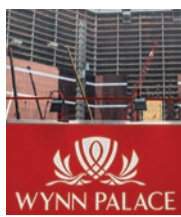




ZHUHAI MAYOR ENVISAGES BORDERLESS REGION

Macau and Zhuhai could go borderless in the future, according to the neighboring city's mayor

P4



WYNN URGES END TO UNCERTAINTY

Steve Wynn has called on the gov't to provide clarity on plans for Macau's development as his company cut its dividend

P6



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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA Women in the Chinese capital in the final stage of pregnancy during the 2008 Beijing Olympics — when officials strictly controlled air pollution — gave birth to heavier babies than in years when the city was smoggier, a study says. [More on p11](#)

KOREAS South Korea's spy agency tells lawmakers that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has ordered the execution of 15 senior officials this year who were accused of challenging his authority.

USA-JAPAN Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will seek support for a trans-Pacific trade pact that has divided U.S. lawmakers as he makes the first address by a Japanese leader to a joint meeting of Congress. [More on p14](#)



NIGERIA's military says it is moving 200 girls and 93 women from a northeastern forest where they were rescued from Boko Haram extremists. Army spokesman Col. Sani Usman says many are traumatized.

SYRIA In the span of a month, Syrian insurgents have routed government forces across the country's northwest, flushing them out of strongholds in a string of embarrassing defeats for President Bashar Assad. The disintegration of government forces in Idlib province, coupled with recent losses in the southern province of Daraa, punctures the notion that Assad is operating from a position of strength, and lays bare some of the government's fundamental weaknesses after four years of civil war.

More on backpage

CCAC records fewer corruption cases

P3 2014 REPORT



Hong Kong election rules fight starts with 47pct poll support

P11



Sheldon Adelson, left, and his attorney John Randall Jones talk before Adelson testifies



Steven Jacobs, former CEO of Sands China, greets a member of his legal team

COURTS

Adelson says Jacobs almost destroyed Sands China

Edvard Pettersson

SHELDON Adelson, the billionaire founder and chairman of Las Vegas Sands Corp., said the man he fired almost five years ago as the head of his casinos in Macau was a “very strange man” who almost destroyed the company.

Adelson, 81, testified Tuesday for the first time in open court about his conflict with Steven Jacobs, who was fired in 2010 as chief executive officer of Sands China Ltd. and who has accused his former boss of requiring him to do “outrageous” and “illegal” things, including collecting compromising information on Macau government officials.

“I didn’t trust anything that came out of Jacobs,” Adelson told a Las Vegas judge, adding that Jacobs’s wrongful-termination lawsuit has validated his distrust. “He tried to go behind my back and report to different members of the board so he wouldn’t have to report to me.”

Adelson, under questioning from James Pisanelli, one of Jacobs’s lawyers, said he should have fired Jacobs sooner because he “tried to kill the company” by unilaterally deciding to cut out the junket operators who control the supply of high-end

gamblers that account for 60 to 70 percent of the gaming revenue in the former Portuguese colony.

Adelson also told the judge that Jacobs was the first employee he had come across in 60 years as a businessman who had compiled a file titled “outrageous” when he started the job and used it to sue and “blackmail” his employer.

Jacobs alleges he was ousted because he clashed with Adelson over demands, among other things, to rehire a Macau lawyer who he said asked for a USD300 million payment for Chinese government officials and to collect evidence on Macau government officials that could be used to “exert leverage” on them to thwart regulation unfavorable to Sands casinos.

Michael Leven, the former president and chief operating officer of Las Vegas Sands, testified last week that Adelson was

I didn't trust anything that came out of Jacobs

ADELSON

concerned that Macau officials were giving him less favorable treatment than locally owned competitors in the former Portuguese colony. According to Leven, the Macau government had reneged on promises regarding Sands’s expansion plans.

Adelson has denied he ordered Jacobs to investigate the business and financial affairs of Macau officials and has accused Jacobs of commissioning the investigations on his own accord. Sands has said Jacobs was fired for working on unauthorized deals and violating company policy.

“I had to repair what he did on the spot,” Adelson said Tuesday, referring to incorrect statements Jacobs had made that Sands China would expand into Japan. “He did things on his own.”

Adelson said he believed Jacobs was trying to embarrass him with the allegations in the lawsuit, which he said were “fabrications” and “delusions” because of the occasions he had stepped in and corrected his former chief executive’s mistakes.

Nevada District Court Judge Elizabeth Gonzalez has steered the testimony away from the underlying reasons why Jacobs was fired and focused on whe-

ther the process was controlled from Las Vegas. Jacobs claims Sands China is, in effect, run by the parent company in Nevada.

The hearing that started last week is only to determine whether Jacobs can sue Hong Kong-listed Sands China, in addition to the Las Vegas-based parent, and Adelson, in Nevada. Sands China, incorporated in the Cayman Islands, said it doesn’t do business in Nevada and shouldn’t be in court there.

Over the objections of Sands China’s lawyers, the judge has allowed some evidence of the conflict between Jacobs and his former boss.

The judge last week permitted testimony about a report by a Hong Kong risk consultant who looked into the business relationship between Sands China and Cheung Chi Tai, an alleged organized-crime figure involved with junket operators who bring high-rollers from mainland China to gamble at the VIP rooms at Sands China casinos.

Leven testified last week that Las Vegas Sands commissioned the investigation in response to Nevada gaming regulators’ concerns about media reports that Sands China was doing business with organized-crime figures in Macau. Based on the investigation, Cheung was bar-

red from the Venetian Macau and other Sands China properties, Leven said.

Keeping the claims against the Macau company in the U.S. is important for Jacobs because he’s trying to recover 2.5 million Sands China stock options, which would be harder to collect if he’s forced to bring a separate lawsuit overseas.

Jacobs “squealed” to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and Justice Department regarding his claims of purported illegal activity by Sands in Macau, Adelson said at the hearing. Both agencies opened Foreign Corrupt Practices Act investigations into the allegations.

“After four years of investigating, they haven’t found a shred of evidence yet,” Adelson said. He took over as chief executive officer of Sands China in March as his most lucrative properties face a sharp decline of gaming revenue after years of rapid growth. Sands China, which last year accounted for about two-thirds of Las Vegas Sands’ total revenue, reported a 54 percent drop in first-quarter profit last week.

China’s crackdown on corruption has caused a 10-month slump for Macau’s casino industry since June, as high-rollers avoided the city, the world’s biggest gambling hub. The economic slowdown in China, a smoking ban in casinos and stricter visa rules also dampened business from mass-market gamblers.

The case is Jacobs v. Las Vegas Sands Corp., A-10-627691-B, Nevada District Court, Clark County (Las Vegas). **Bloomberg**

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2014 REPORT

CCAC receives fewer graft complaints

Brook Yang

THE Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) received a total of 865 claims last year, showing a 17 percent decline in criminal cases but also a 6 percent increase in administrative appeals compared with the previous year.

The Commission stressed in its annual report, released yesterday, that its work fighting corruption and administrative violations relies on citizens' support and participation – an assertion that is reflected in last year's figures, which state that over 96 percent of the claims were reported by citizens.

However, the total number of claims dropped by 31 and halted the upward trend that has prevailed over recent years. Regarding this number, the CCAC said that it "will focus attention and carefully review the reasons behind this change in number, thence targeting deployment in this year's work plan."

According to the report, cases of corruption investigated last year still showed a predominance of offenses by civil servants. A large proportion of those offenses were of document forgery, especially falsification of working records.

Compared with the past several years, the number of criminal claims received by CCAC dropped significantly to 298 last year. The authority followed that up with 492 completed investigations, including cases held over from 2013.

Abuse of power, fraud and embezzlement were also found frequently among those offenses, while instances of civil servants taking bribes declined in comparison. In addition, the commission closed two cases, one involving a civil servant incorrectly declaring property

RENATO MARQUES



and the other involving property from unidentified sources.

The report revealed ten criminal cases, including a corruption allegation against a department head of the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC). The official allegedly commissioned construction design work in 2007 to a company which had his/her spouse as a shareholder. The company received a service fee of MOP2 million; moreover, due to its inadequate design, a delay in subsequent tendering of the construction cost the government in extra project expenses to the amount of over MOP10 million.

Corruption was also found in civil associations. An association's manager embezzled over MOP1 million of public funds between 2011 and 2012, by overstating expenses and concealing earnings. The association also deceived the Health Bureau, Macao Foundation and the Office of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, so that it could illegally receive

funds for one project from different funding bodies.

In a separate case, two doctors working in a private medical institution allegedly defrauded it out of over MOP1.4 million between 2012 and 2014, by profiting through organizing colleagues to refer patients to another clinic to take tests.

Bribery cases involving the private sector saw a slight decline in 2014. Nevertheless, the CCAC revealed that it is sometimes limited in its ability to roll out criminal investigations into the private sector.

"The private sector covers a broad range of industries, whereby different industry norms greatly affect the identification of whether it's a crime or not. Besides, the law doesn't permit launching a criminal investigation before informing [the potential litigant], whereas some private companies often tend to hush up [gloss things over] in order to mitigate the negative effect," said the report.

The CCAC also received six

requests from Hong Kong and the mainland's anti-graft departments for assistance last year; it also made six requests for aid to other jurisdictions in the conduct of investigations. Additionally, the Commission received 449 inquiries regarding criminal offenses.

Meanwhile, the 567 administrative appeals made in 2014 were mostly over alleged violations within the public servant system, police force's management and law enforcement, as well as municipal affairs.

It also received 572 inquiries to seek help in terms of administrative appeals. Apart from the aforementioned areas, these inquiries also concentrated on medical services and public procurement.

The Commission explained that it followed up the claims and complaints by investigating public departments' operations for administrative violations or misconduct, as well as assessing the quality and efficiency of services. In the report, the

Commission revealed ten cases and slammed departments for malpractice, including that of the Monetary Authority of Macao, the Health Bureau, the Public Security Force, the Consumer Council and the Transport Bureau.

