



GRANTS TO ACADEMIC RESEARCH UNAFFECTED BY GAMING RECESSION

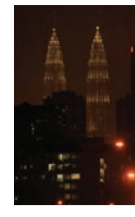
Economic recession in the gaming industry has not dampened gov't financial support for the research projects of local tertiary education institutes so far

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AIRPORT ENSURES RUNWAY SAFETY AFTER TROUBLED LANDING

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POLICE RAID MACAU SCAMMERS IN KUALA LUMPUR

Police busted a Macau scam syndicate with the arrest of 13 Chinese nationals in a raid on a luxury condominium unit in Kuala Lumpur yesterday

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Times

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS



CHINA Lion dancers and flower-bearing children welcomed Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to central China where President Xi Jinping hosted him with a touch of personal diplomacy that is rare for a Chinese leader. Clad in traditional Indian dress, Modi earlier visited the museum dedicated to China's famed Terra Cotta Warriors and a Buddhist temple housing works translated from Sanskrit.



AUSTRALIAN quarantine authorities have ordered Johnny Depp to fly his dogs Pistol and Boo out of the country by Saturday or they will be put down. Agriculture Minister Barnaby Joyce yesterday accused Depp of smuggling the Yorkshire terriers aboard his private jet when he returned to Australia on April 21 to resume filming of the 5th installment in the "Pirates of the Caribbean" movie series at Gold Coast studios.



JAPAN's Cabinet is set to endorse a set of defense bills allowing the country's military to go beyond its self-defense stance and play a greater role internationally, a plan that has split public opinion.

More on [backpage](#)

SIN FONG GARDEN

Activists call for probe over gov't interference

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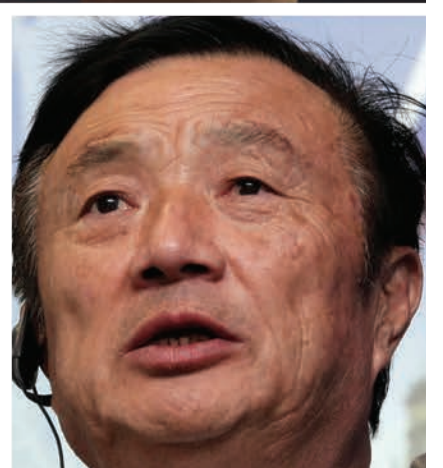


From tycoons to state bosses: Who's who in Chinese business

In a state-dominated economy, President Xi Jinping has more influence over business than any entrepreneur or state company boss. Still, these entrepreneurs have created some of the world's biggest companies and amassed stunning fortunes. Often they are little known outside of China, but that is changing. Here's a look at key figures in Chinese business – inside Extra Times



Extra Times



INTERVIEW | MACAU ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION HEAD LAURA LEI

'Cultural and creative industry is not only limited to handicraft items'

LAURA Lei, who heads the Oral History Association of Macau, identifies a parallel between the work of an historian and that of a reporter. Both, through research and interviews, present a series of highly factual reports to the public. The main difference is that the former writes about the present while the latter records the past.

Founded in 2008, the association aims at enhancing the local cultural profile of Macau. The group achieved publicity with its initiative (in cooperation with the association for local restaurants and bakery employees) when it established a "brothel museum" (although they prefer to call it "Qinglou Fang"). Lei confessed to *The Times* that the English translation was not an appropriate name, as the multi-layered significance of the word "Qinglou" would be denoted by the word "brothel."

Macau Daily Times – How did the partnership with the association for local restaurants and bakery workers form?

Laura Lei – Even though we haven't cooperated with each other before, they know we have experience, as we conducted guided tours on that topic before and therefore know some of its historical background. The idea came right at the time when the Cultural Affairs Bureau was overseeing building renovations. They wished to revitalize the space. It's how we were invited to engage in the project.

MDT – Will the revamp affect the original function of the building as a leisure and entertainment venue for the workers?

LL – We'd work together on the matter. They have another office at Rua de Pedro Nolasco da Silva. Revitalization doesn't mean the original function of the building has to disappear. Therefore, we still have space there for their leisure and entertainment activities. Again, the complex will primarily



Laura Lei

have three functions. A café, or probably a teahouse, either one we haven't settled on. What's more is a creative and cultural store and the Qinglou Museum.

MDT – How do artists qualify to put their works on display or sale there?

LL – Anyone who is interested is welcome to join us. The cultural and creative industry is not only limited to handicraft items. We'll also do exhi-

Revitalization doesn't mean the original function of the building has to disappear

LAURA LEI

bition and sales there. Specific details would be confirmed later. If the artists' works match our theme or objective of showcasing local creations, then it will be fine. But we'd like to focus on printed items.

MDT – What are the association's plans for this year?

LL – Our association will still continue to work on our own study of local oral history this year, which would take place in the summer vacation. Now it's about data collection. There is actually an oral history research component on the local pawn industry, and one more about the anti-Japanese war. Although Macau did not directly experience war, it's important to raise the question of what happened here during the wartime. Besides, there'll be an activity for open recruitment, which is a plan for training

interviewers.

MDT – Could you tell us a little more about your Macau Story House?

LL – Macau Story House was a space dedicated to exhibitions and books about this city. All the books there are available for free. Some of the local artists' handicrafts are also on display there. Last year, the house hosted a series of activities called "Street Food Vendors of Macau," which was a product of oral history from the hawkers in the form of an exhibition. By promoting education in an accessible format, the history we received is not only for publication, but also [to] serve as educational materials.

MDT – How does the oral history project usually work?

LL – We'd first work out a theme, then mobilize helpers.

After obtaining information through preparatory research, then we would pinpoint some targets, who might be seniors with plenty of knowledge. It's kind of like journalist work – transcribe what someone says in verbatim. The interviewers would then write another script to be made public. Journalists record the present while we present the past.

MDT – How many members are there at the association currently?

LL – More people are joining our association. Currently there is a total of between 80 and 90 members. They have always participated in our oral history plans. From 2008 until now, we have constantly identified new members to be our interviewers every year. A majority of them are university students, who are always busy. The reason why those oral history projects take place in the summer is to accommodate to their schedules.

MDT – What are the major difficulties facing the association?

LL – I would say human resources. Most university students opt to work for other companies for better pay. Compared to other associations, our association has relatively few members, as only people truly interested in oral history would stay. Another issue is the soaring rent, which was our primary expenditure.

MDT – Are there any differences between your guided tour and those of others?

LL – We offer a guided tour service at the G32 open area in the São Lázaro. We have workers stationed there, different from those from the government. Our audience is probably the same. However, our information came from the old neighbors, who are still alive. Not only about the past, most of our presentation is about the local livelihood at present. **Staff reporter**

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Public grants to academic research unaffected by gaming revenue drop

ECONOMIC recession in the gaming industry has not dampened the government's financial support for the research projects of local tertiary education institutes so far, said Prof. Zhang Shu Guang, Senior Vice President of the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) who also heads the university's Institute for Social and Cultural Research (ISCR).

The university's research unit revealed the first of several rounds of results yesterday afternoon, which included studies into the Luso-Chinese relationship, research on the historical maps of the city and the compilation of global documents about Macau.

Speaking about any possible pressures that dwindling gaming earnings have had on the university, Zhang admitted that college authorities were initially concerned with whether



or not the continuously plummeting gaming revenue would take a toll on public grants to academic research.

"Currently, we haven't received any obvious information regarding whether support for [academic research] would decrease. We're still cautiously optimistic [about it]," said the

university's rector, adding that most government departments have always been supportive of the academic efforts.

According to Zhang, the uni-

versity has faced no major obstacles in terms of launching research despite some projects having been scaled down due to fiscal considerations. However, the school also had its own supporting body to financially initiate their research.

Among the three examples of research that took two to three years to reach a preliminary stage, researchers who worked on a map project picked 50 precious historic maps out of a total of 500 collected from western countries that best illustrated the appearance of the city from the fifteenth to nineteenth century. It was the first-ever publication with a high level of accuracy in the city's map collection. It also confirmed Macau's vital role in the past as a global commercial platform. Another research effort focused on consolidating local historical database with information from other countries. **Staff reporter**

CRISTO CHEUNG

Local entrepreneur publishes book about 50 years in business

MODESTY, endeavor and perseverance are principles that bring success, according to Cristo Cheung, a local businessman who provides his personal account of the commercial and political scene in Hong Kong over the past 50 years in his Chinese autobiography.

The savvy professional stated during his book

launch in Macau this week that he invested a significant amount of effort into his business and that the work has paid off: his assets have reached a ten-digit value in a matter of 10 years after starting from scratch.

In addition to this, Cheung urged local young entrepreneurs to learn from the mainland's successful businessmen, from whom

their US counterparts are also taking reference. He then attributed their surprising success to the Chinese consumer market, which accounted for a quarter of all of his assets. "They are daring to accept innovation, without knowing what the traditional way is. Therefore they have made many achievements," he said.

Asked how young people could possibly address the mounting rental prices for their startups, the experienced entrepreneur stated that these lessons had to be figured out on their own. He also told the fresh entrepreneurs to learn from Hong Kong and America in terms of commerce.

