of a disturbing pattern of government action against public interest lawyers, Internet activists, journalists, religious leaders and others who peacefully question official Chinese policies and actions," Harf told reporters. AP

Report says Beijing building airstrip on reclaimed island

CHINA is building an airstrip on an artificially created island in a disputed section of the South China Sea, according to independent analysts, a move the U.S. has warned could raise tensions in the area.

Defense group IHS Jane's said satellite images of Fiery Cross Reef taken March 23 show a runway more than 500 meters long as well as paved sections of apron. The U.S. says China is carrying out eight such land reclamation projects in the area.

Jane's said the island is already big enough for a runway 3,000 meters long that would be able to accommodate air force planes. China already operates a runway on Woody Island to the west of Fiery Cross Reef, which is also claimed by Vietnam, the Philippines and Taiwan, and another island it is creating could also be big enough to accommodate a runway.

The airfield construction also was mentioned by the commander of U.S. forces in the Pacific at a congressional hearing on Wednesday. Adm. Samuel Locklear said the reclamation work would allow China to exert more influence in the contested region and possibly deploy military assets such as long-range radar and advanced missile systems.

China claims virtually all of the South China Sea and its island chains. Malaysia and Brunei also claim waters and islands in the



This combination photo of satellite images shows what IHS Jane's describes as an airstrip on Fiery Cross Reef in a disputed section of the South China Sea

area.

At a Friday briefing, Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei defended the island reclamation work, which China says is largely to improve living conditions for people in the area and help with weather forecasting and search and rescue work.

Such work is "lawful, justifiable and reasonable. It does not target or impact on any other country and we hope that relevant parties can have a correct understanding on that," Hong said. AP

Did Tang and Jack Chang, Beijing

AP EXCLUSIVE

Activist more determined after lockup

THE most prominent of five recently released Chinese women's rights activists feels her dedication to the cause has grown stronger after spending 37 days in detention with interrogators who blew smoke onto her face and insulted her sexual orientation, her girlfriend and her lawyer said.

Li Tingting, 25, an openly lesbian campaigner for women's issues, has been at the center of an international outcry over China's detention of activists. Her girlfriend, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition she be identified only by her English name of Teresa, relayed comments from Li for the first time since the activist's conditional release from a Beijing jail last Monday. Teresa spoke in the presence of Li's lawyer Wang Yu, who also confirmed Li's comments.

"Feminism is my soul," Teresa quoted Li as saying. "I thought a lot and came to believe what I do cannot be wrong. My belief is firmer. Feminism will surely be inseparable from me."

Li and four other women, ranging in age from 25 to 32, were detained in a criminal investigation for their plans to hand out stickers and flyers denouncing sexual harassment, in a case reflecting the Chinese leadership's deep distrust of any efforts to organize civil action in a group outside the ruling Communist Party's control.

Known for colorful, high profile protests — from "potty parity" sit-ins to street theater denouncing spousal abuse — the five women drew what has been, for recent years, an unusual amount of attention overseas. Foreign governments, rights groups and luminaries including U.S. presidential candidate Hillary Clinton criticized the arrests as an overreaction by a repressive Chinese government, and urged Chinese authorities to drop the investigations against the women.

China's Foreign Ministry has responded by saying the detentions are an internal affair being handled according to law, and urging foreign countries not to interfere.

The five were released, but remain under investigation and have been told not to travel outside their home cities or meet journalists.

AP reporters traveled to Li's home village of Hongtongying, a community of wheat fields and willow trees on Beijing's outskirts, but were trailed by unidentified vehicles. In a nearby town center, the journalists were able to see Li with Teresa as they walked arm-in-arm from a tea house to a hospital, but could not

AP PHOTO



In this April 18 photo, Chinese activist Li Tingting, left, points as she holds hands with her girlfriend, who wished to be identified only by her English name of Teresa, as they walk along a street in suburban Beijing

interview Li. Her friend and the lawyer said Li would abide by state security officials' demands that she grant no interviews. They also released a written statement by Li, in which she pleaded innocence.

"What I have done does not provoke trouble, but is mild advocacy that does not amount to any crime," Li wrote. "I demand police dismiss the case immediately, remove coercive

is able to do what she's done, I think she should be considered a hope for China," Wang said.

Li will need some time to readjust but has been in good spirits despite her ordeal, her friend and the lawyer said. In the statement, Li said she was deprived of sleep and had cigarette smoke blown onto her face while she was restrained in an iron interrogation chair.

"It made my nostrils and

sonal safety, said Li was "delighted" to learn of the support she received from Clinton and from one of her idols, Eve Ensler.

Author of the "Vagina Monologues," Ensler called for people around the world to protest in front of Chinese embassies and consulates in support of Li and the four other Chinese women's rights activists.

She and other rights advocates have attributed the early release of the five to the international pressure on the issue, which threatened to embarrass China ahead of a key anniversary in September of a high-profile women's rights conference in 1995.

Born just weeks after Chinese troops crushed student pro-democracy protests in the heart of Beijing, Li grew up in a working-class household. She came out early as a lesbian to her parents, who reacted badly to the news. She found her tribe in college where she joined other activists working on HIV, gender equality and gay and lesbian issues. With her at the helm, the activists began staging tongue-in-cheek, media-friendly public protests, which she called performance art.

Li and other women once strolled down a busy Beijing shopping street wearing blood-stained wedding dresses

and warning passing couples about domestic abuse. In another action, several activists boarded a Shanghai subway train in miniskirts and metal breastplates after female passengers reported they had been groped. She also helped organize sit-ins at public restrooms to demand more toilets for women.

Chinese authorities once tried to silence Li by offering her a job on a governmental women's federation if she would stop her protests and social media work. Li turned down the offer and later suspended her work in the face of growing police monitoring. Her lawyer Wang said Li had always been cautious about her activism, seeking legal advice before she took action.

Li was detained just ahead of International Women's Day, which Chinese authorities mark by touting gender equality under the leadership of the Communist Party.

Teresa said that Li thought her group's activism on behalf of women's rights would carry little political risk, and was surprised the state came down on them with such force. Li believes it shows that China's civil society is facing extreme difficulty, and that much "more needs to be done," Teresa said. AP

■ Li Tingting, 25, an openly lesbian campaigner for women's issues, has been at the center of an international outcry over China's detention of activists

restrictions on me and return innocence to me."

The lawyer said the demand that Li hold no interviews has no basis under Chinese law.