■ A large proportion of reported offenses consisted of document forgery, especially falsification of working records

Of these departments, the CCAC disclosed that the Monetary Authority violated the law in several hirings in 2013. The department allegedly tailor-made its scoring ratio and criteria for particular candidates and denied some applicants the right to attend the exam by pre-screening resumes. As a result, the recruitment process will be rerun for the positions in question.

In another case, the CCAC indicated that the authorities had failed to listen to residents' opposition to a plan to build a footbridge connecting the Taipa Health Centre and a building across the street. The report also disclosed a violation within the Health Bureau, indicating that they did not launch the necessary disciplinary process against a doctor who prescribed incorrect antibiotics to a patient.

THE Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, clarified yesterday why he sacked Chao Son U from the Cultural Industries Fund's administrative committee.

Alexis Tam said that his Secretariat initiated a probe on Chao Son U, who is suspected of being involved in granting a subsidy to a relative. Tam said that the Fund's fiscal council received a complaint from workers of the fund's committee about the case.

Alexis Tam said that

CORRUPTION

Alexis Tam explains Chao Son U sacking

both his cabinet and the fiscal council had limited capacity to investigate the case, and hence a report and related documents were handed to the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC). Meanwhile, Alexis Tam deemed the case "serious," and decided to immediately terminate Chao Son U's position.

The secretary also said in a statement released yesterday that he hopes that the sacking may help the fund's credibility. "The immediate cessation of functions is intended to maintain the public's trust in the fund. The future appointment of a civil servant to the post is a way to show trust in the civil servants' team," the statement read.



Alexis Tam

COOPERATION

Zhuhai mayor envisages borderless region

MACAU and its neighboring city of Zhuhai could go borderless in the future under the implementation of the Chinese government's "One-belt-one-road" economic initiatives and multiple free-trade zones, according to Ling Jiang, mayor of Zhuhai city, who also believes that the two-sided cooperation ought to be deepened at a non-official level.

After the first meeting of the year, where bilateral efforts to cooperate in multiple fields over the previous year were reviewed, the 50-year-old Zhuhai municipal governor, who took the post in January, has once again pledged to further beef up cooperation between the two cities, which he described

as "complementary."

"Both Secretary [Lionel] Leong and I perceive future collaboration between the two sides to hold enormous potential (...) and rare opportunities," said Jiang, "especially now, when the central government has implemented the 21st-century 'silk road' and also the free-trade zone in Hengqin."

To date, the number of local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that have made investments in Zhuhai totals 1,284, which accounts for more than 40 percent of the overall number of foreign companies with investments in the city, revealed the Zhuhai mayor.

Ling Jiang also urged the local government to push for non-official interactions between the two cities, which would involve more public participation.

Aside from those proposals, Jiang hinted that he expected continued expansion of infrastructure and social projects built by Macau in Hengqin, such as the elderly care homes suggested by the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture during the Policy Address.

"I suggest that the SAR government could extend its social services to the Hengqin region," said the Zhuhai mayor, adding that local citizens who work or dwell in that particular area could also benefit from the services being introduced.

The remarks made by Lionel Leong echoed the Zhuhai leader's comments after the almost two-hour conference. This was also the very first meeting between the two major officials since Leong came to office.

"[The mainland officials' economic initiatives] indeed have brought fresh opportunities to Macau's regional cooperation,"



Ling Jiang, Mayor of Zhuhai

4TH WATER SUPPLY TUNNEL TO START IN JULY

THE CITY'S fourth conduit for water supply from the mainland was slated for completion in 2016, with construction work to commence this upcoming July, revealed the mayor of Zhuhai.

said the secretary. "Thus, let's think of how we might manage to seize those chances and further them on the basis of former collaboration."

The Secretary for Economy and Finance told media that he expected the central government to roll out more policy initiatives and developmental strategies in order to improve local social wellbeing, cross-regional mega infrastructure and regional partnerships. Leung described those suggestions made in the discussion as "pragmatic" and "innovative."

Lionel Leong also revealed that 17 out of the 33 projects that the local government had proposed to Hengqin have ob-

tained the green light from the Zhuhai authorities.

The conference held yesterday morning mainly centered on topics relating to tourism promotion, environmental protection, border crossing checkpoints between the two jurisdictions, the upgrade of the cross-border industrial zone and the establishment of the Hengqin free trade zone.

The authorities have also promised to work with the mainland officials to advance both governments' funding mechanisms for youth startups, which would encourage young local entrepreneurs to venture out of the city for business opportunities. **Staff reporter**

LOCAL CARS SOON ALLOWED INTO HENGQIN

THE MAYOR of Zhuhai told media that a basic management scheme to allow the entry of Macau-licensed vehicles into Hengqin has already taken shape, after opinions were earlier collected from local government and cross-border checkpoint authorities. The model is not far from receiving official confirmation from the central government, he said.

AD

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Wynn urges end to uncertainty as profit slides

BLOOMBERG

Daryl Loo and Stephanie Wong

BILLIONAIRE Steve Wynn has called on Macau's government to provide clarity on plans for the Chinese city as his casino company cut its dividend and China's anti-corruption drive slashes profits.

Wynn Macau Ltd. reported adjusted property earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization, or Ebitda, dropped 45 percent to USD212.3 million during the first quarter. That missed a median estimate of \$230.5 million from six analysts surveyed by Bloomberg.

VIP gambling in Macau has been hit by President Xi Jinping's campaign on graft that snared thousands of officials, prompting many wealthy Chinese to cut back on conspicuous consumption and stay away from the world's largest gambling hub. As revenues slumped, the city's leaders have given li-

tle detail about the allocation of workers and gaming tables, casting doubt over a slew of new offerings planned by the six major casino operators, including a new Wynn Macau property.

"There's no question that uncertainty is the plaguing word of the day in Macau," the founder of Wynn Resorts Ltd. said during a teleconference for its earnings Tuesday. "Hopefully, our government in Macau will calm that down and put some certainty back into the picture."

The Macau unit of Las Vegas-based Wynn Resorts fell 7.6 percent to HKD16.14 at the close of trading in Hong Kong, the biggest decline since March 17. MGM China Holdings Ltd. was down 2.7 percent, Galaxy Entertainment Group and SJM Holdings Ltd. both fell about 2 percent, and Sands China Ltd. slipped 0.6 percent. The benchmark Hang Seng Index lost 0.2 percent.



Signage for the Wynn Palace project, developed by Wynn Resorts Ltd., is displayed on a fence outside the construction site in Macau

To conserve cash, Wynn Resorts announced it is cutting its dividend to 50 cents a share, from the \$1.50 it paid in February. Wynn Macau, whose revenues accounted for 65 percent of the group's total, aims to open a second property in March 2016.

Steve Wynn highlighted several uncertainties in the Chinese city. He's unsure how many workers the government would allow the company to hire to build its \$4 billion Wynn Palace and how many gambling tables it would get for its new resort.

"We've struggled with ad-

justing our work schedule on construction to the permissions we've been given for workers on construction by the government," he said.

The Macau government has responded to its citizens' pressure to avoid overcrowding in Macau which "leaves us in a bit of a quandary," the billionaire said. "We never know quite what to expect these days," he said. The government is studying curbs on mainland tourists to ease overcrowding.

Wynn's employees in Macau are counting on the benefits

from the company's new project, and those uncertainties "may erupt into protests against the government if it isn't settled soon," the executive said. The former Portuguese colony last year saw a record number of demonstrations by workers demanding better pay and welfare at the city's casinos. Another one has been planned for May 1 during the Labor Day holiday.

Wynn Macau posted a 38 percent decline in revenue to \$705.4 million. Table games revenue in the VIP segment more than halved during the period, while it fell 7 percent for the mass market, the company said.

Steve Wynn said it's "impossible" to predict how long the depression of the VIP market would last. Wynn Resorts' earnings power proved to be underwhelming versus the most expected, which was disappointing given its market share gain during the quarter," DS Kim, an analyst with JP Morgan Chase & Co., wrote in a note Wednesday. Wynn Macau showed "meaningful share gain" in the mass-market segment, while its new VIP rooms showed strong performance, he wrote.

Profit excluding some items fell to 70 cents a share, Wynn Resorts said in a statement. Analysts were projecting \$1.19, the average of 10 estimates compiled by Bloomberg. **Bloomberg**

AD

Macau Daily Times contest



PRISMATIC WORLD TOUR

KATY PERRY

at The Venetian Macao











Question for readers:

Being the first artist to surpass the 75 million digital award threshold, how far ahead is Katy from any other artist?

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Katy is currently touring the world on the Prismatic World Tour, which continues to be a hugely successful global spectacle, with 17 sold out arenas in the UK, 66 sold out arenas in North America and 25 sold out arenas in Australia/New Zealand during 2014. The tour continues in 2015 throughout Europe, Asia and South America where Katy will headline Rock In Rio in Brazil on September 25. The state-

of-the-art stage, specifically designed by Katy for THE PRISMATIC WORLD TOUR at The Venetian Macao, allows her to get closer to her fans than ever before. The one-of-a-kind set design will provide concertgoers with a truly magical experience from every angle in the arena. PRISM has already equalled the sales success of its predecessor, and generated five hit singles, two of which, "Roar" and "Dark Horse,"

hit #1 for multiple weeks, which helped Katy set a new record at Top 40 for most total weeks (46) at No. 1 in the Billboard airplay chart's archives, and makes her the only artist in 2014 with top spins at three different radio station formats (Top 40, Hot AC and AC radio). She is the first artist to surpass the 75 million digital award threshold, counting digital downloads and on-demand streams – 20 million ahead of any other artist.

Catarina Pinto

THE Power of the Macao Gaming Association, whose founding members include lawmaker José Pereira Coutinho and Rita Santos, is urging gaming operators to improve employees' social security contributions, while also calling for the implementation of a full smoking ban inside casinos next year.

In a press conference held yesterday at the Macau Civil Servants Association (ATFPM) premises, members of the association advocated for improvements to casino workers' social security regime. "Currently, gaming concessionaires are paying social security contributions (five percent) on behalf of their employees, and the employees pay another five percent. This contribution is insufficient to protect these employees once they retire and need to ensu-

re the stability of their households," Mr Coutinho explained.