Cheung concluded that teenage business high-



Cristo Cheung

flyers should be fearless and try to go wherever there are opportunities due to the amount of time at their disposal. "Nothing is absolute. The-

refore when there are opportunities, go seize them. Especially for the youth, what they have most is time. They rather try more."

The autobiography was finished over six months, recording the author's half century of business in Macau, Hong Kong, Taiwan and mainland China. It also touched on how Sino-British negotiations have impacted the socioeconomic situation of Hong Kong and also China's prosperity after its reform. Cheung hoped that his manuscript could serve to enlighten local youngster. **Staff reporter**

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SIN FONG

New Macau calls on CCAC to launch probe over gov't interference

Catarina Pinto

THE New Macau Association (ANM) has raised doubts over the impartiality of Macau's judiciary system and has called on the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) to investigate whether or not government officials pledged to avoid prosecuting a group of Sin Fong Garden residents who clashed with police authorities during a protest last year.

ANM president Sulu Sou and member Jason Chao submitted a petition to CCAC yesterday, urging Macau's anti-graft agency to further investigate the case.

"We all know that we are not very confident in the independence of Macau's judiciary system. But now it has escalated to a stage, in which officials may say that they could guarantee the acquittal of citizens. It is hugely problematic," political activist Jason Chao told reporters.

A group of seven Sin Fong Garden proprietors have been accused of aggravated disobedience by the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) over last year's protest and



clash with authorities. Owners of apartments at Sin Fong Garden accused the government of breaking its promise to not prosecute them over the demonstration, which also included camping outside the building.

Chao stressed that, "Macau's Basic Law clearly states that the judiciary system shall exercise its power independently without outsider interference." The political activist recalled that, in this particular case, government officials had hinted that they would interfere with decisions made within the judiciary system.

"It is very worrying for us. So we are here to file a complaint with the CCAC and urge CCAC to launch an investigation into the disciplinary responsibilities of the relevant government offi-

cials," Chao added.

The political activist recalled that although the current Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, was not responsible for this cabinet at the time, he has now been given the responsibility of

investigating the case. "It was the inter-departmental group, which had made that decision or that communicated that message to Sin Fong residents. But the Secretary has the responsibility to look into the disciplinary responsibilities of his subordinates. There's no way he can rid himself of the responsibilities now," he reiterated.

Chao concluded by saying that he hopes to see Macau's rule of law deciding justly, as Sin Fong residents "were just waiting for a chance go back home and did not have any intention of occupying the road [at first]."

Macau researcher Ana Maria Amaro dies



Prof. Ana Maria Amaro, a researcher and author of more than ten books on the topic of Macau, died this week in Portugal. Born in 1926, Amaro lived in Macau between 1957

and 1973, where she served as a high school teacher and studied local traditions. She founded the Portuguese Institute for Chinese Studies in 1998 and the Portuguese Institute of Sinology in Portugal (ipsinologia.com). Her contributions to the Macanese community included her defence of the theory that the first generations didn't come from the mixing between Portuguese men and Chinese women. According to her, the first Macanese were born of Indian, Malay and Sinhalese women brought to Macau by the Portuguese.

Five Portuguese residents to be honored

Yesterday it was announced that the Secretary of State for Portuguese Communities Abroad, José Cesário, will present honorary medals to distinguished Portuguese citizens residing in Macau on Wednesday. The medals will be given to the physician Paula Pimenta, the scholar Cândida Pires, the Association of Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers of Macau president Augusto Nogueira and to the restaurant owners António Neves Coelho and Jorge Mota. The names were proposed by Consul-General of Macau and Hong Kong, Vítor Sereno, and the medals will be presented in a ceremony to be held at the Consul's residence, the former Hotel Bela Vista.

NO NEWS ON UNOFFICIAL POLL ARREST CASES

POLITICAL ACTIVIST Jason Chao confirmed yesterday that he has received no news on his aggravated disobedience case. Chao and four other activists were detained in August after organizing an unofficial poll on universal suffrage. He was charged with aggravated disobedience by the police after refusing to stop collecting personal data from citizens who were cast-

ing a vote in the referendum. "According to the Criminal Procedures Code the investigation should have been completed but at this moment I have not received any update on the case from the prosecutor," said Jason Chao, adding that theoretically the prosecutor should eventually issue a letter stating the verdict on his prosecution.

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Stolen ring sold in Macau

Three Chinese thieves were sentenced to five years in prison by a French court this week. The criminals stole a ring worth nearly half a million euros from a Monaco jewelry store, replacing it with a fake. According to AFP, "while they were in pre-trial custody, one of the suspects' cellmates told investigators how his fellow prisoner was part of a criminal gang with interests in illegal gambling and prostitution in China." The informer claimed that the stolen ring had been sold in Macau.

CE to attend Expo Central China

The chief executive, Chui Sai On, will lead a delegation to Wuhan and Fuzhou from May 17 to 21 as part of the opening of the 9th Central China Investment and Trade Expo (Expo Central China 2015) and the opening of Experience Macau – Fujian. In addition to attending the opening of Expo Central China in Wuhan, the chief executive will also visit the Wuhan City Planning Museum, meeting with leading local officials. Mr Chui will also meet leading officials of Fujian province in Fuzhou. Delegates accompanying Chui Sai On include the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, the director of the Government Information Bureau, Victor Chan, the president of the Macau Trade and Investment Promotion Institute, Jackson Chang and the director of the Macau Government Tourist Office, Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes.

Creative Pavilion in Shenzhen

The Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) has arranged for several cultural and creative entities from Macau to participate in the 11th Chinese (Shenzhen) International Cultural Industries Fair (ICIF) as part of the Macao Creative Pavilion, which opened on May 14 at the Shenzhen Convention and Exhibition Centre. The pavilion features a collection of "Made in Macao" original T-shirts, showcasing more than 50 original designs by local artists which convey the philosophies and aesthetics of Macau brands. According to a press release issued by the IC, the pavilion was "very well received, welcoming many visitors on its opening day." The local entities represented at the Pavilion include Ka Yan An Tai Company Limited, Creative Industries Promotion Association of St. Lazarus Church District-10 Fantasia, Macau Creations Limited, Soda Panda Product Design, Bom Dia Estúdio, Larm's Legend Limited and UNICAM.

STATISTICS

Residential loans decrease

NEW approvals of residential mortgage loans (RMLs) decreased in March 2015 whereas those of commercial real estate loans (CRELs) have increased, according to statistics released yesterday by the Monetary Authority of Macau.

In March 2015, new RMLs approved by Macau banks decreased 6.3 percent month-on-month to MOP4.9 billion, of which, 93.6 pct was extended to residen-

ts. In terms of value, new RMLs to residents decreased 10.5 pct whereas those to non-residents increased 191.9 pct. When compared with the same period of 2014, new approvals of RMLs witnessed an increase of 40.5 pct.

According to the data provided by the Monetary Authority, new CRELs rose by 106.1 pct month-to-month to MOP9.7 billion. 97.7 pct of this total was granted to residents. In terms of value, new CRELs

to residents increased 179.1 pct whereas those of non-residents decreased 82.9 pct.

As of the end of March 2015, the outstanding value of RMLs reached MOP159.0 billion, an increase of 2 pct from one month earlier or 27.2 pct year-on-year. The resident component made up 94.1 ct of the total. Compared to the end of February 2015, outstanding RMLs to residents and non-residents rose 1.9 pct and 3.1 pct respectively.

Airport ensures runway safety after Air Macau flight faces trouble landing

Catarina Pinto

THE Macau International Airport Co. Ltd. (CAM) has assured the public that pilots are accustomed to the runways at local airports, and that landing procedures have not resulted in any accidents. Newspaper Tribuna de Macau reported this week that, in March, an Air Macau flight had trouble landing and flew close to a hill while circling overhead before attempting to land again.

Air Macau confirmed the incident yesterday, stressing that the aircraft was in good condition.

"Flight crews were fully qualified and ready to fly. When trying to make an approach, visibility was poor and to ensure the safety of passengers, a decision to circle overhead was taken timely," Air Macau divulged in an email.

The airline acknowledged that while circling overhead "there was a minor deviation from standard circling procedures." Nevertheless, Air Macau reiterated that the "aircraft was maintained within the safety zone at all times."

Air Macau said it reported the incident to Macau's Civil Aviation Authority.



However, an unnamed source within Air Macau told newspaper Tribuna that, "it was a serious incident," which fortunately had not resulted in severe consequences, as the plane landed safely a few minutes later.

Nevertheless, the same source raised concerns over the safety of runway number 16, which is not equipped with an ILS system (instrument landing system).

Due to poor visibility, the pilots on board aborted their first approach to the runway and circled overhead. According to the same source, the pilots forgot that the autopilot system was switched on, leading to the aircraft turning right instead of left,

thus flying close to one of Taipa's hills.

According to the source, the pilots switched off the autopilot system seconds later and made a sharp turn to prevent the plane from crashing into a hill. "If the pilot had taken a few more seconds to take notice and to take action, an accident could have happened," the source declared. The unnamed source added that "with the poor weather conditions, landing on runway number 16 is more difficult due to the lack of an ILS system."