"The activism by Li Tingting not only complies with Chinese law, but should be lauded because she is promoting the law," Wang said, referring to China's law, policy and declarations championing equal rights for women.

"She should not have been treated so illegally by authorities. For a young woman who

eyes dry and uncomfortable," Li wrote. "I could not move at all and felt my dignity was greatly insulted."

Interrogators shone strong light into her eyes and repeatedly called her homosexuality "sickening" and "shameless," Li wrote.

Her lawyer Wang said the acts by interrogators amounted to torture.

Teresa, who also was briefly detained by police but said she didn't want to give her full name out of fear for her per-

SOUTH KOREA

Police question dozens after violent ferry protest

SOUTH Korean police said yesterday that they were questioning dozens of protesters after violence broke out at a rally denouncing the government's handling of a ferry disaster that killed more than 300 people a year ago.

Police used water cannons and pepper spray to break up thousands of protesters in the capital, Seoul, on Saturday night. Dozens of police officers and protesters were injured during the demonstration.

The protesters, led by relatives of victims of the ferry disaster, tried unsuccessfully to march to the presidential Blue House. More than 70 police buses used to block a downtown street leading to the Blue House were damaged or vandalized, said an official from the National Police Agency, who spoke on condition of anonymity, citing office rules.

The official said around 80 people were being questioned



Riot police officers spray water to disperse protesters after a rally to commemorate the first anniversary of the Sewol ferry sinking in Seoul

over the demonstration. Twenty others who were also detained have been released.

The demonstration capped off a week of vigils and rallies commemorating the anniversary of the ferry disaster. A total of 304 people — most of them students from a single high school — died when the ferry Sewol sank off South Korea's southwest coast on April 16, 2014.

There's frustration among South Koreans who see their government as having failed to make meaningful improvements to safety standards and hold high-level officials accountable for a disaster blamed in part on incompetence and corruption.

The relatives of the victims and their supporters have been calling for the government to accept a more thorough investigation into the cause of the sinking and provide a more detailed plan to salvage the ship.

Prosecutors have blamed negligence by crew members, excessive cargo and improper storage for the sinking, along with slow rescue efforts. Relatives of the victims say the prosecution's investigation was insufficient and have called for the establishment of an independent committee to look more deeply into the government's responsibility for the sinking and the high death toll. **AP**

AUSTRALIA

Authorities arrest 5 for alleged IS-inspired terror plot

Kristen Gelineau, Sydney

FIVE Australian teenagers were arrested Saturday on suspicion of plotting an Islamic State group-inspired terrorist attack at a Veterans' Day ceremony that included targeting police officers, officials said.

The suspects included two 18-year-olds who are alleged to have been preparing an attack at the ANZAC Day ceremony in Melbourne later this month, Australian Federal Police Acting Deputy Commissioner Neil Gaughan told reporters.

Another 18-year-old was arrested on weapons charges, and two other men, aged 18 and 19, were in custody and assisting police. All the arrests took place in Melbourne.

ANZAC Day is the annual April 25 commemoration of the 1915 Gallipoli landings — the first major military action fought by the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps during World War I.

Police said they believe the plot was inspired by the Islamic State group, also known as ISIS, and was to have involved "ed-



Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott

ged weapons."

"At this stage, we have no information that it was a planned beheading. But there was reference to an attack on police," Gaughan said. "Some evidence that we have collected at a couple of the scenes, and some other information we have, leads us to believe that this particular matter was ISIS-inspired."

Australia's government has raised the country's terror warning level in response to the domestic threat posed by supporters of the Islamic State group. In September last year, the

group's spokesman Abu Mohammed al-Adnani issued a message urging attacks abroad, specifically mentioning Australia.

Federal Police Deputy Commissioner Michael Phelan said at a separate news conference that the teens had links to Numan Haider, an 18-year-old who stabbed two Melbourne police officers and was subsequently shot dead in September. Haider had caught authorities' attention months earlier over what police considered troubling behavior, including waving what appeared to be an Islamic State group flag at a shopping mall.

Phelan said the teens arrested Saturday were on officials' radar for months, but the investigation was ramped up when it appeared they were planning a specific attack.

"This is a new paradigm for police," Phelan said. "These types of attacks that are planned are very rudimentary and simple. ... All you need these days is a knife, a flag and a camera and one can commit a terrorist act." **AP**

INDIA

2 policemen arrested in killing of Kashmiri youth

Aijaz Hussain, Srinagar

TWO Indian policemen have been arrested in the killing of a teenage boy during weekend protests in the disputed region of Kashmir, police said.

Towns across the Himalayan territory were mostly quiet yesterday, following two days of clashes between Indian law enforcement authorities and anti-India demonstrators. Streets in the main city of Srinagar were tense, with armed police and paramilitary soldiers inspecting vehicles and questioning people.

Police said in a statement that they arrested two policemen after a preliminary investigation revealed one had ordered the other to fire his rifle at stone-throwing protesters in the northwestern village of Narbal on Saturday "in violation of laid down SOP (standard operating procedure)."

Locals and rights groups have long said, however, that such investigations rarely yield results and are aimed only at calming public anger.

Relatives and witnesses have contested the official story of the boy's death, saying he had been picked up by authorities and was shot on the side of the road while in custody. On Saturday night, protesters held a torch-lighting ceremony in Srinagar in the boy's memory.



Activists of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) shout freedom slogans as they participate in a torch light procession against the killing of a teenage student in Srinagar

Indian authorities have been struggling to contain growing anger after Friday's arrest of separatist leader Masarat Alam on charges of leading protests against India's rule in the region, just weeks after his release from five years in prison on the same charge.

Kashmir is divided between neighboring India and Pakistan, and most people within the predominantly Muslim region mistrust Indian rule. Since an insurgency erupted in 1989, several militant groups in Kashmir have demanded the region be given full independence or merged with Pakistan.

An estimated 68,000 people have died in the fighting and ensuing crackdown by Indian forces. With the insurgency largely suppressed, anti-India sentiment is now expressed mostly through street demonstrations. **AP**

Lynne O'Donnell and Rahim Faiez, Faizabad

AFGHANISTAN

Islamic State blamed for suicide bombing killing 35

A motorcycle-riding suicide bomber attacked a line of people waiting outside a bank Saturday in eastern Afghanistan, killing at least 35 and wounding 125 in an assault the country's president blamed on the Islamic State group.