"Even though casino revenue dropped, operators are still making a profit, so we need further guarantees for our pension schemes," said the president of the Power of the Macao Gaming Association, Stephen Lau.

The group hopes that casino operators can increase the value of their social security contributions, which are paid on the behalf of employees, from five to ten percent.

The association is also calling for the payment of a shift premium to all casino workers, and an annual salary increase.

Gaming revenue dropped for the tenth consecutive month in March, and the Power of Macao Gaming Association claimed that several workers have been recently receiving letters of warning. They fear that these letters might be used at a later stage to

Casino workers call for improvements to social security scheme



Coutinho submits Trade Union Bill to AL

PEREIRA Coutinho yesterday announced that he has submitted a draft of the Trade Union Bill to the Legislative Assembly (AL) for the sixth time. Last year in April, his fifth attempt to convince fellow lawmakers to pass a bill regulating trade unions failed. On the sidelines of a press conference held at the Macau Civil Servants Association, Mr Coutinho revealed that he's already been promoting the draft bill, and will continue lobbying, especially now that May Day approaches.

"The drafted bill was already submitted to the AL... I think more lawmakers will be voting in favor of this bill, because there have been many changes lately and we're approaching the AL's next election in 2017," he acknowledged.

Furthermore, he pointed out that with seven appointed lawmakers in the AL, "the government has a moral obligation to tell them to vote in favor of our bill."

Last year, the bill submitted by Mr Coutinho and his fellow lawmaker Leong Veng Chai was vetoed, with several legislators first indicating support for the legislation but later deciding to vote against it due to the lack of consultation.

Some lawmakers even said that they were suspicious of the motives behind introducing such a bill, claiming that it was intended to stir up disputes.

fire employees.

The implementation of a full smoking ban is another priority for this new association, which was established in December last year. Choi Chi Kin, another member, reasoned that, "a full smoking ban should be implemented next year, otherwise the Macau government will have to deal with public health issues later on."

Lawmaker Coutinho added that the casino workers' association is calling for the implementation of a full smoking ban as of January 1 next year, as "[smoking] has brought several health problems to those working inside VIP rooms."

Despite expressing several con-

cerns over Macau's gaming industry, the Power of the Macao Gaming Association and ATFPM will not join May Day protests, Mr Coutinho confirmed.

"ATFPM is not participating, but we support those taking part and [understand] their concerns," the lawmaker said, adding that they have not encountered issues in communicating with the government lately. "We take to the streets

when we have strong reasons (...) a protest should have concrete results and should be held when other options [to communicate with the government] have been exhausted," he recalled.

Pereira Coutinho, however, said that he will personally be joining the May Day march on Friday in order to talk to protesters and to gain an understanding of their demands.

RECENTLY ESTABLISHED ASSOCIATION

THE POWER of Macao Gaming Association was established last December and comprises about 1,122 members. Lawmaker Coutinho and the former deputy secretary-general of the permanent secretariat of Forum Macau, Rita Santos, are among the founding members.

MUSIC

Chick Corea and Herbie Hancock to perform live in Macau

THE Macau Cultural Centre announced yesterday what it deems to be a "top-class moment of jazz" - Herbie Hancock and Chick Corea in concert. With a combined collection of over thirty Grammy awards, the influential jazz pianists will display a unique evening of improvisation and pure skill on June 5 (Friday) in the Grand Auditorium.

The jazz legends have been active for more than five decades, and are considered rare examples of constant reinvention and progression. The keyboard duo goes a long way back to the Miles Da-



Chick Corea



Herbie Hancock

vies bands of the '60s, and starred in the '70s jazz-funk fusion bands Head Hunters (Hancock) and Return to Forever (Corea).

According to the biogra-

phical notes distributed by CCM, Hancock was born in Chicago and his passion for jazz began in high school, initially inspired by Oscar Peterson and

Bill Evans, setting up a rich career. Substantially influenced by electronics and science, Hancock was a great contributor to numerous Blue Note classics

and acted as a cornerstone of the 1970s and '80s jazz-rock fusion movement.

Keyboard virtuoso and composer Chick Corea has spent as many years

as Hancock on the road, and his career has spanned over an equally astonishing number of musical genres. From bebop to fusion, Corea developed his craft with the likes of Stan Getz and Sarah Vaughan, before embarking on a solo career in 1966. He has since then been at the forefront of jazz and continues to make significant impact on the scene, as evidenced by three consecutive Grammy wins between 2007 and 2009.

Hancock and Corea became legends following their classic live albums and groundbreaking tours in the '60s and '70s.



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Business Luncheon

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Executive Director
AEDAS

Global Award Winning Architects
on
Innovation, Metaphor and Synthesis
A brief introduction to AEDAS design in Hengqin
Wednesday, 13th May



Hengqin Financial International Centre, Zhuhai, to be completed in 2017

The Venetian Resort, Junior Ball Room
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1 pm: Lunch
1.45 pm: Presentation by Wai Tang
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Samsung's profit hit by bigger iPhones, sinks 39 percent

Youkyung Lee
Business Writer, Seoul

SAMSUNG Electronics Co. said its first quarter net profit plunged 39 percent as consumers switched to bigger iPhones, squeezing earnings from its mobile business to less than half what they were a year earlier.

The company reported yesterday that its January-March net profit was 4.63 trillion won (USD4.35 billion), compared with 7.49 trillion won a year earlier. That was lower than the forecast of 4.97 trillion won in a survey of analysts by financial data provider FactSet.

The larger-than-expected drop was due to a big profit plunge in Samsung's mobile business. The maker of Galaxy smartphones said its mobile division generated 2.74 trillion won in quarterly profit compared with 6.43 trillion won a year earlier.

Analysts estimate Samsung sold more smartphones than Apple during the quarter. But the Korean firm lost ground in the more profitable high-end market to Apple after the maker of the iPhone began offering models with bigger screens last fall. Before that, large screens were a feature that set Samsung phones apart.

According to Counterpoint Technology Market Research, sales of iPhones were also strong in countries where Samsung's presence looms large, such as its home market South Korea and Vietnam, which has Sam-



Visitors tour a Samsung Electronics shop in Seoul, South Korea

sung's biggest phone factory.

Samsung, which does not disclose its smartphone shipments, is estimated to have sold 83 million smartphones during the quarter, down 6 percent from a year earlier, according to Counterpoint. But most of the sales increase came from mid-level handsets like the Galaxy A series, which sell for less than its flagship models. The period preceded the launch of the latest versions of Samsung's flagship smartphones.

Samsung said its quarterly revenue fell 12 percent from a year earlier to 47.12 trillion won while operating income dropped 30 percent to 5.98 trillion won, in line with Samsung's earnings preview earlier this month.

The Korean company said its profits will increase during the second quarter as the Galaxy S6, and S6 Edge with a curved screen, expand sales after their global launch this month.

But the shipments of those high-end phones will not be big enough to offset an expected decrease in sales of middle- to low-end models, it said. Marketing expenses will also go up, pressuring its profit margin.

The initial sales of the S6 were "great" but the pre-orders of Samsung's new smartphones were "no match to the iPhone 6," said Tom Kang, director at Counterpoint.

Samsung is betting big on the Galaxy S6 series to claw back sales in key markets such as China, where it lost its leading position to Apple and Xiaomi. As part of its push to make new smartphones more attractive, Samsung acquired mobile-payment startup LoopPay this year and introduced Samsung Pay, a mobile payment system on the latest Galaxy phones. The company also introduced new design elements to the S6 Edge phone, which has screens that curve. **AP**

Hermes quarterly sales rise 19% as Japan leads growth

Andrew Roberts

Hermes International SCA reported a 19 percent increase in first-quarter sales, as the Birkin bag maker's Japanese business showed unexpected growth.

Revenue rose to 1.12 billion euros (USD1.2 billion), Paris-based Hermes said in a statement yesterday.

A 15 percent gain in Japan boosted sales compared with a strong year-earlier quarter when the French company raised prices and clients splurged ahead of a tax increase. That compensated for growth of 3.1 percent in non-domestic European sales, which was about a third the pace analysts anticipated. The growth rates exclude currency shifts.

Hermes highlighted a more challenging environment in Hong Kong and Macau

"Japan is particularly striking," said Luca Solca, an analyst at Exane BNP Paribas. Europe is "not seeing much of a pick-up in the quarter, although there have been some important store renovations which might have affected performance."

Hermes rose 2 percent to 342.60 euros at 9:05 a.m.



yesterday in Paris, extending the stock's gain this year to 16 percent.

Organic revenue growth of 8 percent in the quarter represented a deceleration from 2014, though was "quite encouraging" in the context of full-year guidance, Solca said. Hermes said its mid-term goal for revenue growth remains about 8 percent at constant exchange rates "despite the economic geopolitical and monetary uncertainties around the world."

All other regions matched estimates, though Hermes highlighted a more challenging environment in Hong Kong and Macau, and said America confirmed its potential for development.

Demand for leather goods and saddlery remained high, Hermes said. Production at two new facilities boosted capacity, while work started on two more workshops in France, the company said.

Watches continued to underperform, though the 3.1 percent decline was less than analysts predicted. Perfume sales, which barely grew, suffered from a lack of new products, Solca said.

Bloomberg

corporate bits

GALAXY ACTIVELY TRAINS LOCAL TEAM MEMBERS



With regard to fulfilling its corporate social responsibility, Galaxy Entertainment Group pays particular attention to the cultivation of local team members and the advance-

ment of their upward mobility, thus giving locals priority for promotions to management positions.

As of today, GEG has close to 20,000 team members of which 70% are locals. Since 2004, GEG has promoted 7,293 local team members which accounts for nearly 80% of all promotions. In the next two months, 687 team members will receive promotions and 98% of them will be for locals, marking a new high for the number of promotions involving local team members in the recent years. GEG also emphasizes on providing training and since 2004, GEG has hosted a wide range of training courses for more than 80,000 participants, of which 85% are locals.