CAM told the Times that over the past 20 years "pilots have been practicing and performing well while flying,

especially during landing procedures" which have not resulted in any accidents. "All the airlines operating at the Macau International Airport are licensed and the qualification of its pilot's techniques ensured," CAM stated in an email.

Furthermore, CAM recalled that Macau's airport was designed and set up 20 years ago, with its designated flying route not passing by Zhuhai airspace.

CAM also said that with increased air traffic, "the pilot's decision to land or not is very crucial to everyone's life," and therefore passengers should understand potential delays in flight departures or arrivals.

Taipa wet market faces facelift and expansion

THE Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) has considered expanding the current wet market, located in the old district of Taipa. The Urban Planning Department from the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) has been seeking other possible locations for another wet market to meet the fast-growing urban development in the island.

The authorities' plan was revealed at the sixth meeting of the Urban Planning Committee, which was held this week. Most committee members agreed on the proposal, provided that the current two-storey building includes an additional floor and an underground two floors parking lot. Some other commission members criticized the reconstruction, labeling it as meaningless and the traffic in that area as inconvenient to the public. They suggested that the market should be relocated elsewhere.

Lao Iong, head of the Urban Planning Department, responded to their remarks, saying that the department has been investigating other possible locations at which to build a new wet market. The IACM representative also added that the bureau would collect public opinions to work out the final scheme.

After the meeting, Lao told media representatives that a majority of the total 661 opinions received earlier initially suggested a general acceptance of the controversial urban planning blueprint for Fisherman's Wharf. However, the authorities had no way of verifying the identities of those respondents. The department head stressed that the small number of responses could not influence the government's decision. The more influential factors, he said, would be the either supporting or opposing opinions stated in the responses, which would later be classified accordingly.

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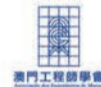
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REAL ESTATE MATTERS

The most important questions to ask when you sell

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

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JULIET RISDON

In the last three parts of this series we look at the final stage of home ownership or property investment. The part where you sell!

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

It follows then that we should give these transactions the extra time and attention that they warrant, but this does not always happen.

In many instances it isn't so much an issue of motivation, but rather not knowing the right questions to ask. This series deals with key questions that we CAN, and sometimes SHOULD, ask.

Knowing the answers to these questions can help to avoid misunderstandings and, in many cases, will save time, money or both.

If you decide to sell for whatever reason, it is natural to be concerned that you are making a good decision and getting the maximum value at the time for your property.

The trouble is you may sell and find yourself without property.

Of course it is important to do your homework about any potential property you are considering to sell, and with so many things going on you may forget to ask your agent the most important questions about selling.

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

Why am I selling?

It pays to know not only what we are selling, but also 'why'?

The why is of course the motivation, and pays to be clear on exactly why you want to rid yourself of this property.

It can be a long, relatively slow process. Knowing the 'why' behind the decision will help keep you focused as the sale progresses.

What price do I want to achieve?

Knowing your price range will give you a clear advantage over many sellers in the Macau market.

Nobody wants to deal with an owner who keeps changing the price.

Now this is not to say that maximum price can't be achieved, far from it. Instead, just be clear on the highest realistic value, and this can be shared with everyone involved.

At the same time please refer to the next point for your 'bottom' end of the range.

What's the minimum amount I am willing to accept?

Establishing a minimum price will

give you your price range if you have already asked and answered question 2 above.

This minimum price should be kept to yourself and not shared with anyone.

If you are asked for your best price you can always respond by saying 'make me your best offer and you will find out'.

If this were YOUR house, what would YOU sell it for?

OK, you can't guarantee and honest answer to this question, but it certainly IS a fun one to ask the agent.

The answer might surprise you enough to make you re-consider the sale.

What tax should I pay?

The good news is that there is no Capital Gains Tax on Macau property at the present time, unless a property is sold less than two years after it was purchased.

Properties purchased for less than one year pay a special duty of 20% of the sales price whilst property that was bought between one year and two years before will be charged a 10% special duty.

That's all for this week. Next week we look at another 5 questions in the second of this 3 part series.

PokerStarsMacau
Home to Asia's best live poker tournaments

PROJECT POKER
BY FRED LEUNG

APPT9 Macau: Bryan Huang is secretly taking over the Asia-Pacific

When you're a Team PokerStars Pro it's not often you get overlooked or unnoticed. But with so many incredible stories on the Asia Pacific Poker Tour this season (Phil Ivey wins his third Aussie Millions \$250K Challenge, Yuguang Li wins two titles in two days), Bryan Huang has gone under the radar while managing to make the Top 13 on the three most prominent Asia-Pacific ranking systems.

Huang, is presently No. 7 on the GPI Asia-Pacific Rankings, No. 9 on the Australia-New Zealand Player of the Year Leaderboard, and No. 13 on the Asia Player of the Year Leaderboard. To put that in perspective, there are 1,118 ranked players amongst the three leaderboards.

The 30-year old Singaporean has surged up the rankings after making the main event final tables at ANZPT Perth and APPT Seoul in addition to cashing in the Aussie Millions Main Event. However, Huang hasn't displayed any sort of satisfaction despite his current standing.

"They aren't impressive enough...you either win or don't win. Nobody remembers No. 2," responded Huang when asked about his accomplishments thus far in 2015. "With that being said, I'll do right by myself and go for it. That's the main reason why I always put in volume...to give myself a shot. That way I won't be disappointed if I finish 2nd or 3rd or whatever because I know I gave it 100% and left nothing on the table."

"Hopefully, May will change things after APPT Macau."

Huang won the Asia Player of the Year (APOY) title in 2010 but, like many other winners, hasn't been able to string together a solid season the past two years where he's finished outside the Top 100.

"Burnout is a massive factor," suggested Huang on why APOY winners struggle afterwards. "For me, I was playing online, sleeping three hours, then playing a live tournament and then rinse-repeat. Now I focus on either live events or online but rarely both."

"I also have a very fulfilling life outside of poker. My time is so busy now that when I go to a poker tournament it's like a way to de-stress and I feel so in the zone...Zen-like."

Having the experience of knowing what it takes to win a 'Player of the Year' title certainly gives Huang an advantage - particularly in preparing his schedule on how best to achieve the ultimate goal.

"The GPI Asia-Pacific ranking is more or less a product of the ANZPOY or APOY so my chances go up if I do well in those two leaderboards," said Huang. "Planning is important but you can't look too far ahead either. You can only win what's in front of you and for me, that's getting myself ready for APPT Macau in two weeks."

APPT Macau takes place at 'PokerStars LIVE at the City of Dreams, Macau' from May 20-31, 2015.

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PokerStars LIVE
Macau

Chow Tai Fook seeks 20pct drop in HK shop rents

Lisa Pham

CHOW Tai Fook Jewellery Group Ltd. is seeking a 20 percent reduction in rent for some of its stores in Hong Kong when contracts come up for renewal this year, as sales of luxury items plunged in the city.

The company has already obtained rent cuts of between 10 percent and 20 percent so far this year, compared to the previous contracts for some stores, Managing Director Kent Wong said, without quantifying the number of shops. About 30 of its outlets in Hong Kong will come up for renewal in 2015, he said.

This year is a "very special year that we can negotiate with the landlord," Wong said in an interview in Hong Kong on May 8. "We are demand driven; we expect we can have a 20 percent rental reduction."

Hong Kong's retail rents are falling as China's slowing economy and its clampdown on corruption and extravagance crimped consumer spending. Wealthy Chinese tourists also chose other travel destinations. The city saw the first monthly drop in visitors since June 2009 in March, when sales of jewelry, watches and clocks also fell for the sixth straight month.

Chow Tai Fook's same-store sales in Hong Kong, Macau and other markets dropped 26 percent in the three months ended



An employee assists customers inside a Chow Tai Fook Jewellery Group Ltd. jewelry store in the Central district of Hong Kong

March from a year earlier, dropping for a fifth quarter. The company may shut down one or two stores in Hong Kong this year, including a branch on the Peak, Wong said.

"Rents of prime retail locations in Hong Kong are generally more sticky in nature," said Catherine Lim, an analyst at Bloomberg Intelligence in Singapore. "These are still desirable locations for brand building purposes for the retailer. Rents of non-prime locations, especially street-level shops, may have more room for deductions."

Chow Tai Fook, the wor-

ld's largest listed jeweler, has about 90 points of sales in Hong Kong with almost half of receipts coming from Mongkok and Tsim Sha Tsui, popular shopping districts among Chinese tourists.

Economists at Daiwa Capital Markets forecast retail sales in Hong Kong to fall by 4 percent in value this year from 2014.

Retail rents in the city's top-four shopping locations have dropped 3.5 percent quarter-on-quarter in the first three months of this year according to a Colliers International report last month. It predicts the rents

of street-level shops to fall another 9 percent in 2015, with more vacant shops becoming available.

While the company has no plans to expand in Hong Kong this year, Wong hasn't ruled out the possibility of opening a store if they can find a prime location with good rental terms.