The accusation by President Ashraf Ghani, following local media reporting the Islamic State group's Afghan affiliate claiming the attack, would mark a major escalation in the extremists' nascent campaign of violence in the country.

While nowhere near as powerful as the Taliban, the affiliate's ability to strike at will would mark a new threat for the country to contend with as U.S. and NATO forces ended their combat mission at the start of the year. It also further stretches the Islamic State group's influence far beyond its self-declared caliphate stretching through a third of Iraq and Syria.

The attack in Jalalabad, the capital of eastern Nangarhar province, targeted a crowd of soldiers and civilians gathered outside the bank to receive their monthly salaries. The blast killed at least 35 people and wounded 125, said Ahmad Zia Abdul-



Afghan security forces members inspect the site of a suicide attack near a new Kabul Bank in Jalalabad, east of Kabul

zai, a spokesman for the provincial governor.

Hours after the attack, Ghani blamed the Islamic State group for the bombing.

"In the horrific incident in Nangarhar, who took responsibility? The Taliban didn't claim responsibility. Daesh claimed responsibility for it," Ghani said,

using an Arabic acronym for the group.

Local Afghan media quoted a previously unknown man who identified himself as a spokesman for the Islamic State group's affiliate in the country, claiming responsibility for the attack. It's not clear whether Ghani relied on this for his remarks or if he had other

intelligence at his disposal.

The Taliban denied it carried out the bank attack and another elsewhere in the province that killed one civilian and wounded two.

"We condemn/deny involvement in both," Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid tweeted.

The Islamic State group, currently targeted by a U.S.-led coalition's airstrikes and an Iraqi ground offensive, has seen its public image rise dramatically since it seized much of Iraq last summer. Its online videos and propaganda, including scenes of its mass killings and beheadings, have caught the attention of many extremists.

Ghani previously has warned that the Islamic State group was starting to establish a presence in Afghanistan. He used his visit to the United States last month to reiterate his concerns.

"If we don't stand on the same line united, these people are going to destroy us," Ghani told

a crowd of 600 people Saturday in Faizabad, the capital of northeastern Badakhshan province.

He called on the Taliban to join with the Kabul government, and said that any Taliban who switched allegiance to Islamic State group would earn the wrath of Afghanistan's religious leaders.

Ghani also blamed a recent attack on an army outpost, in which 18 soldiers were killed, eight of them beheaded, on "international terrorists." The Taliban aren't known to carry out beheadings.

The United Nations' Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Ivan Simonovic, on a visit to Afghanistan, called the attack a "war crime."

"The use of suicide bombs and other devices in such an indiscriminate way by insurgent groups clearly constitutes a war crime, and those responsible for organizing or perpetrating such attacks must be brought to justice," he said in a statement. AP

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ISLAMIC STATE

Video purports to show killing of Ethiopians in Libya



This undated image made from a video released by Islamic State militants appears to show the killing of a group of captured Ethiopian Christians in Libya

A video released by the Islamic State group yesterday appears to show the killing of two different groups of captured Ethiopian Christians by the extremist group's Libyan affiliates.

The 29-minute online video purports to show militants holding two groups of captives. It says one group is held by an IS affiliate in eastern Libya

known as Barka Province and the other by an affiliate in the south calling itself the Fazzan Province.

A masked fighter brandishing a pistol delivers a long statement, saying Christians must convert to Islam or pay a special tax prescribed by the Quran.

The video then switches between footage of the captives in the south being shot dead and

the captives in the east being beheaded on a beach.

It was not immediately clear who the captives were or when they were captured. It was also not clear how many captives were killed.

The video bore the official logo of the IS media arm Al-Furqan and resembled previous videos released by the extremist group, including one in

February in which IS militants in Libya beheaded 21 captured Egyptian Christians on a beach.

The Islamic State group has been able to gain a foothold amid the chaos in Libya, where two governments backed by rival alliances of militias are battling each other as well as extremist groups.

The Islamic State group is also advancing in Iraq, where

the extremists captured three villages near the city of Ramadi in the western Anbar province and were locked in heavy clashes with Iraqi troops.

More than 90,000 people have fled the Islamic State group's advance in Anbar, a United Nations humanitarian agency said yesterday.

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said in a statement that civilians are fleeing Ramadi as well as the three nearby villages captured by the IS group a few days ago. It said humanitarian agencies have moved quickly to provide assistance, including food, water and shelter.

"Our top priority is delivering life-saving assistance to people who are fleeing - food, water and shelter are highest on the list of priorities," said Lise Grande, the U.N. humanitarian coordinator for Iraq.

Grande expressed concern over the safety of the displaced people, who are mainly heading to Baghdad and the IS-held city of Fallujah.

"Seeing people carrying what little they can and rushing for safety is heart-breaking," she added.

Iraqi officials in Anbar have described Ramadi as a ghost town, with empty streets and closed shops.

Iraqi troops backed by Shiite militias and U.S.-led airstrikes managed to dislodge the IS group from the northern city of Tikrit earlier this month.

But the troops have struggled against the militants in Anbar, which saw some of the heaviest fighting of the eight-year U.S. military intervention that ended in 2011. **AP**

SOUTH AFRICA

Immigrants describe threats following mob attacks

Christopher Torchia,
Johannesburg

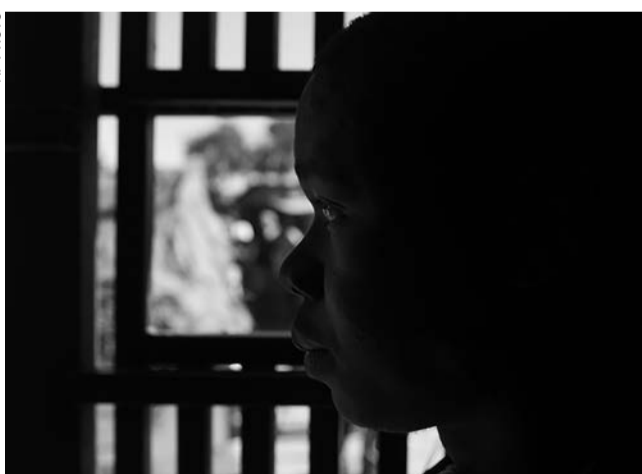
FEARFUL immigrants in South Africa who fled their homes because of threats and deadly attacks by South Africans said yesterday they were targeted in some cases by longtime neighbors and people who warned they would assault anyone carrying a foreign passport.