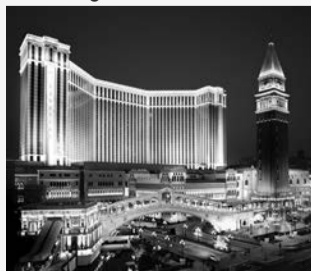
THE VENETIAN NAMED BEST LUXURY RESORT BY TRAVEL + LEISURE INDIA & SOUTH ASIA

The Venetian Macao was named Best Luxury Resort in the international category of the fourth edition of India's Best Awards organized by "Travel + Leisure India & South Asia" magazine. The annual awards recognize hotels, airlines, cruises and destinations in India and across the world. The award is testimony to the services and facilities that are on offer, highlighting the reputation of the integrated resort in South Asia.

The results were generated by polling readers, both offline and online, over the course of five months in 2014. The Venetian Macao was the only resort in Greater China that won an award of any kind.

"It's a great honor to be re-

cognized as the Best Luxury Resort by readers of "Travel + Leisure India & South Asia" said Mark McWhinnie, Senior Vice President of Resort Operations and Development. "The South Asia region, and specifically India, is a very important market for us and we are therefore delighted to be recognized by visitors from that region."



OULALAFLOWER FLORAL MASTERPIECES EXHIBITION BY CAROLE DELAVELLE



French flower design company Oulalaflower hosted its first Floral Masterpieces Exhibition in Macau on April 26th at the Macau Design Centre to celebrate 5 years of its establishment, with over 160 guests attending the opening cocktail ceremony, from 6pm to 9pm.

Mrs Lilas Bernheim and Mr Rutger Verschuren gave speeches on behalf of Oulalaflower and floral designer Carole Delavelle. After the ribbon cutting

by Mrs Lilas Bernheim, Deputy Consul General of Consulate General of France in Hong Kong and Macau, Mr James Chu, Chairman of the Macau Designers Association, Mr. Rutger Verschuren, Chairman of the France Macau Business Association and Miss Carole Delavelle, Managing Director of Oulalaflower, guests were served champagne, French wine and finger food from Maquette restaurant and Oh la la Patisserie.

Booming film industry mines Web for oddball talent

Louise Watt, Beijing

Yi Zhenxing's movie career started by posting clips of himself online with a paper bag over his head commenting on computer games.

The videos got lots of views so Yi, formerly a civil engineer, graduated to a web-only comedy series about a young loser's misadventures based on classic Chinese stories. To garner the biggest audience, he monitored which episodes and parts of episodes were most popular before releasing the next one. Now, the 30-year-old's playful and largely plot-less videos are being worked into a movie aiming to get his millions of online fans into the cinemas.

The unusual path to the big screen shows how the Internet, granular data on online usage and private investment are driving changes in China's film industry. The market is developing at a faster pace than in the U.S. and Europe while viewing habits are less entrenched and easier to change. But the influx of new money isn't chasing cinematic quality, say film critics and industry observers, who don't foresee homegrown Chinese films attracting a global audience.

Before, films were funded by state-owned or, sometimes, private studios. Now, billionaires and companies in industries from mining to tourism are jumping into the booming and glamorous film business whose pace of growth is stunning even by China's standards.

"It's sexy to have a movie company," said Victor Koo, CEO of video streaming business Youku Tudou Inc., which



Yi Zhenxing, left, chats with his employees during a meeting at his office in Beijing

co-produced three of China's top-10 grossing films last year.

Despite restrictions on what can be shown in Chinese movie theaters because of state censorship, the country's film industry is a force to be reckoned with. Box office revenue in 2014 was USD4.9 billion, almost three times as much as 2010.

China is building an average of 15 screens a day and is expected to surpass the stagnating North American box office and become the world's biggest by ticket sales by 2020. Hollywood is using Chinese actors and locations to appeal to local audiences, partnering with Chinese production com-

panies, and sending stars such as Johnny Depp on publicity tours.

Yet the blossoming of the industry is mostly about quantity.

Film critic Raymond Zhou said that the quality of films produced last year worsened even as the box office broke records because investors chased "quick money" and producers churned out screwball comedies and other lowbrow fare.

"They just aim so low it's a shame to call themselves artists," he said.

Companies that include e-commerce giant Alibaba, online game and social media operator Tencent, and Baidu, which runs China's most popular search engine, have created their own film units or snapped shares in entertainment businesses. They have huge reach and can use big data to glean information about the preferences and habits of their millions of users to target them with advertising, content and recommendations. That's information a traditional movie studio can only dream about.

Smartphone maker Xiaomi announced in November it would invest \$1 billion in entertainment content, the first tranche of which would be spent with Youku.

Marcel Fenez, an entertainment and media expert at PwC in Hong Kong, said whereas the entertainment industry

The Internet, granular data on online usage and private investment are driving changes in China's film industry

has been "neatly packaged" into film, TV and publications, "the online digital platform enables people to transcend those traditional areas and to be able to do anything."

This blurring between the online and offline is already happening in the United States. Netflix struck big with its own content such as "House of Cards," putting whole seasons online at once. The sequel to Ang Lee's "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" will be

the first Netflix-backed film to premiere both on an internet TV platform and in IMAX theaters.

In China, online video sites position themselves as a one-stop shop, unlike U.S. users having to go to YouTube for home videos and Netflix for movies and TV dramas. Sites such as Youku Tudou are no longer content with streaming movies and making their own web series. It set up a small film unit of 20 people with no movie background that takes Youku's original content and turns it into low-budget movies costing less than 100 million yuan (\$16 million).

Youku Tudou CEO Koo said that in the past, people deciding on a film to watch or back relied on established directors.

"But in the last two years that has fundamentally changed," he said, "I think partly because of the proliferation of screens and partly because of the Internet."

Yi, the online star who goes by the web name of Yi Xiaoxing, was noticed by Tudou when his short videos became popular. That led to him forming a company and making the web series "Surprise," about a young man for whom things often go wrong.

The series had a budget of about 50,000 yuan (\$8,000) per episode. Yi said revenue from the first season was more than 10 million yuan (\$1.6 million) and the second season doubled that figure.

"When an episode was released online we tracked data and looked at where the viewers fast-forwarded in order to see which bits were the most liked or disliked" to guide future episodes, he said.

For Chinese filmmakers the major opportunity is still the domestic audience and few believe they will be successful targeting an international audience because of the cultural gap.

Koo said because of this they will see more China-Hollywood co-productions.

"I think the holy grail is that are they movies that can be more cross cultural, and that's what everybody wants to try to do," he said. "Besides 'Kung Fu Panda,' I haven't seen a whole lot of examples." AP

'FAST & FURIOUS 7' IS MAINLAND'S BIGGEST EVER GROSSING MOVIE

"FAST & Furious 7" has knocked "Transformers: Age of Extinction" off the perch of China's highest grossing movie, demonstrating that Hollywood action and special effects movies are the safest bets in the fast-growing Chinese market. The movie starring Vin Diesel pulled in 450 million yuan (USD74 mil-

lion) in its second full week, ending Sunday, bringing its total box office takings to 2.02 billion yuan (\$332 million), according to the official Xinhua News Agency. Last summer, the fourth "Transformers" film overtook the 2010 "Avatar" to become the biggest grossing movie with \$320 million in ticket sales.



Natasha Khan and David Tweed

HONG KONG

Election rules fight starts with 47% poll support

ALMOST half of Hong Kong backs China's terms for the city's first leadership election, suggesting the government's proposal may have broader support than pro-democracy lawmakers contend.

In a survey of 1,167 people commissioned by Now TV, 47 percent supported the proposal while 38 percent opposed it, the broadcaster said. The rest were undecided in the first poll conducted by three local universities since the bill was unveiled.

Lawmakers in Hong Kong are set to vote on a plan before the end of July, which will see citizens elect a chief executive from candidates screened by a China-backed committee. Pro-democracy lawmakers have pledged to veto the plan after tens of thousands of protesters clashed with the police last October to demand wider election rights.

"Public opinion remains deeply divided, roughly along 50/50 lines," said Sebastian Veg, director of the French Centre for Research on Contemporary China in Hong Kong. "If there is no consensus in society, pushing through reform by force can be very counterproductive."

Under the April 22 proposal, candidates for the 2017 election must be screened by a 1,200-strong committee, and there would be a maximum of three people who can stand. Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying needs support from four pro-democracy lawmakers to get a two-third majority to pass the bill.

"We still have two months to go so we have to be prepared to



Demonstrators sleep during a protest outside the government offices in Hong Kong on Monday Oct. 6, 2014

see more of those opinion polls - supporting both sides of the argument," said Jean-Pierre Cabestan, director of government and international studies at Hong Kong Baptist University. The government will be seeking to "demonstrate through opinion polls that the majority of Hong Kong people are supporting the package."

Should more polls show simi-

lar results, pressure will increase on legislators to support the bill, Cabestan said.

About 63 percent of those surveyed aged 18 to 29 years old opposed the bill, Now TV said. The margin of error for the entire poll was less than 1.6 percentage points in the poll conducted by the University of Hong Kong, the Chinese University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong

Polytechnic University.

The 79-day protest blocking key streets last year, popularly known as the Umbrella Movement, was led by students. While initially successful in garnering public support, the toll on businesses and traffic sapped the city's patience before the police swept exhausted protesters from the streets before Christmas.

"Almost all of the teenagers are opposed to the plan," said Shania Chan, 18, who had taken part in the protests last year. "The older generation, like our parents, are opposed to our actions, this Umbrella Movement. They think it's illegal."

The government and pro-democracy lawmakers have started campaigns to win public support for their stance. An open-bus tour on April 25 by Hong Kong's No. 2 official Carrie Lam was disrupted by protesters.

If lawmakers fail to agree to the plan, Leung's successor would be picked by a committee of tycoons, lawmakers and industry representatives, the same system that's been in place since the last British governor left.