"The market in general needs six months to one year to restructure the product mix catering to the changing taste of customers," he said. "We remain optimistic about Hong Kong in the mid- to long-term." **Bloomberg**

Aussie casino on hunt for linguists

CASINO Canberra is on a hiring spree ahead of its planned redevelopment and is seeking Chinese and Vietnamese speakers to apply for the new jobs, the Canberra Times reported.

According to the Australian newspaper, the casino wants linguists to apply to become full-time and part-time guest service officers, who typically look after elite and higher-rolling clients.

The casino is also looking for multilingual recruits for its casino dealer school, offering paid training for successful applicants.

"Applicants with multilingual skills are strongly encouraged to apply," the job advertisement quoted by the paper reads.

The casino's new owner, Hong Kong billionaire Tony Fung, has revealed grand Las Vegas-style plans for a new casino included as part of an "integrated entertainment precinct" on the current site which he bought for USD6million in December.

Australian casinos are increasingly targeting VIP gamblers from China and the expanding Asian middle classes to boost business. James

Packer, who is building a \$1billion casino resort at Barangaroo in Sydney, has said "the biggest opportunity" lies in China. But, due to a crackdown on gambling by the Chinese government, revenue has been dropping for casinos such as his in Hong Kong.

The Canberra Times says the new Canberra positions are among a number of jobs on offer at the casino, including table games dealers and cashiers. Aquis said in January that it expects to finish the complex by the end of 2016.

Aquis recently appointed a new Canberra-based chief executive for their Australian casino projects, former Sands Macau general manager Geoff Andres.

corporate bits

'THE HOUSE OF DANCING WATER EXCLUSIVE BACKSTAGE JOURNEY'



'The House of Dancing Water' at City of Dreams Macau will be celebrating its 5th anniversary this September. With the 'Le French May' campaign launching at City of Dreams Macau, the purpose-built theater will open its doors for the first time, showcasing 'The House of Dan-

cing Water Exclusive Backstage Journey' where audiences can set foot on stage to experience the water-based staging technology with fountain effects, audio set and an exclusive photo opportunity with the automated fountain and performers on the central stage.

The tour also reveals the production's backstage, including props and tailor made costumes. The approximately 17-meter-high 'Performer Catwalk' at Level 4 and the roof of the theater at approximately 40 meters on Level 8 over the main pool provide a view of the theater where audiences can see the professionals up-close performing the high dive at approximately 24 meters.

CTM OFFERS PRIVILEGES TO CELEBRATE WORLD TELECOM DAY



In celebration of "World Telecommunications and Information Society Day", between 16-17th May, all CTM mobile customers (including postpaid and prepaid customers) are entitled free sending and receiving of local SMS and MMS messages,

as well as making local video calls. Macau residents can enjoy 517 minutes free CTM Wi-Fi service upon successful login to CTM's Wi-Fi network at more than 500 CTM Wi-Fi Hotspots throughout Macau.

Moreover, during 16-31st May, smartphone service plan customers when subscribing to additional data plans at MOP68 are entitled to an extra free 517MB of data usage within the month. Customers who subscribe or upgrade to the "No.1 Home Fiber Broadband" service plan and purchase any smartphone or tablet will get a cash discount of MOP1,600, as well as receiving a selected model smart watch on a first-come-first-serve basis.

PORTUGUESE POOLSIDE BBQS AT SHERATON MACAU



On Friday and Saturday evenings between 6:00 pm and 10:00 pm from now until October 31, the Sala Pool at Sheraton is offering a spread of Portuguese-inspired barbecue dishes and live music.

Popular offerings include the Bairrada-style suckling pig, Grilled Chorizo sausages flambeé with Portuguese bran-

dy as well as the Pata Negra (cured ham). For those who enjoy seafood, there's the Portuguese-style clams with white wine sauce as well as the grilled octopus and tiger prawns with garlic and butter. All the seafood dishes pair well with Sheraton's Sala Red or White Sangrias for al-fresco drinking outdoors by the pool.

In land of fakes, e-commerce giant sells trust

Joe McDonald
Business Writer, Beijing

BEFORE he became a billionaire in e-commerce, Richard Liu was a failure.

As a student, Liu started a restaurant in Beijing but went bankrupt. He blames employees who he said stole from him, and when he took a second stab at business by opening an electronics store in 1998, Liu insisted on honesty. After seeing other shops overcharge customers and pass off counterfeit goods, he says he sold only genuine merchandise.

"I felt this was an opportunity to establish a new kind of business," said Liu in an interview. He said his shop became the first in northwestern Beijing's Zhongguancun neighborhood, a center for technology companies, to use price tags to avoid haggling with buyers.

After Liu went online in 2003 and expanded into selling home appliances, clothing and other goods, that focus on reliability helped his company, JD.com, grow into China's biggest Internet-based direct retailer. It is a powerful selling point for Chinese consumers who have endured repeated scandals over fake and sometimes deadly milk, medicines and other products.

In contrast to China's dominant e-commerce brand, Alibaba Group, which provides platforms for companies and consumers to sell directly to each other and leaves the handling of goods to outside delivery companies, JD.com operates like a department store, buying goods from suppliers and re-selling them to shoppers. The Beijing-based company controls the flow of merchandise from the supplier to the customer's door. It operates its own distribution network of more than 100 warehouses and a fleet of thousands of bright red delivery vehicles emblazoned with its logo of a grinning dog named Joy.

Liu, 41, said his disastrous experience operating a restaurant while studying at People's University in Beijing in the mid-1990s taught him a painful lesson about the role of honesty in business. He said pilfering and phony receipts were common.

"An employee would pay 2 yuan for bean sprouts but tell me he paid 4 yuan," said Liu,

whose name in Chinese is Liu Qiangdong. "The cashier and other employees would sneak money into their own pockets."

Liu is part of a wave of Chinese business leaders in fields from e-commerce to tourism and mobile phones who are helping to drive the rapid evolution of the world's second-largest economy.

Most prominent is Alibaba founder Jack Ma, who became a media star in the West after a record-setting USD25 billion U.S. stock offering last year. Another is Wang Jianlin, chairman of Wanda Group, which acquired U.S. cinema chain AMC in 2012.

China accounted for 213 billionaires on Forbes magazine's global rich list last year, more than any other country except the United States with 536. And while many of the Americans inherited their riches, nearly all the Chinese are self-made. And young, too: JD.com's Liu and some others passed \$1 billion in net worth before turning 40.

Focus on reliability helped JD.com grow into China's biggest Internet-based direct retailer

JD.com has emerged as Alibaba's strongest challenger in a Chinese e-commerce market that consulting firm Forrester says could grow to \$1 trillion in annual sales by 2020.

Its rise reflects the rapid emergence of more affluent and demanding Chinese consumers. Online shoppers used to look only at price and took their chances with counterfeit or shoddy goods. Today, they are willing to pay for quality and are shifting to merchants that control their supply chain and will help resolve complaints.

Last year, JD.com raised its profile abroad with a U.S. stock market debut that raised \$1.8 billion ahead of Alibaba's IPO. Liu's net worth has risen to \$8.8 billion.

JD.com's workforce of 68,000 includes inspectors



Visitors wait at the entrance to JD.com head office in Beijing

who check product quality. A call center with a staff of 7,000 fields customer complaints. The company also operates an online mall with about 60,000 merchants that include clothing brands Uniqlo and The Gap. It screens sellers before they are allowed onto the site and those caught dealing in counterfeits can be fined 1 million yuan (\$160,000).

Liu keeps a lower public profile than Alibaba's Ma.

Each June, Liu marks the anniversary of JD.com's founding by working for a day as a delivery driver. Chinese news reports say customers often fail to recognize him when he shows up at their door.

In person, Liu exudes quiet confidence rather than the exuberant energy of many Chinese entrepreneurs his age. He has a personable manner and boyish face but an older man's unwavering gaze. During an interview in his wood-paneled office in a tower adjacent to the site of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, he chuckled at a question about how he chose Joy the dog as JD.com's mascot.

"Don't you think it's cute?" he said. The logo, he said, symbolizes JD.com's loyal-

ty to customers and is meant to make a company founded on selling to male tech nerds more welcoming to female shoppers.

JD.com is a fraction of Alibaba's size but growing faster.

The total value of goods sold across Alibaba's platforms in the first quarter of this year was more than six times JD.com's level of 87.8 billion yuan (\$14.2 billion). But JD.com sales rose 99 percent, more than double Alibaba's 40 percent growth.

For its part, Alibaba has responded to pressure to help stamp out China's rampant trade in fakes by increasing spending and assigning more than 2,000 employees to keeping counterfeits off its sales platforms.

Other Chinese online retailers need to set up similar distribution and quality control systems if they want to get out of the "no-win game" of competing on price alone, said Angela Wang, an expert in retailing at the Boston Consulting Group.

Liu moved online after the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome in 2003 kept shoppers away from stores, sending Chinese retailing into

a tailspin. As it grew, the company was renamed 360buy Jingdong Inc. and became JD.com in January 2014.