The immigrants spoke in interviews with The Associated Press at a tent camp after they hurriedly left Alexandra township in Johannesburg, where mobs attacked shops owned by people from other African countries, including Congo and Somalia. The violence there followed anti-immigrant riots in and around the

coastal city of Durban that killed at least six people, recalling a bout of similar unrest in South Africa in 2008 in which about 60 people died.

The message from the mobs in Alexandra was, "We don't want to see people with passports. We only want to see people with South African IDs," said Veronica Lechaea, who comes from the southern African country of Lesotho and has lived in South Africa since 2008. Lechaea, who works as an office cleaner in Johannesburg, left her home in Alexandra and sought refuge in a camp set up on the grounds of an Anglican church by Gift of the Givers, a South African charity.

The attacks stem from



A child looks out from inside a deserted store in Germiston, near Johannesburg

a perception that immigrants are taking jobs at the expense of South Africans in a country with high unemployment. Many people from other countries have entered South Africa illegally, though the government

has said a large number are working legally and contributing to economic development.

Sandra Ngwanya, a chicken seller from Zimbabwe who also left her Alexandra home for the Gift of the Givers camp,

said her neighbors told her: "We are going to go door to door, taking your stuff and beating you. So we want you to go back to your country."

Ngwanya, who has lived in South Africa since 2006 and married a South African, said she left her two young children with cousins and hoped to go home soon.

"They are saying it's quiet. The police are all over the place. I want to go and check on our stuff," said Ngwanya, whose husband works in a mine outside Johannesburg and planned to return to check on his family.

However, some people at the camp said the situation remained volatile.

"These people start in the night. In the day, it's fine,"

Nora Ngohveni, a Mozambican, said in a reference to the mobs. She spoke while sitting with her 6-year-old daughter, Sandra, on a mattress in a tent.

About 20 people are staying at the Gift of the Givers camp, though organizer Emily Thomas said more people are expected to arrive from another camp that was set up outside Johannesburg.

The South African government has provided food, shelter and other necessities to more than 1,000 people in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal provinces, which include Johannesburg and Durban respectively, authorities said in a statement. Police have arrested 307 suspects during the riots, the statement said. **AP**

ITALY

24 dead, 28 safe, hundreds missing as Med migrant boat sinks

Frances D'Emilio, Rome

A boat believed to be crowded with 700 migrants capsized in the waters north of Libya overnight, leaving at least 24 confirmed dead and sparking fears for what could become the Mediterranean's deadliest known migrant sea disaster, Italy's Coast Guard and other officials said yesterday.

The Coast Guard said in a statement that the migrants' 20-meter vessel may have overturned because migrants rushed to one side of the craft when they saw a Portuguese merchant vessel approach it late Saturday night. The cargo ship had been dispatched to come to the migrants' aid.

The Coast Guard said at least 28 survivors had been rescued by yesterday morning. Maltese Prime Minister Joseph Muscat put the number of survivors at 50.

It was not clear whether Muscat's figure included the 28 sur-



In this image from TV, migrants crowd at the rail aboard an Italian navy vessel as it cruises towards Italian port of Messina, Saturday April 18

vivors reported by Italy. Maltese search units were aiding rescue efforts.

Muscat said rescuers were seeing people in the sea and were "checking who is alive and who is dead."

The capsizing of such a crowded boat represented the "biggest human tragedy of the last few years," Muscat said.

A United Nations refugee agency spokeswoman Carlotta Sami tweeted that according to one survivor, the boat had set out with 700 migrants aboard.

But the Coast Guard and other authorities said they had no immediate way to determine how many were aboard or how many might still be rescued. The total number of passengers was ex-

pected to be clarified as officers interviewed survivors. Given the depth of the sea — as deep as 5 kilometers or more in the area — it was possible that many bodies would never be recovered. This has commonly been the case in similar tragedies off the coasts of Libya, Italy, and other Mediterranean nations in recent years.

Pope Francis was among those following the news. "There are fears there could be hundreds of dead," Francis told the faithful in St. Peter's Square. He bowed his head in silent prayer as did many of the tens of thousands in the crowd. For a second day running, he called on Europe to do more to help Italy manage its continent-leading flow of migrants.

Italian Premier Matteo Renzi summoned his top ministers to a meeting last night in Rome to discuss the latest tragedy.

"The numbers (of the dead) are still provisional but the numbers are destined to rise," Renzi said. "How can it be that we daily are

witnessing a tragedy?"

Rescuers reported seeing wreckage in the sea.

"There are large fuel stains, pieces of wood, life jackets," Italian Border Police Gen. Antonino Iraso, whose force has boats deployed in the rescue effort, told Sky TG24 TV.

When asked whether the boat capsized because the migrants rushed to one side as the Portuguese vessel pulled alongside, Iraso replied: "The dynamics aren't clear. But this is not the first time that has happened."

The numbers of migrants attempting the dangerous crossing by sea from Libya swells as the springtime weather improves, providing calmer seas and warmer water temperatures. But the smugglers' boats are frequently overcrowded or unseaworthy.

So far this year, more than 900 have died in failed crossings. Last week, 400 people were presumed drowned when another boat capsized. **AP**

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what's ON



"READING MARKET" PROMOTION DAY

TIME: 10am-6pm

UNTIL: April 21, 2015

VENUE: The Old Court Building

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2837 7117

CANTONESE OPERATIC SONGS CONCERT

TIME: 7:45pm

VENUE: Macau Cultural Centre, Grand Auditorium

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2878 7701

FEAST OF PAK TAI: CANTONESE OPERA PERFORMANCES & ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION

TIME: 7:30pm-11pm

VENUE: Pak Tai Temple, Carmo Square, Taipa

UNTIL: April 23, 2015

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: 2882 7295

INSIDE OUT – CONTEMPORARY ART EXHIBITION

TIME: 10am-7pm

UNTIL: April 30, 2015

VENUE: Flugent Art Gallery, Rua S. Paulo 54-58B,

Mei Tai Grand Garden, R/C A, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2872 3429

LUB DUB: AN EXHIBITION BY PAKEONG x

'EXPERIENCE – FORTES'

TIME: 10am to 7pm (Mondays to Fridays)

3pm to 7pm (Saturdays; Closed on Sundays and public holidays)

UNTIL: May 2, 2015

VENUE: Rui Cunha Foundation Gallery,

Avenida da Praia Grande, n° 749, r/c

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2892 3288

Offbeat

RINGO STARR, GREEN DAY ROCK THEIR WAY INTO ROCK HALL



Ringo Starr and Billie Joe Armstrong, from Green Day, perform at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony

Ringo Starr was ushered into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame with a little help from one of his famous friends.