"I was chosen by 400 voters and yet, less than 20 years later, the people of Hong Kong could all be casting their vote for chief executive," said Tung Chee-hwa, referring to the 400-person committee that selected him as Hong Kong's first leader upon its return to China in 1997.

"That's a very quick development," Tung, a vice chairman of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, told reporters yesterday. He urged legislators to "stand with the people of Hong Kong" and the government's proposal. **Bloomberg**

STUDY

Babies born during pollution-light Olympics heavier

WOMEN in the Chinese capital in the final stage of pregnancy during the 2008 Beijing Olympics - when officials strictly controlled air pollution - gave birth to heavier babies than in years when the city was smoggier, a study said yesterday.

The study, led by epidemiologist David Q. Rich of the University of Rochester Medical Center and published in the journal Environmental Health Perspectives, found that babies born to Beijing mothers in their eighth month of pregnancy during the 2008 Summer Games were on average 23 grams heavier than those born either a year ear-



A girl flies a kite on Olympic Green near Beijing National Stadium, also known as the Birds Nest, in Beijing

lier or a year later. It found no significant association for mothers

in their first through seventh months. Studies previously have

linked pollution to birth weight, but did not pinpoint at what stage of

pregnancy the association is greatest. The researchers in China and the U.S. used records of more than 83,000 full-term births to mothers in Beijing from 2007 to 2009.

Beijing halted construction, shut factories and cut the numbers of vehicles allowed on the roads for 47 days for the games, providing the basis for a natural experiment on the effects of pollution.

The authors suggested that pollution controls - even short-lived ones - can have positive health benefits.

"These findings not only illustrate one of the many significant health consequences of pollu-

tion, but also demonstrate that this phenomenon can be reversed," Rich said in a statement.

Professor Chen Yuyu of the Applied Economics Department at Peking University, who was not involved in the birth study, said it was interesting but not conclusive because there could have been other unobserved factors during the Olympics that contributed to the results.

Chen, who was the co-author of a 2013 report that linked heavy pollution from coal burning to shorter lives in northern China, said more research is needed to "improve our understanding of pollution's impact on people's health." **AP**

INDONESIA

Gov't confirms 8 executed for drug smuggling

Tatan Syuflana, Cilacap

INDONESIA brushed aside last-minute appeals and executed eight people convicted of drug smuggling yesterday, although a Philippine woman was granted a stay of execution.

Attorney General Muhammad Prasetyo confirmed at a news conference hours after the deaths had been widely reported that each of the eight had been executed simultaneously at 12:35 a.m. by a 13-member firing squad. Medical teams confirmed their deaths three minutes later, he said.

"The executions have been successfully implemented, perfectly," Prasetyo said. "All worked, no misses," he said of the deaths of two Australians, four Nigerians, a Brazilian and an Indonesian man.

Prasetyo early announced that Mary Jane Fiesta Veloso had been granted a stay of execution while the Philippines investigates her case.

Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott announced that Australia will withdraw its ambassador from Jakarta in response to the executions of two Australians, Myuran Sukumaran, 33, and Andrew Chan, 31.



An ambulance arrives from the prison island of Nusakambangan where the executions were carried out, in Cilacap, Central Java

"These executions are both cruel and unnecessary," Abbott told reporters.

He said it was cruel because Chan and Sukumaran had spent a decade in jail before being executed and "unnecessary because both of these young Australians were fully reha-

bilitated while in prison."

Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff said in a statement the execution of a second Brazilian citizen in Indonesia this year "marks a serious event in the relations between the two countries."

Brazil had asked for a stay of

Tony Abbott announced that Australia will withdraw its ambassador from Jakarta in response

execution for Rodrigo Gularte, 42, on humanitarian grounds because he was schizophrenic.

Prasetyo dismissed concerns that Indonesia had done long-term damage to bilateral relations through the executions.

"It's just a momentary reaction," he said. "What we're doing is carrying out court decisions."

He said that the message was "do not try to smuggle drugs in Indonesia, because we will be harsh and firm against drug-related crimes."

Michael Chan, brother of Andrew Chan, who became a Christian pastor during his decade in prison and married an Indonesian woman on Monday, reacted with anger.

"I have just lost a courageous brother to a flawed Indonesian

legal system. I miss you already RIP my Little Brother," he tweeted.

In a statement, the Sukumaran and Chan families, said: "In the 10 years since they were arrested, they did all they could to make amends, helping many others. They asked for mercy, but there was none."

Mary Jane Veloso's mother, Celia, said that the stay of execution for her daughter was nothing short of a miracle.

Presidential spokesman Herminio Coloma thanked Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo for giving due consideration to the appeal of his Philippine counterpart, Benigno Aquino III. He said the reprieve provides an opportunity for her testimony to expose how a criminal syndicate duped her into being an unwitting accomplice and courier in drug trafficking.

There were cheers from the more than 250 Veloso supporters who held a candlelight vigil outside the Indonesian Embassy in Manila.

Veloso, 30, was arrested in 2010 at the airport in the central Indonesian city of Yogyakarta, where officials discovered about 2.5 kilograms of heroin hidden in her luggage.

Prasetyo said Veloso was granted a stay of execution because her alleged boss has been arrested in the Philippines, and the authorities there requested Indonesian assistance in pursuing the case.

"This delay did not cancel the execution. We just want to give a chance in relation with the legal process in the Philippines," he said. AP

NEPAL

Quake toll tops 5,000 as aid reaches epicenter area

Katy Daigle, Paslang

AID reached a hilly district near the epicenter of Nepal's earthquake for the first time yesterday, four days after the quake struck and as the death toll from the disaster passed the 5,000 mark.

But it will still take time for the food and other supplies to reach survivors in remote communities who have been cut off by landslides, warned said Geoff Pinnock, a World Food Program emergency officer.

"It doesn't happen overnight," said Pinnock from the village of Majuwa, 20 kilometers downhill from Gorkha town, a staging area for relief efforts to areas worst-hit by Saturday's magnitude-7.8 earthquake.

Nearby, five cargo trucks filled with rice, cooking oil and sugar stood on a grassy field fringed with banana and acacia trees beneath the soaring Himalayas, waiting for a helicopter carry the supplies to remote, quake-hit villages.

Soon, the U.N. food agency was expected to deliver shipments of high-energy food biscuits to be sent out to areas without enough water for cooking, Pinnock said. The first aid shipments had reached Dhading district, just east of Gorkha, near the epicenter, about 80 kilometers northwest of Kathmandu.

Nepalese police said yesterday the death toll from the quake had reached 4,989. Another 18 were killed on the slopes of Mount Everest, while



An Indian Army doctor helps an injured woman drink water after she was evacuated from the higher mountains by the Nepalese army

61 died in neighboring India, and China's official Xinhua News Agency reported 25 dead in Tibet, putting the total over 5,000.

The disaster also injured more than 10,000, police said, and rendered thousands more homeless. The U.N. says the disaster has affected 8.1 million

people — more than a fourth of Nepal's population of 27.8 million — and that 1.4 million needed food assistance.

"Under normal circumstances, a government would have the capacity to respond to maybe 10, or 20, or 30,000 people in need. But if you're looking at 8 million as we

are here, you need a bit of time to scale everything up," Pinnock said.

Planes carrying food and other supplies have been steadily arriving at Kathmandu's small airport, but the aid distribution process remains fairly chaotic, with Nepalese officials having difficulty directing the flow of emergency supplies.

About 200 people blocked traffic in the capital yesterday to protest the slow pace of aid delivery. The protesters faced off with police and there were minor scuffles but no arrests were made.

Police arrested dozens of people on suspicion of looting abandoned homes as well as causing panic by spreading rumors of another big quake. Police official Bigyan Raj Sharma said 27 people were

detained for stealing.

But in a sign that life was inching back to normal, banks in Kathmandu opened for a few hours yesterday and stuffed their ATMs with cash, giving people access to money.

In some heartening news, French rescuers freed a man from the ruins of a three-story Kathmandu hotel more than three days after the quake. Rishi Khanal, 27, said he drank his own urine to survive.

Khanal said he was surrounded by dead people and a terrible smell. But he kept banging on the rubble all around him and eventually this brought a French rescue team that extracted him after being trapped for 82 hours.

"I am thankful," he said. AP



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USA

Baltimore streets once rocked by riots quiet under curfew

Amanda Lee Myers and
David Dishneau, Baltimore

BALTIMORE streets previously rocked by riots were eerily quiet early yesterday as residents obeyed an all-night curfew enforced by 3,000 police and National Guardsmen.

The curfew, which went into effect at 10 p.m. Tuesday (yesterday daytime in Macau), got off to a not-so-promising start, however, as about 200 protesters initially ignored the warnings of police officers and the pleas of community activists to disperse.

Some threw water bottles or lay down on the ground. A line of police behind riot shields hurled tear gas canisters and fired pepper balls at the crowd and slowly advanced forward



A protestor faces police enforcing a curfew in Baltimore

to push it back. Demonstrators picked up the canisters and hurled them back at officers. But the crowd rapidly dispersed and was down to just a few dozen people within minutes.

The clash came after a day of high tension but relative peace in Baltimore, which was rocked by looting and widespread arson Monday in the city's worst outbreak of rioting since 1968.

Police, city leaders and many residents condemned the violence, and hundreds of volunteers showed up Tuesday to sweep the streets of glass and other debris.

But life was unlikely to get completely back to normal anytime soon: The curfew was to go back into effect at 10 p.m. yesterday and baseball officials — in what may be

a first in the sport's 145-year history — announced that yesterday's Baltimore Orioles game at Camden Yards would be closed to the public.

The violence set off soul-searching among community leaders and others, with some suggesting the uprising wasn't just about race or the police department, but also about high unemployment, high crime, poor housing, broken-down schools and lack of opportunity in Baltimore's inner-city neighborhoods — issues that aren't going away anytime soon.

Activists also stressed that they would continue to press authorities for answers in the case of Freddie Gray, a 25-year-old black man who died of a spinal-cord injury under mysterious circumstances while in police custody. His case is what spurred Monday's riots.