JD.com has yet to report a profit but says its loss narrowed to 710.2 million yuan (\$114.6 million) in the first quarter, equal to about 1.9 percent of revenue.

Its network is being expanded into the populous Chinese countryside.

"By the end of this year, we will be ready to enter nearly 100,000 villages," said Liu. "A logistics network covering the whole country will have been completely built."

And JD.com is extending its model abroad.

In February, it launched a French Mall that allows Chinese customers to order wine, cosmetics and clothing directly from France. It launched a Korean Mall in March and Liu says it plans similar direct sales links to suppliers in the United States, Australia, Italy and Spain.

The company plans one day to sell in other markets, Liu said.

"As Chinese brands go abroad, we want to take the JD.com sales model to the whole world." AP

Artists face up to life under 'mini-Mao'

Ting Shi

ON the outskirts of Beijing, in a tiny, cement-framed house with rusty furniture and an unmade brick bed, artist and curator Guan Yizhao sits among partly unpacked suitcases, hoping for exile.

Until last June, when police shut down his gallery and seized his collection, Guan was a successful curator in the art space he opened in 2008 in the city's trendy 798 Art District. His attempt to seek legal redress for the eviction failed.

"No lawyer dared take up my case," said Guan, who relies on friends for financial help. "The security agents had told me: 'If you stop displaying provocative artworks or posting that stuff on the Internet, and just mind your own business, nobody will touch you.'"

Guan, 48, a former soldier in the People's Liberation Army, is one face of China's efforts to control information in the country Xi Jinping took over as Communist Party chief in November 2012. The past 30 months have seen the harshest media censorship and crackdown on dissent in more than two decades.

Last October, Xi turned his attention to the world of art and literature. He invited 72 leading artists and authors to a symposium in Beijing, where he told them their role was to promote "socialist core values" so their works could guide the public to form "correct views" on history, statehood, race and culture.

Xi warned artists against becoming "slaves of the market" and decried the rise of pla-



Guan Yizhao, artist and curator, poses for a photograph at his home in Beijing, China

giarism, and fast-food style consumption that appealed to "base instincts."

The two-hour meeting had an eerie echo of a speech by former Chairman Mao Zedong at his revolutionary base in Yan'an in 1942. Mao believed art should serve a political purpose, and told about 100 artists and authors they should advance socialism and reflect the lives of peasants and workers. The talks formed the ideological foundation of China's censorship.

Xi faces a different world than Mao in controlling in-

formation, said Perry Link, Chancellorial Chair for Teaching Across Disciplines at the University of California at Riverside. Even with the government able to block foreign websites and monitor and shut down local users' accounts, Chinese netizens use social networks like WeChat to air grievances over corruption or mismanagement.

"Mao held daunting power over a populace that was much less educated and 'connected' than today's," he said. "Any artistic following of Xi today is only game-playing aimed at

ladder-climbing or self-protection."

The corraling of artists is one part of Xi's effort to further centralize control and forge a strong sense of nationalism. The strengthening of ideology has been one of the priorities of his presidency, including a tighter grip on traditional me-

Xi is trying to be a mini-Mao

PERRY LINK
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

dia and the Internet, warning against the influence of "Western values" in universities and cracking down on rights lawyers, activists and liberal scholars.

In his speech to the artists, Xi said "the main melody" in the creative process should be patriotism and traditional culture.

"The real message today of 'serve the people and socialism' is follow rules that come from the top and don't think for yourself," said Link, who is also emeritus professor of East Asian studies at Princeton University. "Xi is trying to be a mini-Mao."

State control over art has always existed, but Xi is more "blunt" in his approach, said Guan, who lived and painted in the late 1980s in Yuanmingyuan Artist Village in the west of Beijing - the kernel of the Chinese contemporary art movement.

Some artists have backed Xi's reforms. In January, Nobel Prize-winning author Mo Yan publicly threw his support behind Xi's anti-graft campaign, announcing his next book would focus on the perils of corrupt officials.

Still, Shen Yun, a Beijing-based ceramic and performance artist, said the "relative relaxation in creative space" under Xi's predecessor Hu Jintao has gone.

Xi's speech has created "a long shadow under which everybody is as silent as a winter cicada," said Shen, who has been detained by police at least five times since the 1980s. "You feel you need to hold your tongue, because voicing an opinion can be dangerous." **Bloomberg**



In this still image taken from cellphone video recorded May 2 by a bystander, Xu Chunhe, left, struggles with policeman Li Lebin, right, in a train station in Qing'an city

TV shows footage of scuffle before police shooting

CHINA'S main state broadcaster released security camera footage yesterday showing that a man who was fatally shot by a policeman at a train station behaved aggressively and attacked the officer with a long baton before he opened fire.

The edited footage released on China Central Television gives a fuller — but not complete — picture of the scuffles leading up to the May 2 shooting of Xu Chunhe, 45, in the northeastern town of Qing'an, some of

which had circulated online from a bystander's video clip.

The incident drew a public outcry over concerns that the policeman used excessive force, and release of the security footage appeared aimed at countering portrayals that it was an unprovoked police attack on the man. Also yesterday, police reaffirmed their conclusion that the shooting was justified.

One of Xu's lawyers, Xie Yanyi, has said that the policeman, Li Lebin,

should be investigated on charges of murder. Another lawyer for the family, Li Zhongwei, said the video footage may have left out scenes in which Xu is beaten by the policeman.

The security footage shows the man punching the officer in the head and later wrestling away a 2-meter-long baton the officer used to try to subdue him and then using it to attack the officer.

Li, the police officer, said in an interview with CCTV that Xu was hitting

him in the head and in his shooting hand, making it difficult to keep the gun steady. He said he had no choice but to aim his fire at the man because it was a crowded train station where a stray bullet might otherwise have hit a bystander.

Li, the lawyer, said yesterday that the edited video may play up the violence by Xu while downplaying the violence by the policeman. "We believe the full raw video from that day should be released to the public." **AP**

AFGHANISTAN

Taliban guesthouse attack kills 14, including 9 foreigners

Lynne O'Donnell and
Amir Shah, Kabul

THE Taliban attack on a Kabul guesthouse left 14 people dead, including nine foreigners, in the most audacious assault by the insurgents in the Afghan capital since the start of their spring offensive, a government official confirmed yesterday.

Among the nine foreigners killed in Wednesday's attack, seven were men and two were women, according to the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media. The full breakdown of the nationalities was not immediately known but an American and four Indians have been confirmed dead.

Gunmen stormed the restaurant of the Park Palace hotel in the Afghan capital as it was hosting a party for foreigners on Wednesday evening, and authorities said the victims were killed during an hours-long siege that ended early yesterday morning. At least 54 hostages were rescued, according to Afghan officials.



AP PHOTO: Afghan security forces inspect the site of the Park Palace Hotel attacked by gunmen, in Kabul

Five Afghans were also among the dead — four men and one woman — and seven were wounded, including one Afghan policeman.

The U.N. mission in Afghanistan condemned the assault, saying in a statement yesterday that it was an "atrocious."

"Taliban statements on avoiding civilian casualties ring hollow when we set them against the latest killings," said UNAMA's human rights director Georgette Gagnon.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack. The group's

spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in an email distributed to media that the hotel was targeted because of the presence of foreigners, including Americans there. In the claim, he said only one attacker was involved, armed with a Kalashnikov rifle, a suicide vest and a pistol — not three as the Afghan government reported. The Taliban often exaggerate their claims.

The Afghan police kept the hotel cordoned off yesterday. Earlier, they said all the attackers were killed in the shootout with security troops.

The attack began around 8:30 p.m. local time when the gunmen opened fire at the hotel restaurant, according to Kabul police chief Gen. Abdul Rahman Rahimi.

U.S. Embassy spokeswoman Monica Cummings said in an email statement that a U.S. citizen was killed in the attack, although she had no further details and did not identify the victim.

Cummings said the U.S. Embassy was in close contact with Afghan authorities and was working to obtain more information. "Our thoughts are with the families of the victims," she said.

India's Ambassador Amar Sinha confirmed yesterday that four Indian nationals were also among the dead — three men and a woman. He said they were among a total of 11 Indians resident at the guesthouse, none of whom are embassy personnel.

The guesthouse had about 100 residents, he said.

Throughout the standoff, sporadic gunfire echoed around the guesthouse in a central neighborhood that is home to United Nations compounds and a fo-

reign-run hospital. At one point, two explosions could be heard and four ambulances later arrived to the scene.

Amin Habib, a U.S. citizen from Los Angeles, told the AP that a party was going on at the hotel to honor a Canadian when the gunmen stormed the guesthouse. He said dozens of people, including foreigners and U.S. citizens, were inside the hotel at the time.

Also earlier, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Twitter account said he was "concerned about the situation (and) I pray for everyone's safety."

Canada's Foreign Affairs Spokeswoman Caitlin Workman said all staff at the Canadian Embassy in Kabul were "safe and accounted for."

Hours after the standoff began, fire trucks arrived at the scene, with firefighters saying they were called in to clear and secure the area. A number of people were seen leaving the building. Police initially freed some 20 people trapped in the guesthouse, but others had remained inside, according to Zia Massoud, an Afghan government official.