The mop-topped drummer who kept the beat for the Beatles, Starr was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as a solo artist on Saturday night during a ceremony jammed with scintillating performances and touching moments.

Starr was the last of the Beatles to be inducted for his individual work, getting in after bandmates Paul McCartney, John Lennon and George Harrison. He was always the fourth Beatle — John, Paul, George ... and Ringo — but now he's been immortalized as a frontman.

Starr was inducted along with Green Day, underground-icou Lou Reed, Joan Jett and The Blackhearts, soul singer-songwriter Bill Withers, guitarist Stevie Ray Vaughan and Double Trouble, The Paul Butterfield Blues Band and The "5" Royales.

The 74-year-old Starr was inducted by McCartney, and then stepped to the podium and said: "My name is Ringo and I play drums" — as if anyone didn't know.

He was then joined on stage by Eagles guitarist Joe Walsh on "It Don't Come Easy" before McCartney came out to play bass, the two living Beatles jamming again, to "A Little Help From My Friends." AP

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
17:00	Non Daily Portuguese News
17:40	Brazil Avenue (Repeated)
18:30	Non Daily Portuguese News (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Sports
22:10	Brazil Avenue
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Champions League Magazine
00:00	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

cinema

CINETEATRO

16 APR - 22 APR



FAST AND FURIOUS 7_

ROOM 1

(2D) 2:15, 4.45, 9.45 pm

(3D) 7.15 pm

Director: James Wan

Starring: Vin Diesel, Paul Walker, Dwayne Johnson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 137min



CHILD 44_

ROOM 2

2.15, 4.45, 7.15, 9.45 pm

Director: Daniel Espinosa

Starring: Tom Hardy, Gary Oldman, Noomi Rapace

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 137min



THE WATER DIVINER_

ROOM 3

2.00, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Russell Crowe

Starring: Jai Courtney, Russell Crowe, Olga Kurylenko

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 111min

MACAU TOWER

09 APR - 22 APR

FURIOUS 7_

2.00, 4.30, 7.00, 9.30 pm

Director: James Wan

Starring: Vin Diesel, Paul Walker, Dwayne Johnson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 137min

this day in history



1974 'TROUBLES' DEATH TOLL HITS 1,000

The conflict in Northern Ireland has claimed its 1,000th victim. The milestone has been reached amid a spate of killings and shootings over the past two days.

They culminated in the death earlier today of a petrol station owner James Murphy in County Fermanagh. The body of Mr Murphy, a Roman Catholic, was found dumped on a roadside verge by a motorist. He had been shot in the chest at close range.

Yesterday another Catholic was also shot dead. James Corbett, 20, was driven away from his home on the outskirts of Belfast by two men. The body of Mr Corbett, whose widow is expecting their first child, was thrown from the car shortly afterwards with two bullet wounds to the head.

Later on Saturday county court judge Garrett McGrath was seriously wounded by two gunmen at his weekend cottage in County Antrim. And at about the same time in Newtownbutler, County Fermanagh, an elderly man and a police officer were seriously injured in a loyalist car bomb attack.

The device containing 800 lbs of explosive was one of the largest ever to be detonated in Northern Ireland. The murders and attacks came as the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Michael Ramsey, visited Belfast - his second trip during the Troubles in Northern Ireland.

On Sunday during a sermon at St Anne's Cathedral Dr Ramsey called for peace between the two communities. But he was interrupted several times by hecklers believed to be supporters of the Reverend Ian Paisley.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

By the time of the Good Friday peace agreement in 1998 more than 3,000 people had died as a result of the conflict in Northern Ireland. However, the agreement did not bring an end to the killing. In August 1998, 29 people died when a bomb exploded in the town of Omagh.

The device was planted by an IRA splinter group opposed to the peace deal. The agreement has also come close to collapse several times, particularly over the pace of IRA weapons decommissioning.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Whoa - the week gets off to a weird start with some conflicting cosmic forces.

Taurus April 20-May 20
Some intense stellar energy that you've been enjoying suddenly seems to be propelling you faster than you're comfortable with.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21
It seems like love is trying to teach you a lesson, thwarting you at every turn.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Open wide - your mind, that is. Invite some radical ideas over to your (mental) place and let them relax and expand.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Yes, you're at the center of the universe, but try to act like you're not aware of it.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22
If you're inclined to express yourself about some matter of the heart, proceed with caution.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22
The comfort of home and one of your favorite companions holds undeniable appeal.

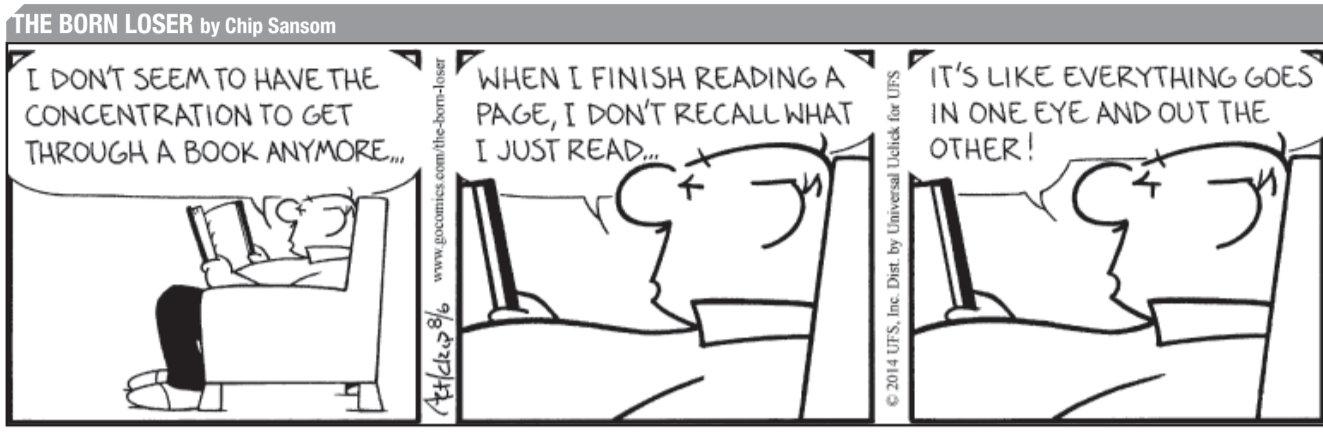
Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
Your impatience to get something hot going on in the realm of romance could lead you to act on impulse - which isn't necessarily a bad thing.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Practice active listening - there's a lot more information being put out there than you might think.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Working hard at romance is one way to approach it, but there's something to be said for relaxing and letting it come to you.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Boredom doesn't become you, so give your heart a kick-start.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20
Tap into those inner feelings, dreams and your heart's secrets, and let them out.



SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzles: Easy and Easy+ grids with numbers.

Sudoku puzzles: Medium and Hard grids with numbers.

WEATHER

Weather forecast table for China and World cities, including min/max temperatures and conditions.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Black, in poetry; 5- Beet variety; 10- H.S. exam; 14- Roman moon goddess; 15- Scoundrel; 16- Ethereal; Prefix; 17- "Johnny Mnemonic" actor; 18- Full of speech; 20- Expected; 22- Steal livestock; 23- Buccaneer; 25- Cain's brother; 26- Repeated from the beginning; 27- Star Wars letters; 28- Archer of myth; 32- Hurler Hershiser; 33- Try to bite; 35- Expression of disgust; 36- Actor Herbert; 37- Short snooze; 38- Prizm maker; 39- Pearl Buck heroine; 41- Narrow openings; 43- Currency unit in Western Samoa; 44- Actress Russo; 45- Light brown color, common to pale sunworshippers; 46- Firearm; 48- Bok ...; 50- French dance; 51- With vinegar as the solvent; 54- Join securely; 55- City on central Luzon; 57- Church recess; 61- Controversial orchard spray; 62- Chili con ...; 63- Look ... hands; 64- Repudiate; 65- Weighty; 66- Screen image;

Friday's solution crossword grid with filled-in words.

Large crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-66.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



FOR SALE/RENT advertisement for JML Property with contact info.

Real estate listings for various properties in Macau, including Bauhinia Court, Excellent Investment Property, Pou Kei Unit A, etc.

JML Property logo and contact information.

The Venetian Macao hosts China Music Awards for fourth consecutive year



Alex To



Aarif Rahman



Zhang Jing Xuan and Gillian Chung



Della



Richie Jen



Ella Chen



Sodagreen



Nicky Wu



W-inds



Rain



Elva Hsiao



Jacky Chan



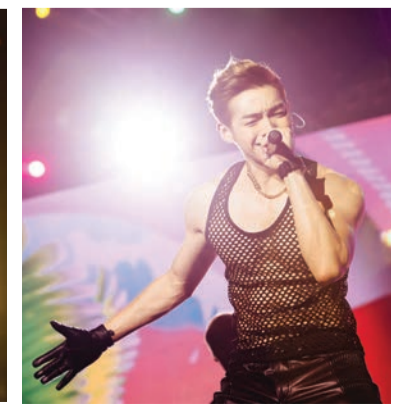
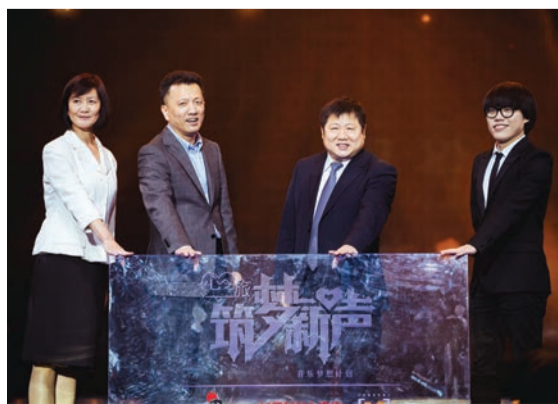
Dave Horton, Global Chief Marketing Officer of Las Vegas Sands Corp. and Sands China Ltd. and his wife

CO-SPONSORED BY The Venetian Macao, the 19th Channel [V] China Music Awards and Asian Influential Power Grand Ceremony returned to The Venetian Macao for the fourth high-profile year. Following the red carpet event at the main lobby, the awards presentation ceremony was well attended at the Cotai Arena Thursday night.

Hundreds of excited fans crammed into The Venetian Macao's main lobby to catch a glimpse of their favorite singers and actors as they walked the red carpet. This edition of the awards came with the theme "Never Stop," and if the screaming fans were anything to go by, they certainly took the theme to heart. More than 40 celebrities were in attendance, including Korean superstar Rain; top Japanese boy group w-inds; Taiwanese celebrity Jay Chou and super band Sodagreen. Some of the high-profile stars included Jacky Chan, Wang Feng, Karen Mok, Zhou Bi Chang, Alex To, Ella Chen, MoMo Wu and Della. Joining them on the red carpet were representatives from Star China Media Ltd.; and Dave Horton, Global Chief Marketing Officer of Las Vegas Sands Corp. and Sands China Ltd.

A total of 45 awards were presented at the star-studded ceremony, including Most Popular Male Singer (HK & Taiwan), Most Popular Female Singer (HK & Taiwan), Asian Most Popular Japanese Group, Asian Most Popular Korean Artist, Most Popular Male Singer (Mainland China), and Most Popular Female Singer (Mainland China) among others.

The China Music Awards was founded in 1994 and has since gathered the best and brightest from the music industry in host cities like Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu, Hong Kong, Macao and Taipei. More than 100 members of the press from mainland China, Hong Kong and Macao were present at the integrated resort to cover this major event. The spectacle was broadcast live on Star TV, Channel V and Star International, and was streamed online by Sina, Tencent, Sohu, NetEase, Youku, Tudou, Letv, FengXing, PPS and iQIYI so that fans across the globe were able to tune in and enjoy an evening that was chock-full of big-name superstars.



Jerome Pugmire, Bahrain

FORMULA One commercial chief Bernie Ecclestone says the Azerbaijan Grand Prix will make its debut next season, despite concerns over the country's human rights record. Known as the Baku European Grand Prix, it is to be held as a street race in the country's capital, Baku.

A report this year by Human Rights Watch said that there had been a deterioration in the former Soviet Republic state's record, with more than 30 human rights defenders — including political activists and journalists — convicted or imprisoned.

Speaking ahead of the Bahrain GP, which was canceled in 2011 amid violent clashes after an uprising demanding political reforms, Ecclestone said he did not think there would be any problems. "It's going to be another good race," he said.