A group of pastors announced plans to hold a rally and prayer vigil for the city of Baltimore and Gray's family at noon yesterday and to "draw public attention to 17 police accountability bills the state legislature failed to pass during the recent legislative session." AP

Obama, Abe declare progress, but no breakthrough, on trade

Jim Kuhnhehn, Washington

PRESIDENT Barack Obama acknowledged Tuesday (yesterday, Macau time) the challenge he faces winning U.S. congressional support for a major Asia-Pacific trade deal that has become a cornerstone of his second term agenda. "It's never fun passing a trade bill in this town," the president said as he and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe declared their determination to seeing the deal through.

Both Obama and Abe face domestic pressures on trade that have not only created sticking points between Japan and the U.S., but have also complicated Obama's ability to win support for a broader 12-nation Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement.

With Japan and the U.S. as the largest economies in those negotiations, resolving their own differences could go far in paving the way for the more extensive trade deal.

"I know that the politics around trade can be hard in both our countries," Obama said, as Abe stood by his side during a Rose Garden news conference.



President Barack Obama and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe

While Abe's visit to the White House was not expected to yield a trade breakthrough, the lack of a final accord between the two nonetheless stood out given agreement in other areas, particularly on changes to U.S.-Japan defense guidelines — an area where both countries share more common ground. The new rules boost Japan's military capability amid growing Chinese assertiveness in disputed areas in the East and South China Sea claimed by Beijing.

Referring to the trade barriers on vehicles that have been one of the main sticking points in the U.S.-Japan trade talks, Obama said: "There are many Japanese cars in

America, I want to see more American cars in Japan as well."

Abe said he is eager to see "the early conclusion" of the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement, adding that on outstanding issues over trade barriers "we welcome the fact that significant progress was made."

Before completing the deal, however, Obama must win expanded negotiating authority from the U.S. Congress, a difficult task given opposition from liberals and labor unions who say they fear the loss of American jobs. As a result, Obama's stiffest resistance has come from members of his own Democratic Party. AP

SAUDI ARABIA

King names counterterrorism czar as new crown prince

Aya Batrawy, Riyadh

THE Saudi king yesterday removed his half-brother from the post of crown prince, replacing him with his nephew, and elevated his son to the position of deputy crown prince in the most significant repositioning of power among members of the kingdom's royal family since King Salman assumed the throne in January.

The appointments, announced in a decree from the royal court, further thrust a new generation of Saudi princes into the line of succession and mapped out the future of the throne for potentially decades to come.

The post of crown prince secures Prince Mohammed bin Nayef, 55, as the most likely successor to the king. The prince, who is also the interior minister, is widely known internationally as Saudi Arabia's counterterrorism czar and was previously also deputy crown prince.

The prince becomes the first from among his generation to be elevated to such a high position — first in line to the throne. He has survived several assassination attempts, including one in 2009 by al-Qaida. He takes over the post of crown prince from Prince Muqrin.

The royal decree also announced that the king's son, Prince Mohammed bin Salman, had been appointed deputy crown



Images of Saudi King Salman, left, Prince Muqrin, center, and Prince Mohammed bin Nayef are displayed on a shop door at the al Aqeeliya market in Riyadh

prince. He is believed to be around 30 years old and is also the country's defense minister. As deputy crown prince, he is essentially seen as being second in line to the throne.

The newly appointed crown prince and deputy crown prince are both from among a generation of grandsons of Saudi Arabia's founder, the late King Abdul-Aziz Al Saud, whose sons have passed power among one another — from brother to brother — since his death in 1953.

As the new crown prince, Mohammed bin Nayef will continue to oversee the country's massive police force and border guards as interior minister. As crown prince, he will also serve as deputy prime minister. His late father was the elder full-brother of 79-year-old King Salman. AP



Celebrate May Day: An Exhibition by Modern Maestro Tom Dixon

Great Design Comes To Town

Tom Dixon is one of modern design's iconic figures, and for the first time in Macau, an exhibition of the master is being held from now till 10th May. Some of his products will be available in SIGNUM's lifestyle pop-up store, giving you the chance to purchase his signature designs and pick up a unique gift for Mother's Day.

A Pleasant Gift

Shoppers who spend MOP 30,000 or more during the promotion period (1st-10th May) will be rewarded with a signature Tom Dixon scent diffuser worth MOP 1,000*.

*Terms and Conditions apply



what's ON



'CLASSIC RECURRENCE • CENTENNIAL EVOLUTION' — EXHIBITION OF WOMEN'S FASHION

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

UNTIL: May 10, 2015

ADDRESS: Macau Fashion Gallery / No. 47,
Rua de S. Roque, Macau|

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853)2835 3341

MACAU GRAND PRIX MUSEUM & WINE MUSEUM

TIME: 10am-8pm daily (Except Tuesdays)

VENUE: Rua Luis Gonzaga Gomes, 431,
basement (Tourism Activities Centre-CAT)

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8798 4108 / 2833 3000

19TH AND 20TH CENTURY PORTRAIT OIL PAINTINGS — MAM COLLECTION

TIME: 10am-7pm

(Closed on Mondays, No admission after 6:30 pm)

UNTIL: December 31, 2015

VENUE: Macau Museum of Art,

Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE

ADMISSION: MOP5

(Free on Sundays and public holidays)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

INSTALLATION 'VALKYRIE OCTOPUS'

BY JOANA VASCONCELOS

TIME: 24 hours

UNTIL: October 31, 2015

VENUE: MGM MACAU, Av. Dr. Sun Yat Sen, NAPE

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8802 8888

"MY WORLD, MY IMAGINARIUM"

- ANTHONY'S KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS
AND STUDENTS COLLECTIVE ART EXHIBITION

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

10:30am-5:40pm (Saturdays)

UNTIL: May 2, 2015

VENUE: Centre of Educational Resources,

Av. da Praia Grande n° 926, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8395 9131

POST POMBALINO IT, DRAWING EXHIBITION BY JOÃO SANTA-RITA

TIME: 3pm-8pm (Monday)

12pm-8pm (Tuesday-Sunday)

UNTIL: May 20, 2015

VENUE: Albergue SCM - A2 Gallery,

Calçada da Igreja de São Lázaro No.8, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2852 2550

Offbeat

LARGE TOURIST HOTEL ABRUPTLY CLOSES IN PUERTO RICO

A large hotel in one of the main tourist districts of Puerto Rico has abruptly announced that it will close.

Puerto Rico Hotel and Tourism Association President Miguel Vega says the Radisson Ambassador Plaza in the Condado district of San Juan will close today (Macau time). He said it will result in the loss of about 200 jobs.

The website of local newspaper El Nuevo Dia reported earlier this week that the company announced the closure of the 233-room hotel to employees in a statement that said it had been operating under bank control for the past year while seeking a buyer.

The Ambassador has struggled in an economy that has been in recession for nearly a decade while its casino has faced increased competition from the proliferation of illegal slot machines.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
18:10	Brazil Avenue (Repeated)
19:00	Montra do Lilau (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:30	Miscellaneous
22:10	Brazil Avenue
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:20	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

cinema

CINETEATRO

30 APR

THE AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON

ROOM 1

(3D) 2.15, 7.15 pm

(2D) 4.45, 9.45 pm

Director: Joss Whedon

Starring: Robert Downey Jr., Chris Hemsworth,

Mark Ruffalo

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 141min

FAST AND FURIOUS 7

ROOM 2

2.15, 4.45 pm

Director: James Wan

Starring: Vin Diesel, Paul Walker, Dwayne Johnson

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 137min



HELIOS

ROOM 2

7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: Longman Leung, Sunny Luk

Starring: Jacky Cheung, Nick Cheung, Shawn Yue, Ji

Jin-hee

Language: Chinese (Chinese/English)

Duration: 118min



MURMUR OF THE HEARTS

ROOM 3

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: Sylvia Chang

Starring: Isabella Leong, Joseph Chang, Lawrence Ko,

Lee Sinje

Language: Mandarin (Chinese/English)

Duration: 119min

MACAU TOWER

23 APR - 20 MAY

THE AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON

2.00, 4.30, 7.00, 9.30 pm

Director: Joss Whedon

Starring: Robert Downey Jr., Chris Hemsworth, Mark

Ruffalo

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 141min

this day in history



1975 SAIGON SURRENDERS

The war in Vietnam ended today as the government in Saigon announced its unconditional surrender to North Vietnamese forces.

The President, Duong Van Minh, who has been in office for just three days, made the announcement in a radio broadcast to the nation early this morning. He asked his forces to lay down their arms and called on the North Vietnamese Army and Vietcong to halt all hostilities.

In a direct appeal to the Communist forces, he said: "We are here to hand over to you the power in order to avoid bloodshed."

The announcement was followed swiftly by the arrival of North Vietnamese troops. Their entrance was virtually unopposed, confounding predictions of a bloody and protracted last-ditch battle for the city.

The front line of tanks smashed through the gates of the presidential palace within minutes, and at 1130 local time (0330 GMT), decades of war came to an end.

Vietcong troops, many barefoot and some no more than teenagers, rounded up government soldiers, and raised their red and blue flags. The looting which has ravaged the city over the last 24 hours stopped, and power was restored later in the day. Only the United States embassy remained closed and silent, ransacked by looters.

Saigon was immediately renamed Ho Chi Minh City. A statement by the Provisional Revolutionary Government, or PRG, in Paris, promised a policy of non-alignment, and the peaceful reunification of Vietnam.

The British government is now urgently reviewing the possibility of recognising the PRG. France has already recognised the new regime, and other Western countries are preparing to follow suit.

The capitulation of the South Vietnamese government came just four hours after the last frenzied evacuation of Americans from the city. President Ford, who has requested humanitarian aid for the Vietnamese, let it be known that he was proud to have saved what Vietnamese he could in the last, frantic helicopter evacuation.

But there is said to be deep humiliation in the United States government at the desperation and chaos of the final hours of America's presence in Vietnam.

The President ordered United States ships to remain indefinitely off the Vietnamese coast to pick up refugees: but even this gesture has been snubbed by the North Vietnamese, who have prevented any more refugees from fleeing.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

In the immediate aftermath of the fall of Saigon, the Communist forces held victory parades and placed posters of Ho Chi Minh, the leader of the Viet Minh, on public buildings.