The hotel has both guest rooms for visitors and a residential area for those who live full time in Kabul, including foreign aid workers.

Afghan security forces have been struggling to fend off Taliban attacks since U.S. and NATO forces formally concluded their combat mission at the end of last year. **AP**

MALAYSIA

Gov't turns away 800 boat people saying it cannot be 'nice'

Eileen Ng and Thanyarat
Doksone, Langkawi

THOUSANDS of Rohingya Muslims and Bangladeshis abandoned at sea by human traffickers had nowhere to go yesterday, as Malaysia turned away two boats crammed with migrants, and Thailand kept at bay a third boat with hundreds more.

"What do you expect us to do?" Malaysian Deputy Home Minister Wan Junaidi Jafaar said. "We have been very nice to the people who broke into our border. We have treated them humanely but they cannot be flooding our shores like this."

"We have to send the right message that they are not welcome here," he told The Associated Press, just days after about 1,000 refugees landed on the shores of Langkawi, a popular resort island in northern Malaysia near Thailand. Another 600 have arrived surreptitiously in Indonesia.

Southeast Asia, which for years tried to quietly ignore the plight of Myanmar's 1.3 million Rohingya, finds itself caught in a spiraling humanitarian crisis that in many ways it helped create. In the last three years, more than 120,000 members of the Muslim minority, who are intensely persecuted in Buddhist-majority Myanmar, have



AP PHOTO: Bangladeshi migrants have their lunch at a temporary shelter

boarded ships to flee to other countries, paying huge sums of money to human traffickers.

Meanwhile, Thai authorities also spotted a boat with migrants on the sea border between Thailand and Malaysia, Satun province governor Dejrat Simsiri told the AP by phone.

He said Thai boats, including navy and national parks vessels, are now checking out the migrants' boat "to make sure they do not come into Thai waters."

"We are monitoring from afar but it appears that the people are in frail condition ... there are hundreds of them," he said.

Dejrat said Thailand will provide food and fuel, and send them to a "third country" if that's what they want.

"It's unlikely that we will bring them to shore... we will need order from higher officials before we can proceed," he said. **AP**

NEPAL

PM: 'We were not prepared' for 2nd quake; US chopper still missing

Nirmala George, Charikot

NEPAL has been overwhelmed by its second massive earthquake in less than three weeks, its prime minister said yesterday as he visited this normally placid foothills town, now a center for frightened villagers desperate for government help.

Thousands of people now crowd the streets of Charikot, the administrative center of the isolated district hit hardest by Tuesday's magnitude-7.3 quake, which killed at least 96 people and injured more than 2,300. The magnitude-7.8 earthquake that hit April 25 killed more than 8,150 people, injured tens of thousands more and left hundreds of thousands homeless.

"After the first quake, we were not prepared for a second one so big," Prime Minister Sushil Koirala told reporters after arriving in Charikot by helicopter.

He said the coming mon-



AP PHOTO: A Nepalese woman brushes her teeth next to quake damaged houses in Bhaktapur

soon rains now loomed large, with hundreds of thousands of people left homeless.

"We need tents. Our people need shelter. With the rainy season, it will be difficult for people to survive in the open," he said.

Nearly everyone is too afraid to sleep indoors in Charikot, which is filling with people from surrounding areas seeking help. Aftershocks are keeping them on edge. Charikot is 140 kilometers north of Kathmandu, the Nepalese capital.

Meanwhile the search

continued yesterday for a U.S. Marine helicopter carrying six Marines and two Nepalese soldiers. It disappeared Tuesday while delivering aid in the country's northeast.

Pentagon spokesman Col. Steve Warren said the U.S. aerial search for the helicopter had found "nothing of note."

He said the U.S. has redirected some satellites to assist in the search. Officials in Kathmandu said the search was focused on the Sunkhani area, nearly 80 kilometers northeast of the capital.

Tuesday's quake was less powerful than the one in April and shook a smaller, less populated area. It was centered between Kathmandu and Mount Everest, and was southeast of last month's earthquake. It hit hardest in deeply rural parts of the Himalayan foothills, hammering many villages reached only by hiking trails and causing road-blocking landslides. **AP**

Oliver Teves, Manila

PHILIPPINES

Factory fire death toll climbs to 72; lapses investigated

POLICE will open a criminal investigation into a Philippine factory fire that killed at least 72 people, as a relative of several of the victims said yesterday the blaze had trapped workers in the building's second floor where iron grills on windows prevented their escape.

Most of the bodies were retrieved from the gutted two-story Kentex Manufacturing Corp. rubber slipper factory a day after the fire raged for over five hours in the outskirts of the capital, Manila.

As forensic officers worked to identify the dead and reconcile their names with those listed as missing, questions were being raised if the factory followed fire and building safety standards.

Dionesio Candido, whose daughter, granddaughter, sister-in-law and niece were among the missing, said iron grills reinforced with fencing wire covered windows on the second floor that "could prevent even cats from escaping."

He said he was allowed by authorities to enter the gutted building, where he saw charred remains "piled on top of each other."

Local media reports quoted relatives as saying their kin sent frantic text messages asking for help from second floor, but contact was lost shortly after.

Police will file charges against "all those accountable and those at fault," said police Deputy Director General Leonardo Espina.

Valenzuela city fire marshal Mel Jose Lagan said arson investigators will look



Activists hold slogans while they mourn for victims of a fire that gutted the Kentex rubber slipper factory during a rally in Manila

into why the people were unable to escape from the second floor when there was a "sufficient exit" that includes a wide stairway to the back of the building leading to the outside. They will also look into whether there were more

people inside the building than allowed.

Iron grill bars on windows are common in offices, factories and homes in the Philippines to keep away thieves. In workplaces or factories, they are also meant to prevent employees from

stealing equipment or products.

Valenzuela Mayor Rex Gatchalian said that a workers log book was lost in the fire and the foreman was among the dead, making it difficult to determine how many were inside the factory at the time.

The chief of the national police medical examiner's office, Emmanuel Aranas, said fingerprints could no longer be used to identify the burnt victims and forensic officers will have to rely on dental records, DNA and personal items to identify the bodies.

Gatchalian said the fire was apparently ignited by sparks from welding work at the factory's main entrance door, triggering an explosion of the chemicals used to make the slippers. Workers fled to the second floor where they were trapped, he said.

District Fire Marshal Wilberto Rico Neil Kwan Tiu said that the building had other exits but apparently the workers were overwhelmed by the thick black smoke from the burning rubber and chemicals, which are highly flammable and caused the blaze to spread quickly. **AP**

AD

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Geoff Mulvihill, Philadelphia

USA

THE Amtrak passenger train that crashed in Philadelphia, killing at least seven people, was hurtling at 170 kph before it ran off the rails along a sharp curve where the speed limit drops to just 80 kph, federal investigators said Wednesday (yesterday, Macau time).

It was the deadliest U.S. train accident in nearly seven years. It happened along Amtrak's busy Northeast Corridor, between Washington and Boston, where the national passenger railway carries 11.6 million passengers a year.

The train's engineer applied the emergency brakes moments before the crash but slowed the train to only 164 kph by the time the locomotive's black box stopped recording data, said Robert Sumwalt, of the National Transportation Safety Board. The speed limit just before the bend is 128 kph, he said.

The engineer, whose name was not released, refused to give a statement to law enforcement and left a police precinct with a lawyer, police said. Sumwalt



Emergency personnel walk near the scene of a deadly train wreck in Philadelphia

Investigators: Train in deadly wreck was speeding

said federal accident investigators want to talk to him but will give him a day or two to recover from the shock of the accident.

Mayor Michael Nutter said there was "no way in the world" the engineer should have been going that fast into the curve.

"Clearly he was reckless and irresponsible in his actions," Nutter told CNN. "I don't know what was going on with him, I don't know what was going on in the cab, but there's really no excuse that could be offered."

More than 200 people aboard the Washington-to-New York train were injured in the wreck, which happened in a decayed industrial neighborhood not far from the Delaware River just before 9:30 p.m. Tuesday. Passengers crawled out the windows of the torn and toppled

rail cars in the darkness and emerged dazed and bloody, many of them with broken bones and burns.

Amtrak suspended all service until further notice along the Philadelphia-to-New York stretch of the nation's busiest rail corridor as investigators examined the wreckage and the tracks and gathered evidence. The shutdown snarled the commute and forced thousands of people to find other ways to reach their destinations.

The dead included an Associated Press employee, a midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy, a Wells Fargo executive, a college administrator and the CEO of an educational startup. At least 10 people remained hospitalized in critical condition. **AP**

US House passes bill to end NSA bulk collection of phone records

Ken Dilanian
Intelligence Writer, Washington

THE House of Representatives voted by a wide margin Wednesday (early yesterday in Macau) to end the National Security Agency's bulk collection of Americans' phone records, setting the stage for a showdown with the Senate just weeks before the Bush-era provisions authorizing the program are due to expire.

The House bill would create a new system to search data held by telephone companies on a case-by-case basis. If it becomes law, it will represent one of the most significant changes stemming from the unauthorized disclosures of former NSA contractor Edward Snowden.