Earlier this week, the sport's official website carried a legal notice stating that "The Formula One Group is committed to respecting internationally recognized human rights in its operations globally."

The Human Right Watch report on Azerbaijan said "the Azerbaijani government escalated repression against its critics, marking a dramatic deterioration in its already poor rights record."

Asked if the human rights situation in Azerbaijan had been checked out with a view to hosting next year's race, Ecclestone said "We have" before adding "I think everybody seems to be happy. There doesn't seem to be any big problem there." Ecclestone also addresses questions about the worrying decline in the status of iconic European races.

More races are heading to



Ecclestone, right, president and CEO of Formula One Management, gestures in the paddock ahead the Bahrain Formula One Grand Prix

F1

Ecclestone says 2016 Azerbaijan Grand Prix going ahead

countries in Asia and the Middle East, where government funding can better cover the high hosting fees. Qatar is reportedly very keen on hosting a race, although Ecclestone did not say Sunday whether that is a possibility.

The German GP was erased from the 2015 schedule because of financial problems — and it is uncertain to be held next year — and Ecclestone has not guaranteed the future of Italy's famed Monza race, which is held outside of Milan in September and is particularly popular with

Ferrari fans.

Ecclestone is in ongoing talks with Monza promoters over a new deal, with the current deal set to expire after next year's race. There is an impasse with promoters urging Ecclestone to lower his prices, but with Ecclestone also in the position of receiving potential offers from other countries keen to host the race and able to afford it.

"We have to wait and see. They don't have an agreement. Bit like Germany really," said Ecclestone, who somewhat dis-

missed the idea that historic races like Monza, Hockenheim and Nuerburgring are too important to be replaced.

"I tell you something, I was

told that when we didn't have a race in France (Magny-Cours). And Germany now," he said. "We've got some good replacements, haven't we?" AP

HAMILTON WINS BAHRAIN GP

DEFENDING CHAMPION

Lewis Hamilton won the Bahrain Grand Prix from pole position today (Macau time) to strengthen his overall lead in the Formula One standings with his third win in four races this season and 36th of his career. The British driver

started from pole for the first time in the desert race under floodlights and was largely untroubled, finishing ahead of Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen and his Mercedes teammate Nico Rosberg, whose sloppy error with two laps remaining let in Raikkonen.

GOLF

Thailand's Kiradech wins Shenzhen in playoff

THAILAND'S Kiradech Aphibarnrat captured the inaugural Shenzhen International yesterday after rallying in regulation with an eagle on the 17th hole and beating Chinese teenager Li Haotong in a playoff.

Kiradech and Li shared the lead after the turn, but the 19-year-old Chinese player looked to be heading for the biggest title of his career when he birdied the 17th and Kiradech bogeyed the par-4 15th to open up a two-stroke lead.

Kiradech rebounded, however, with an eagle on the par-5 17th to pull even with Li again and force the playoff. He had a chance to win on the



Huang Wen Yi teeing off

18th, but his birdie putt skirted to the right of the hole.

On the playoff hole, Kiradech hit his approach shot to the middle of the 18th green and made a birdie, while Li two-put-

ted for par.

The 19-year-old Li shot a 5-under 67 in the final round, while Kiradech, the overnight leader, had a 72. Both finished at 12-under 276.

Tommy Fleetwood was

third at 11-under 277.

Kiradech had only won one previous title on the European Tour at the 2013 Malaysian Open. He was coming off a joint-sixth place finish at the Arnold Palmer Invitational last month on the U.S. PGA Tour.

Li has been improving over the past year. He won the last two tournaments on the PGA Tour of China last year to earn a card on the U.S.-based Web.com Tour, where he has made five cuts this year. He's also risen to No. 194 in the world rankings — surpassing established players Liang Wenchong and Wu Ashun to become the highest-ranked Chinese player.

Fleetwood played steady all week, carding 70, 69, 69 and 69 in his four rounds. The 24-year-old Englishman, who had been aiming for his second European Tour title, pulled within a stroke of Li with a birdie on the 17th, but could get no closer.

France's Julien Quesne also had an eagle on the 17th and a birdie on the 18th to shoot a 65.

"My long game was very good. I've got some trouble with putting, but I made some putts at the end. So, it's a good week for me," he said. "I do my best to make the birdie at the end to be minus-10, to be maybe top 5 or top 10."

Quesne finished in a tie for fourth with Mar-

co Crespi, Huang Wenyi, David Howell, Tom Lewis, Y.E. Yang, and Peter Uihlein.

Two-time Masters champion Bubba Watson finally seemed to acclimate to the conditions after three subpar rounds, making eight birdies to shoot a 7-under 65. It was the first time he'd broken 70 this week.

"I wish I would have putted better the first three rounds," he said. "I putted good the last round, but all in all, it was a good test. It shows what I need to work on. It shows me that I can play outside the U.S., especially today."

Watson finished in a tie for 29th place at 5-under 283. AP

opinion

Insight
Paulo Barbosa



ON POLITICAL ABILITY

The 2015 Policy Address is done. Chief Executive Chui Sai On and all five secretaries went to the Legislative Assembly (AL) to present the strategy they aim to implement during the upcoming months. The last to present their plan to the lawmakers was Raimundo do Rosário (see our report about the second day of his policy address on page 5), who was a pleasant surprise.

Chui Sai On was true to form, as expected. He enumerated social welfare measures directed at the elderly population and regional cooperation policies that seemingly originate outside Macau. There was no long-term plan to develop the region. The idea that got more media attention in the local non-Chinese press was the announcement of a study on the creation of a municipal body "with no political power" until 2017. This could indicate (or not) more democratization in the policy making process. But even that idea was not clearly explained. As I wrote previously, the CE was vague and resorted to platitudes about economic diversification. There was no real debate at the AL between him and the lawmakers, since he seemed to be delivering canned responses to pre-made questions. Chui doesn't like to leave anything to chance or to improvise during his speeches. He does that to such an extent that even a debate becomes the transcript of a written speech.

Regarding the secretaries' performance at the AL, Alexis Tam was perhaps the one that showed the most political ability. The Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture demonstrated that his time as government spokesperson has given him a finger on the pulse of the local media and knowledge about what can capture the public's attention. He made a strong announcement — the revamp of the Hotel Estoril into an arts center targeted at local youth — and stressed the importance of national education, demonstrating that he abides by Beijing's agenda. Alexis Tam also announced some other concrete measures (like the replacement of the hospital director), and even managed to say what the French call a 'boutade,' or a sound byte, that obviously caught media attention and some took seriously. He said that he would resign from office if his reforms fail.

The Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong, also performed well at his first policy address presentation. His strong idea is that the gaming industry needs a "check-up" and the government will develop an interim review of the performances of gaming concessionaires this year. The message is that gaming operators need to perform well in non-gaming elements, job creation and career opportunities afforded to locals; as well as social responsibility programs.

The Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, had a somewhat clumsy start. When he took office he said that he needed to study the several dossiers before presenting any concrete measure, revealing honesty but also lack of political intuition (a politician can't be in office and assume total ignorance or absence of ideas over the matters he supervises). But Raimundo do Rosário surprised me, showing a practical, engineer's frame of mind. He said that he would solve concrete problems and wouldn't let public work projects stall. Candidly, he admitted to the complete mess of his secretariat's ongoing works in fields like transportation and major public projects, saying that he couldn't "justify the unjustifiable" (a great sound bite).

One last note about the debates at the AL: The rules should be amended in order to make them more organized, especially during the policy address. Since the secretaries oversee a wide array of issues, the debates are illogical, almost chaotic. Lawmakers are allowed to talk too much (half an hour) and mostly spend their time guessing everything and nothing. And the secretaries choose what they want to reply to and ignore some questions.

The debate would be more organized and relevant if it became more sectorial. For example, it would be preferable to have two hours allocated for health issues than to mix health with culture, social welfare and sports over one afternoon.

THE BUZZ KIDS OF COLD WAR
CROCS GOING TO CUBA

Cuba's efforts to sustain the critically endangered Cuban crocodile are getting a boost from Sweden, home to a pair of reptiles that Fidel Castro gave to a Soviet cosmonaut four decades ago.

A Stockholm zoo is sending 10 of the couple's babies to Cuba, where they will be placed in quarantine and eventually released into the Zapata Swamp, said Jonas Wahlstrom, the zookeeper who raised them.

"It's the dream of any zoo director to be part of releasing animals into the wild," said Wahlstrom, 62, clutching one of the stout-legged youngsters outside its enclosure at the Skansen aquarium and zoo in Stockholm. The Cuban crocodile, once found across the Caribbean, is restricted today to two swamps in Cuba, where it is threatened by interbreeding with American crocodiles, habitat loss and illegal hunting.

AUTO INDUSTRY

Mercedes shrinks SUV coupe to compact



An employee works on an engine unit for a Mercedes-Benz AG S-Class Coupe, produced by Daimler AG

Elisabeth Behrmann

MERCEDES-BENZ, which is introducing four sport-utility vehicles this year, is looking at bringing out an all-new compact coupe version as early as 2016 as buyers continue to favor the sporty models.

Almost 18 centimeters shorter than the mid-sized GLE coupe that's due to start sales in 2015, the "near-production" concept car with a low sloping back end would be pitted against the curvy BMW AG X4 SUV that went on sale last year.

The prototype, dubbed the GLC coupe, gives a "foretaste of future SUV models from Mercedes-Benz," Gorden Wagener, head of design at parent company

Daimler AG, said in a statement for its unveiling yesterday at the Shanghai Auto Show.

Mercedes is rolling out four new or revamped SUVs this year in its effort to overtake BMW and Volkswagen's Audi division in worldwide luxury-car sales by the end of the decade. The GLC is part of Stuttgart, Germany-based Mercedes's drive to add 11 models with no predecessor to the lineup. Daimler

2015 will be the year of the SUV

DIETER ZETSCHKE

Chief Executive Officer Dieter Zetsche in February declared 2015 to be "the year of the SUV" as demand jumps.

Among the top three premium-car producers, sales growth in 2014 at Mercedes outpaced gains at both first-place BMW and No. 2 Audi. During the first quarter of this year, Mercedes's deliveries jumped 16 percent, compared with 6.1 percent for Audi and 5.4 percent for Munich-based BMW. SUVs accounted for 21 percent of Mercedes's volume in the quarter, the same proportion as all of last year.

Demand for roomy yet sporty SUVs is set to expand further, according to IHS Automotive. The market research company forecasts that global sales of the models will rise 32 percent from 2014 to 24.7 million vehicles by the end of the decade.

"Among the trends we're expecting includes far more sub-compact SUVs to be launched over the next few years," Ian Fletcher, an IHS analyst in London, said in an e-mail. Premium-auto producers "will also look to gain greater visibility in the compact SUV segment."

Bloomberg

Station	Air quality
Roadside	15-35 Good
High Density Residential Area	20-40 Good
Ambient	15-35 Good

WORLD BRIEFS



MEXICO About 200 participants in a protest convoy of Central American migrants arrived in Mexico's capital Saturday and filed abuse complaints with the government's National Human Rights Commission. The agency said in a statement that an ombudsman met with representatives of the protest, who turned in 139 complaints alleging violations against migrants by Mexican federal police and immigration officers.

GERMANY Officials in Germany solemnly commemorated the liberation of two Nazi concentration camps 70 years ago in the closing days of World War II. Poland's first lady, Anna Komorowska, joined in remembrance activities yesterday at the site of the Ravensbrueck women's camp in northern Germany. Many of the prisoners came from Poland. Ceremonies also were taking place at the former Sachsenhausen camp near Berlin.



FINLAND Finns are voting in parliamentary elections that will determine which coalition of parties can lead the country out of a three-year recession. Conservative Prime Minister Alexander Stubb (pictured) acknowledges economic reforms should have been made earlier by the government during its four-year term. Campaigning for yesterday's election was dominated by arguments over unemployment, benefit cuts and the rising national debt.

LIBYA The extremist Islamic State group, which controls a third of both Iraq and Syria in its self-declared caliphate, released a video Sunday purportedly showing militants killing two groups of Ethiopian Christians in Libya. More on p14

CUBA At least two dissidents made it past a first round of voting and are standing as candidates in municipal elections that will be watched on and off the island yesterday as an unprecedented test of Cuba's single-party system.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Paulo Barbosa



The annual Beishan World Music Festival was held this weekend with its fifth edition at the Beishan Theatre in Zhuhai. Toy Captain (pictured) were one of the bands warmly received by the enthusiastic audience. The band sings in a folk dialect about Shantou city's old tales of the islanders and the sea.