While most South Vietnamese were relieved at the end of the war, some who remained loyal to President Thieu committed suicide.

North and South Vietnam were reunified under communist rule in 1976. Ten years later, the government relaxed its regime, allowing elements of market forces and private enterprise to flourish.

There is still, however, opposition within the Vietnamese government to too much economic liberalisation.

In November 2000, President Bill Clinton visited Vietnam. It was hoped that this would be the culmination of US efforts to normalise relations with its former enemy.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Just like some marriages end in divorce, your relationship with money is on the skids. At least there were no kids, eh? There is plenty of time in the future to start the romance all over again.

Taurus April 20-May 20 If you learn anything at all from those around you, it should be not to take your financial status for granted. And if you learn anything else, it's to never be pompous.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Things have been dark and serious for a while, so enjoy the rare light hearted day. It's a good day to socialize. All banter is light hearted, but avoid all talk of finance or the future.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 When you could afford to make outrageous purchases you felt you deserved them, so what does that say now that you're a bargain basement shopper? Not much, except to clarify your hindsight.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Don't let a lack of funds bring out the worst in you. You have plenty to draw on, so cash in on your better qualities. A little confidence goes a long way, even in this economy.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You're the type who wants to be organized, but it's almost impossible to have a plan in this environment. Just ask any economist. So don't be too rigid about your approach to the future.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 It's a hard time to be group leader, because everyone is desperate for some reassurance. You may not have any to give, but you do have something valuable to offer. Get creative when others look to you for answers.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 You're not the only one wondering if you're in the middle of a career crisis. The times are a challenge to everyone around you, even those who are able to keep their cool. Do as they do, and learn to not look stressed.

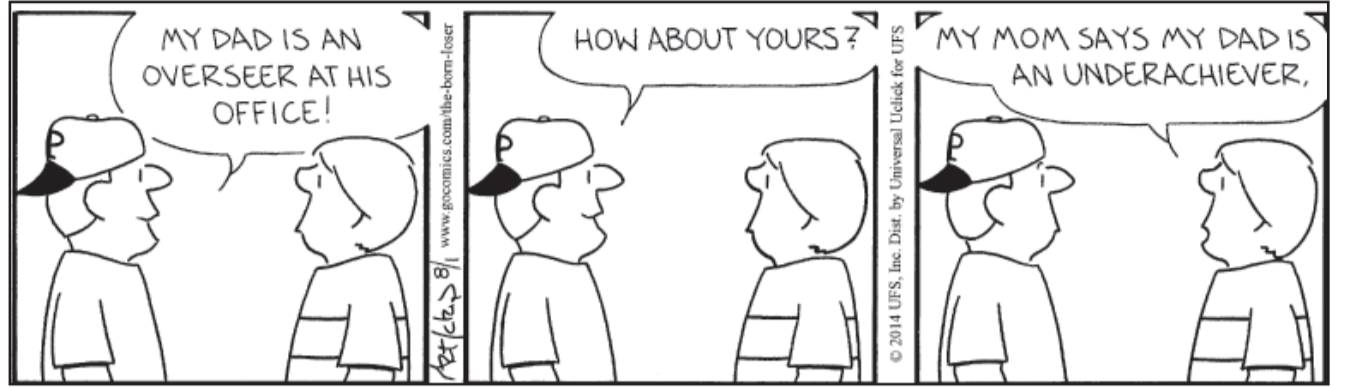
Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Growth may have slowed down or stopped altogether but that doesn't mean things like happiness and goodwill have to. Do what you can to maintain your quality of life, in ways that don't take money.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 It's not an easy day. But then neither was yesterday, or last week or month. Some things you just can't get used to, so brace yourself for the worst in business.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Don't waste time on fixed ideas, especially about things that are naturally fluid, like the bottom line. In fact, get ready for sudden changes and abrupt interruptions.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 There is too much going on to waste time on someone else's business. Your boss won't like it anyway, and that's just for starters. Working hard is more important than ever, so keep your mind on your own desk.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Easy+

9x9 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Medium

9x9 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Hard

9x9 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

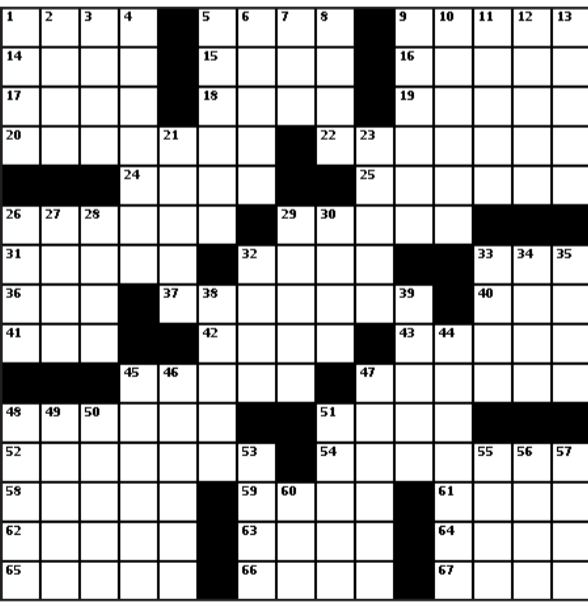
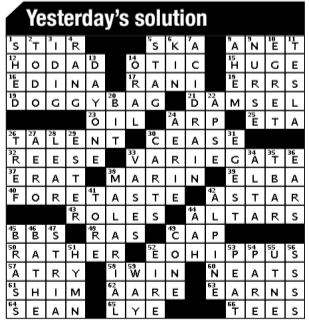
WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Plant part; 5- Shangri-la; 9- Some Art Deco works; 14- Ambience; 15- Still life subject; 16- 1986 Indy 500 winner Bobby; 17- Talk big; 18- Differently; 19- Fend (off); 20- Tangle up; 22- Learner; 24- Relaxed; 25- Corroborate; 26- European-style restaurant; 29- Soft feltlike fabric; 31- Ditto; 32- Greek war god; 33- Satisfied; 36- ... mouse?; 37- Pure; 40- Clean air org.; 41- 100 yrs.; 42- San ... Italy; 43- Grecian architectural style; 45- Fight, disturbance; 47- Introduce; 48- Skiing style; 51- Canceled; 52- Kingly, in the jungle; 54- Loving; 58- Throws; 59- Do followers; 61- Deep blue; 62- Projecting window; 63- Don Juan's mother; 64- Panamanian baby; 65- Cave; 66- Animal raised by humans, abandoned by mother; 67- New driver, often;

DOWN: 1- Kemo ...; 2- Rotate; 3- Notable times; 4- Electric generator; 5- Extremely; 6- Loiter; 7- Tricky curve; 8- Nair rival; 9- Synthetic; 10- Ostrich or emu; 11- Baron; 12- Roof overhangs; 13- Winter woe; 21- Composer Copland; 23- Mikhail's wife; 26- Univ. hotshot; 27- Able was ...; 28- "South Park" kid; 29- Mist; 30- Aviation prefix; 32- Fit to ...; 33- Computer list; 34- Monumental; 35- Diplomacy; 38- Senator Specter; 39- Jargon; 44- Something smelly; 45- Moneyer; 46- Maroon; 47- Treat with element 53; 48- Foil maker; 49- Get to know; 50- Assume as fact; 51- Titled; 53- ... the Red; 55- Arrow poison; 56- Mudville complement; 57- Small secluded valley; 60- Alfonso's queen



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
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IACM 28 387 333
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“ THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' ”

Tim Dahlberg
Boxing Writer, Las Vegas

BOXING

Big price, big expectations for Mayweather-Pacquiao pay TV

GEORGE Foreman was fighting Evander Holyfield for the heavyweight title, and anyone wanting to watch it in April 1991 had to plan ahead.

It was the night boxing pay-per-view was born. But to get the fight, customers had to go to their local cable TV offices and put a deposit down for a box that would allow them to get the bout.

"I remember the Friday before the fight we were getting calls from cable operators saying there were lines wrapped around the building a number of times and not enough boxes to meet the demand," said Mark Taffet, who oversees pay-per-view for HBO. "We were shocked when we saw the number of buys."

The fight cost USD35.95, and 1.4 million people bought it for their homes. They got their money's worth when Holyfield took some big punches from the 42-year-old Foreman, but fired back with more of his own to win a unanimous decision.

A lot has changed in a quarter-century. Now it takes just a few clicks of the remote to buy a fight. The potential audience, meanwhile, has grown from 16.5 million addressable homes to nearly 100 million.

And, of course, the pay-per-view price has gone up. It will cost people \$99.95 to watch Floyd Mayweather Jr. fight Manny Pacquiao Saturday night.

Cost aside, more than 3 million people are expected to buy the megafight for their homes, helping make it the richest fight ever. The bout is set to break records for both number of buys (the current mark is 2.48 million for Mayweather's 2007 fight with Oscar De La Hoya) and total pay-per-view revenue (\$150 million, set by Mayweather and Canelo Alvarez in 2013).

"We expect we will break the pay-per-view record," said Showtime executive Stephen



Boxer Floyd Mayweather Jr. speaks during an arrival ceremony in Las Vegas



Boxer Manny Pacquiao holds his youngest child, Israel, as they arrive at the Delano Las Vegas

Espinoza, whose network is producing the telecast and is partners with HBO in delivering it. "We're not sure exactly where the ceiling is but we are already seeing unprecedented traffic and unprecedented viewership. There are all kinds of indicators which point to huge success, we're just not sure how huge of a success it will end up being."

Longtime rivals in the boxing business, Showtime and HBO had to agree to do the fight together in order to get it made. Mayweather fights under contract with Showtime, while Pacquiao fights on HBO.

The model is similar to that used by the two networks in the 2002 fight between Lennox Lewis and Mike Tyson, including an announcing team that features HBO's Jim Lampley on play-by-play and Showtime's Al Bernstein as the color analyst.