President Barack Obama supports the House legislation, known as the USA Freedom Act, which is in line with a proposal he made last March. The House passed a similar bill last year, but it failed in the Senate.

Many Senate Republicans don't like the measure, and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has introduced a separate version that would keep the program as is. Yet, he also faces oppo-



A sign stands outside the NSA campus in Fort Meade, Md.

sition from within his party and has said he is open to compromise.

Most House members would rather see the Bush-era provisions expire altogether than re-authorize NSA bulk collection, said Rep. Adam Schiff, ranking Democrat on the intelligence committee.

The issue, which exploded into public view two years ago, has implications for the 2016 presidential contest, with Republican candidates staking out different positions.

The revelation that the NSA had for years been secretly collecting all records of U.S. landline phone calls was among the most controversial disclosures by Snowden, a former NSA systems admi-

nistrator who in 2013 leaked thousands of secret documents to journalists.

The program collects the number called, along with the date, time and duration of call, but not the content or people's names. It stores the information in an NSA database that a small number of analysts query for matches against the phone numbers of known terrorists abroad, hunting for domestic connections to plots.

Officials acknowledge the program has never foiled a terrorist attack, and some within the NSA had proposed abandoning it even before it leaked — on the grounds that its financial and privacy costs outweighed its counterterrorism benefits. **AP**

BURUNDI

Rival army generals claim control as gunfire continues

Andrew Njuguna and Melanie Gouby,
Bujumbura

SPORADIC gunfire rang out in Burundi's capital yesterday, the day after an army general announced he had ousted President Pierre Nkurunziza, whose decision to seek a third term in office had provoked street protests.

Explosions could be heard in central Bujumbura. Gunshots were being heard in central Bujumbura.

Thousands took to the streets on Wednesday to celebrate after Maj. Gen. Godefroid Niyombare announced on a private radio station that Nkurunziza had been relieved of his duties.

Nkurunziza was in neighboring Tanzania for a summit on his country's troubles at the time. His whereabouts remained unclear yesterday, but the presidency said in a Twitter post yesterday that Nkurunziza urged the country to remain calm amid the attempted coup, and that the situation is under control.

The military is divided between Nkurunziza loyalists and those who back Niyombare, who had been fired in February as the country's intelligence chief. The army chief of staff, Maj. Gen. Prime Niyongabo, said on state radio late Wednesday that he is "against Maj. Gen. Niyombare."

A grenade attack Wednesday night seriously damaged the building of private broadcaster Renaissance TV, where Niyombare



A demonstrator holds the Burundi national flag and makes the victory sign in the capital Bujumbura

also made his coup statement, said the station's director, Innocent Muhozi. One of his offices was also burned overnight, he said.

Police withdrew from the streets of Bujumbura after Niyombare's coup statement, and people thronged Bujumbura's streets and applauded soldiers who rode by in tanks and trucks. But some officials remained loyal to Nkurunziza, whose office said a statement posted on the president's Twitter and Facebook accounts Wednesday evening that the coup attempt was unsuccessful.

At least 15 people were killed during protests since April 26 over Nkurunziza's bid for a third term. During the unrest, the military acted as a buffer between police and protesters who said Nkurunziza's bid for a third term violated the Constitution and Arusha peace accords that ended a civil war. **AP**

TV canal macau



FRIDAY

- 13:00 TDM News (Repeated)
- 13:30 News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
- 14:30 RTPi Live
- 18:10 Brazil Avenue (Repeated)
- 19:00 TDM Talkshow (Repeated)
- 19:30 Soap Opera
- 20:30 Main News, Financial & Weather Report
- 21:30 Revenge S2
- 22:10 Brazil Avenue
- 23:00 TDM News
- 23:30 Europa League Highlights
- 23:50 Portuguese Film
- 01:25 Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

SATURDAY

- 10:15 Boonie Bears
- 11:10 Documentary Serie
- 11:45 Documentary Serie
- 12:00 Cooking
- 13:00 TDM News (Repeated)
- 13:30 News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
- 14:30 Soap Opera
- 19:00 Contest
- 20:00 Miscellaneous
- 20:30 Main News, Financial & Weather Report
- 21:10 Drama
- 22:10 Comedy
- 23:00 TDM News
- 23:30 Shorts
- 00:20 Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

SUNDAY

- 11:00 Sunday Mass
- 12:00 Miscellaneous
- 12:30 Miscellaneous
- 13:00 TDM News (Repeated)
- 13:30 News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
- 14:30 Animation
- 16:00 Miscellaneous
- 16:55 Miscellaneous
- 17:45 Documentary Series
- 18:45 Miscellaneous
- 19:30 Comedy
- 20:30 Main News, Financial & Weather Report
- 21:00 Non-Daily Portuguese News
- 22:00 Ebola - The Search for A Cure
- 23:00 TDM News
- 23:30 News
- 23:45 Documentary Series
- 00:15 Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

offbeat

SWEDISH PEACE GROUP LAUNCHES GAY SONAR AGAINST RUSSIAN SUBS



Swedish peace activists who argue that military hardware isn't the best way to deter Russian submarines have launched their own underwater defense installation: a gay-themed sonar system.

In a publicity stunt dubbed "Operation The Singing Sailor," the Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society placed a sonar device in the Stockholm archipelago sending out a Morse code message saying "This way if you are gay."

The device also features a neon sign with a sailor waving a white flag and the words "Welcome to Sweden — Gay since 1944" — the year Sweden legalized homosexuality.

The group is urging the Swedish government to resist calls for re-armament after a weeklong hunt in October for a suspected Russian submarine, saying "love and peace across boundaries is more important than ever."

cinema



CINETEATRO

14 MAY - 18 MAY



WOMAN IN BLACK 2: ANGEL OF DEATH

ROOM 1

2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Tom Harper

Starring: Helen McCrory, Jeremy Irvine, Phoebe Fox

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 98min



MAD MAX: FURY ROAD

ROOM 2

(3D) 7.15 pm

(2D) 2.30, 4.45, 9.30 pm

Director: George Miller

Starring: Tom Hardy, Charlize Theron, Nicholas Hoult

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 120min



THE TENOR-LIRICO SPINTO

ROOM 3

2.30, 4.45, 7.15 pm

Director: Kim Sang-man

Starring: Ji-tae Yu, Yūsuke Iseya, Ye-ryeon Cha

Language: English (Chinese/English)

Duration: 121min

THE AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON

ROOM 3

9.30 pm

Director: Joss Whedon

Starring: Robert Downey Jr., Chris Hemsworth, Mark Ruffalo

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 141min

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



1954 QUEEN RETURNS AFTER LENGTHY VOYAGE

The Royal Family has returned safely from their six-month tour of the Commonwealth to a rapturous welcome in London.

Thousands flocked to the banks of the River Thames to see the Royal Yacht Britannia bringing the Queen home.

Ships' sirens and factory hooters welcomed the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and their two children, Prince Charles and Princess Anne. They spent most of the journey on the ship's saluting platform to wave at the crowd and take photographs.

They were joined by the Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill, who stayed on the yacht last night at the Queen's invitation, after boarding at Yarmouth, on the Isle of Wight.

A huge red-and-white banner was hung from Tower Bridge bearing the words, "Welcome Home".

The twin arms of the bridge opened to their fullest extent to let the yacht through, as well as its escort, and countless small boats full of well-wishers sailing in for a closer look.

Once the Britannia had moored, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret joined the royal party on board the yacht's barge for their onward journey to Westminster.

As they left, there was a thundering 41-gun salute from the Tower of London.

The banks of the Thames at Westminster were again packed with a cheering, whistling crowd as the Royal Family at last disembarked onto dry land.

It was the first close-up glimpse many had had of the Queen since concerns over her health at the end of her strenuous tour. She seemed well and cheerful, but had lost some weight.

The Royal Family continued to Buckingham Palace in three carriages, through streets lined with cheering, flag-waving people, some of whom had waited all night to see the Queen and her family pass by.

Even when the Queen arrived at Buckingham Palace, no sooner had the door closed behind her than the cry began to go up: "We want the Queen!"

Within ten minutes, the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, with their two children, appeared on the balcony to roars of approval from the crowd. It was the first of four appearances, the last at nearly 2300 BST (2200 GMT).

Even then, the crowd was persuaded to leave only when the lamps floodlighting the palace were switched off.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The young Queen's first Commonwealth tour was a gruelling journey lasting almost six months and covering 43,618 miles by air, sea and land.

She visited many countries which had never before seen their ruling monarch. She made her Christmas broadcast for 1953 live from New Zealand.

The tour was the first undertaken by the Royal Yacht Britannia, which the Queen had launched herself in 1953.

The yacht travelled for more than a million miles on Royal and official duties over 44 years before it was decommissioned in December 1997.

The Labour Party had made it part of their general election manifesto earlier that year not to replace the Britannia as a cost-cutting measure, and the Queen no longer has use of a royal yacht.