"Lampley and Bernstein, two of the most experienced and knowledgeable broadcasters the sport has seen," said Espinoza, executive vice president and general manager for Showtime Sports. "It's really an excellent pairing."

The networks are counting on an unprecedented promotional campaign the week of the fight by the different cable and satellite distributors to push sales. Unlike most fights, the ads will be aimed at casual sports fans who might want to gather a few family and friends together for a viewing party, much like they would for a Super Bowl.

"We're targeting people who are not generally engaged in sports conversation as well as people who aren't big sports fans but are event fans," Espinoza said. "They may not follow sports much but they like the big events and this is

a big event."

The \$99.95 price tag most systems will charge is the most for any fight, though fans will be able to get up to a \$50 rebate by buying beer from sponsor Tecate. Taffet, senior vice president of sports operations and pay-per-view for HBO, said that if people are making an event out of it, they can justify the cost by the number of people attending.

"When you take the cost of pay-per-view and divide it by the number of viewers in each house we expect the cost averages out to that of a movie ticket," Taffet said. "The cost of the refreshments for the viewing parties usually exceeds the cost of the pay-per-view telecast."

The early indications are that the price won't be a deterrent for a lot of people. Taffet said several distributors had already sold more than 10,000 pay-per-

views with nearly two weeks left before the fight, which is unheard of in a business that relies on last-minute decision making.

If more than 3 million people buy the telecast it would mean huge payouts for the two fighters. Promoters get an average of between \$55 and \$60 for each pay-per-view after splitting with the networks and distributors, meaning revenue to the camps of the two fighters could near the \$200 million mark.

Yes, it's a lot pricier than the \$35.95 charged to watch Holyfield beat Foreman. And the argument could be made to wait a week when a tape of the fight will almost surely be broadcast for free on both networks.

Then again, no one will have to get up early Monday morning to return a box to their cable operator. **AP**

UFC

Jon Jones stripped of title, suspended after arrest

JON Jones has been stripped of his UFC light heavyweight title and suspended indefinitely following his arrest in New Mexico on a hit-and-run that police say left a pregnant woman with a broken arm.

The UFC announced the extraordinary penalties yesterday (Macau time) for violations of its athletic code of conduct policy following Jones' latest arrest in a string of mis-



Jon Jones celebrates after defeating Daniel Cormier during their light heavyweight title mixed martial arts bout in Las Vegas

behavior.

"Got a lot of soul searching to do," Jones posted on his official Twitter account. "Sorry to everyone I've let down."

UFC President Dana White and CEO Lorenzo Fertitta apparently met with Jones in Albuquerque before making their decision, which deprives the promotion of a major star. Jones is widely considered the world's best pound-for-pound mixed

martial artist.

"He's very disappointed. He's upset," White told Fox Sports, the UFC's official broadcast partner. "He wanted to go down as one of the greats, or the greatest ever. He's disappointed, but it is what it is. It was the decision we had to make."

Jones was scheduled to face No. 1 contender Anthony Johnson at UFC 187 in Las Vegas on May

23, headlining one of the promotion's biggest shows of the year.

Instead, No. 3 contender Daniel Cormier will face Johnson for the title. Cormier lost to Jones in January, several weeks after Jones tested positive for cocaine use.

Cormier was scheduled to fight on a card in New Orleans on June 6, but agreed to take his second straight title shot on 3 1/2 weeks' notice. **AP**

opinion

HK Observer
 Robert Carroll



(No) Room for Improvement

One of the key issues facing voters here is whether the reform package on electing the chief executive, as proffered by the government is the final version of Beijing's definition of universal suffrage, or whether it will be the first in a progression of steps. The signals coming from various officials and those who have commented are confusing because they are not in unison. There have been a number of urgings to "pocket" the deal and work on improvements later, but will there be any?

The latest comments from Li Fei, Chairman of the Basic Law Committee, reportedly declare that there has been no decision to revise the proposed package at a later date. The comments indicate that only if the package is implemented and "experienced and observed for some time can there be a decision whether it needs amending. Any law could be improved as long as it complied with the Basic Law." Those were the reported comments from Li to a delegation of barristers from Hong Kong in Beijing gathered to discuss the political reform package.

Judging from those statements, there doesn't seem to be any guarantee at all that there will be movement towards a more representative election of the chief executive. Unsurprisingly, there was no hint either that the package was anything less than satisfactory.

Given that Hong Kong society is sharply divided over political reform and that the government has launched an all-out public relations campaign to win over the public, it is a pity that Li did not place greater emphasis on future openness to change.

If there is a flexible attitude in Beijing to future electoral system improvements, it would be very helpful to know so. If not, there is probably minimal chance of getting support from the few wavering pan democrats from whom four votes are needed to pass the reform bill. The Basic Law requires such changes to the existing electoral system to be passed by a two-thirds majority. One of those closest to Beijing in the pan-democrat camp, barrister Ronny Tong Ka-wah, said a few months ago that he thought that this package could be the end of the line as far as future changes to the chief executive elections was concerned; that unless some agreement was reached to have flexibility in the future, there would be no change. Tong's opinion is based on his many years of following – as closely as one can at a distance – the process of how decisions in Beijing are made, and what he hears from the more reformist camp in China is it's the doves, as he puts it, not the hawks, who have the upper hand.

Talking of flexibility, neither was there much movement in the government's recently announced reform proposals. So, why conduct two public consultations when we end up with more or less the same plan as before the consultations?

While property developer Joseph Lau Luen-hung may have been convicted in Macau of bribery, these charges do not appear to have affected the chances of his rising star son, Lau Ming-wai, who took over the helm at the family firm, Chinese Estates Holdings, after Lau senior's fall from grace. He has been appointed to chair the Commission on Youth by Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying. What is interesting here is that Lau junior was deputy secretary-general for Henry Tang-Ying-yen, Leung's main rival in the CE election campaign, during which much bitterness and harsh words were exchanged between the two candidates. Lau, although social-media savvy and clearly identified with the establishment at a mere 34 years old, may be the sort with perhaps enough sensitivity on his side who can build bridges as an insider with youth.

THE BUZZ TROPICANA LAS VEGAS HOTEL AND CASINO TO BE SOLD FOR USD360M

The Tropicana hotel and casino in Las Vegas is being sold for USD360 million.

A group of shareholders, including private equity firm Onex Corp., say they will sell the 58-year-old Tropicana to the casino operator Penn National Gaming Inc.

Over the past four years, the Tropicana has spent \$200 million to renovate its 1,500 hotel rooms. The Tropicana also has a comedy club,

a theater and more than 100,000 square feet of meeting space.

The deal will give Penn National its first property on the Las Vegas Strip. The company, based in Wyomissing, Pennsylvania, operates 26 casinos and hotels around the country. Its other Nevada property, The M Resort, is about 12 miles from the Las Vegas Strip.

The deal is expected to close later this year.

Norway's finance minister doubts global warming is man-made



Siv Jensen

Karl Ritter, Stockholm

NORWAY'S finance minister says she doubts that global warming is man-made, seemingly contradicting the country's official position in U.N. climate talks.

In an on-camera interview posted on the Aftenposten newspaper's website, Siv Jensen answered "no" to a question about whether she was convinced that climate change was caused by humans.

Asked to clarify whether

she was in doubt about man-made warming, she said "yes."

Jensen, who leads the right-wing Progress Party, said she still backs the coalition government's climate policies.

Norway is seen as a leader in international efforts to control greenhouse gas emissions and was among the first countries to submit a target for a U.N. climate pact that's expected to be adopted in Paris in December. The Scandinavian country pledged to cut

emissions by at least 40 percent by 2030, compared to 1990 levels.

The government's submission refers to the U.N.-sponsored Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's latest assessment, which concluded that it's "extremely likely" that most of the warming observed since the 1950s was caused by human influence on the climate system.

Jensen's comments drew anger from critics, including her sister, who heads the national branch of the WWF environmental group.

"Fortunately, Norwegian climate policies don't depend on the Progress Party leader's personal views on this matter," Nina Jensen told Aftenposten. "But I want to underline that political leaders today who sow doubt about man-made climate change aren't doing their job to create solutions to the most important problem the world is facing."

Siv Jensen later told Aftenposten her answers "lacked nuance" and said she didn't want to start a debate on the issue.

Calls to Prime Minister Erna Solberg's office weren't immediately returned yesterday. **AP**

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	25-45 Good	
High Density Residential Area	25-45 Good	
Ambient	25-45 Good	

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS



YEMEN'S Shiite rebels and their allies advanced in the southern city of Aden on yesterday, capturing parts of an upscale neighborhood and seizing men they accuse of fighting them from their homes. Security officials in the city said the rebels, known as Houthis, aided by military forces loyal to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh, had moved up the seaside road in the neighborhood of Khormaksar, taking an area stretching from the Russian Consulate to the Crater business district.

VENEZUELA government workers are getting a few extra hours off each day as officials try to save on electricity. Starting immediately, government offices will stay open only six hours a day, closing early at 1 p.m., Electric Energy Minister Jesse Chacon said Tuesday. A lack of infrastructure investment and surging demand driven by some of the world's lowest tariffs has been battering Venezuela's electricity sector for years.



USA Jack Ely, the singer known for "Louie Louie," the low-budget recording that became one of the most famous songs of the 20th century, died at his home in Redmond, Oregon, after a long battle with an illness. He was 71.

UKRAINE There has been no change in background radiation levels in the Ukrainian capital as a result of nighttime fires in woodlands in the exclusion zone around the destroyed Chernobyl nuclear power plant, Ukrainian authorities said yesterday.

GREECE is to present a draft bill of reforms to creditors, hoping for approval which would pave the way for unlocking vitally needed bailout funds. The draft bill is expected to include measures proposed by Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis during the government's negotiations, which have dragged on for more than three months.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

AP Photo/Ahn Young-joon



Buddhist believers holding lanterns in the shape of lotus flowers walk around the Gwanghwamun Plaza in Seoul, South Korea, yesterday, to celebrate Buddha's upcoming birthday, which is on May 25.