The Britannia is now berthed in Edinburgh, where it opened in October 1998 as a star tourist attraction. It is visited by about 275,000 people from the UK and overseas each year.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 The path to pick is increasingly less clear when all roads seem to lead to the red. You can't pull in your karmic chits, but you can get some inner assurance knowing they're in the bank. Relax.

Taurus April 20-May 20 Being part of a group has its advantages, but not financial ones today. It's time for you to go solo. Avoid investment strategies that are geared toward the masses, and choose more way out approaches.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 If you are filled with frustration, then communication how you feel should be put off until another day. But on the other hand, if you're dreaming about things changing for the better, then share your investor confidence.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Having your finger on the pulse, being in tune with others -- call it what you want, but you've got what it takes to dump the losers and invest in the winners today, as long as you trust your intuition.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 No matter how much research you do, something in your gut will tell you not to invest. It's a good day to keep your financial dealings to a minimum, even if the numbers are enticing.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Money moves at the pace it wants, so don't bother starting any new projects. Nothing can make you a profit, no matter how many details you analyze or how many ingredients you throw into the pot.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Don't get upset if things don't progress in real life the way they do in your imaginings. Keep your head down and remind yourself of the basics: you'll make a profit in the long run, not the short-term.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Stop being so deadly serious. The best way to turn a buck today is to do it playfully. Pretend you're a magician at a children's party, and pull some profits out of your hat with a wave of your wand.

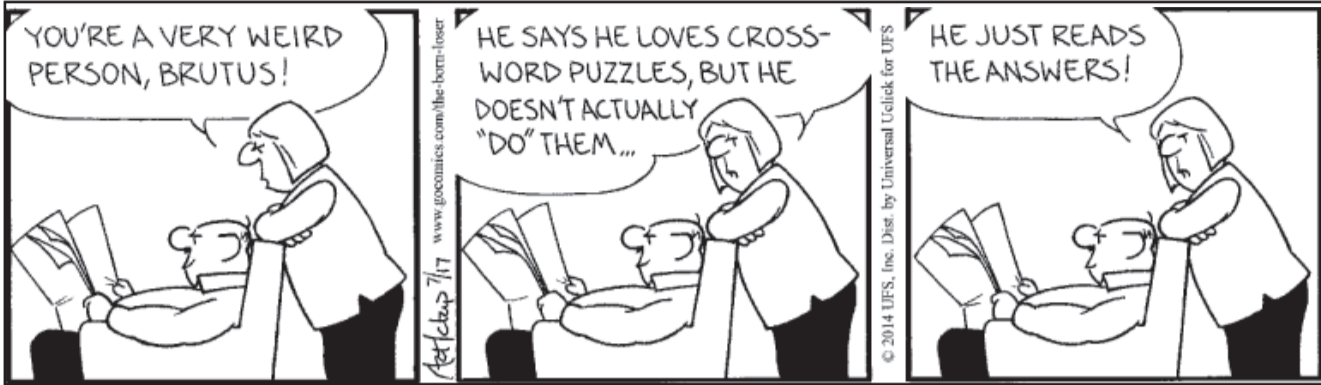
Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Strange how hard it is to get revved up to start the day lately. You're missing your surrogate cup of coffee: profit. But the only way to make even a small one is to get your feet on the ground, so get moving.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You may be tempted to get a little creative, but don't. Here's an important truth you won't learn in school: you can write the beginning and the middle, but you can't write the end. Stay on the up and up.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Don't overspend. That goes for you, and anyone else who has access to the cookie jar. Joint assets need to be especially guarded today, and that job falls on you.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 The financial pressure is on. You deserve a break but you might not get one. Whether it's eating a gourmet meal or getting a massage, be sure to treat yourself well, if only in your dreams.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle with numbers 1-9 in some cells.

Easy+

9x9 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle with numbers 1-9 in some cells.

Medium

9x9 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle with numbers 1-9 in some cells.

Hard

9x9 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle with numbers 1-9 in some cells.

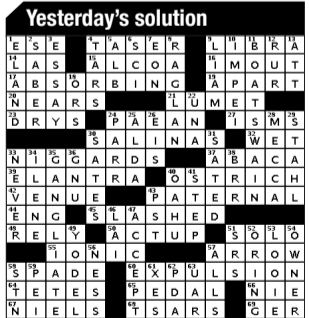
WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Blues singer James; 5- Buckeye State; 9- Alert; 14- Captain of the Pequod; 15- Drum sound; 16- Wand; 17- Basic monetary unit of Ghana; 18- Part of an archipelago; 19- Muzzle; 20- Earphone; 22- Loathing; 24- Book of the Bible; 26- Man-mouse connector; 27- Diacritic mark; 30- Convict; 35- Lott of Mississippi; 36- Predictive sign; 37- Peter Gunn's girlfriend; 38- Last: Abbr.; 39- Odious; 42- Compass pt.; 43- Country singer McEntire; 45- Russian pancake; 46- Abyss; 48- Unnecessary; 50- Rubs out; 51- Make public; 52- Now; 54- Give life to; 58- Gratuity; 62- Hawaiian island; 63- Blueprint detail; 65- Architect Saarinen; 66- Goes into business; 67- Wings; 68- Harper's Bazaar illustrator; 69- Try; 70- Charged particles; 71- Crash wherever convenient;

DOWN: 1- Per; 2- How you used to be?; 3- I did it!; 4- Ivory Coast's largest city; 5- Familiarize; 6- Plantain lily; 7- Off one's feed; 8- Corrida cheers; 9- Utterly senseless; 10- One who aspires; 11- Like ___ of bricks; 12- Womanizer; 13- ___'acte; 21- Compass point; 23- Horn-shaped bone; 25- Writer of religious songs; 27- Complete reversal; 28- 1957 hit for the Bobettes; 29- Do not disturb; 31- Long time; 32- Thoughts; 33- Dentist's directive; 34- Judges; 36- Painter's medium; 40- "I Hated, Hated, Hated This Movie" author; 41- Beat it!; 44- Unyielding; 47- Yekel; 49- Go between; 50- Draws forth; 53- Body of salt water; 54- Loads; 55- The ___ Valley is a Californian wineland; 56- Supermodel Sastre; 57- Actor Morales; 59- Illustrious warrior; 60- Fine things; 61- Misfortunes; 64- Arafat's org.



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FOOTBALL

Court suspends strike in Spanish league ahead of last rounds



Barcelona's Lionel Messi

A Spanish court yesterday suspended a strike called by the soccer players' union, allowing the final two rounds of the season to be played.

The National Court announced its decision in a statement, ruling in favor of the Spanish league's request to temporarily suspend the strike.

Judges Ricardo Bodas Matin, Emilia Ruiz-Jarabo and Ramon Gallos, who had examined the case, said holding the strike would prevent the conclusion of first and second division championships on their scheduled dates.

They ruled this would "cause serious organizational disorder," that would be difficult to resolve given the complexity of Spain's international sporting commitments as well as club and players' holidays.

The ruling also required the league deposit a bond of 5 million euros (USD5.7 million) by 3 p.m. local

time, something that was done.

The players' union said last week it would strike from Saturday as a protest against a proposed government law that aims to regulate the sale of television rights and the distribution of revenues.

The strike was backed by the Spanish soccer federation. Shortly after the court's ruling was announced, the federation said it too had called off its plans to suspend matches.

The government's proposed law would replace the current system, which allows clubs to negotiate the sale of their TV rights, with collective bargaining. The aim would be to enable a more even distribution of income between big clubs with great viewer appeal and less well-known clubs.

Barcelona leads Real Madrid by four points and could clinch the league title with a win at Atletico Madrid on Sunday. The leaders will also play Athletic Bilbao in the Copa del Rey final on May 30, a match that had been threatened by the strike.

The ruling gave the union five days to lodge an appeal and said the court's decision was provisional and "could be modified" when it further studied the union's reasons for wanting to strike. **AP**

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Juventus draws 1-1 with Madrid to meet Barcelona in Berlin final

Harold Heckle, Madrid

JUVENTUS came back from a goal down to draw 1-1 with Real Madrid yesterday and line up a Champions League final against Barcelona with a 3-2 victory on aggregate.

Former Madrid striker Alvaro Morata scored the priceless equalizer for Juventus against his old club in the 57th minute at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium.

Madrid was trailing 2-1 after last week's first leg in Turin and the defending champions looked to have turned the contest around in the 23rd minute when Cristiano Ronaldo scored a penalty to give his side a 1-0 lead.

But Morata's goal from close range meant there will be no all-Spanish final in Berlin on June 6, and Juventus gets a chance to life the trophy for a third time.

"This doesn't end here," Morata said. "We want to



Juventus' Alvaro Morata, left, scores a goal during the Champions League second leg semifinal soccer match between Real Madrid and Juventus

create history."

Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri paid tribute to his match-winner and the rest of the team.

"Alvaro has grown physically, mentally and tactically," he said. "I'm proud, this is an extraordinary squad. They've outdone themselves."

For Madrid, the pursuit of an 11th European Cup title ended at its own stadium after an impressive run of form.

"It's hard," Madrid defender Sergio Ramos said. "The team fought but we have to say goodbye. We thought we had done enough with the goal, but we let it slip and paid the price. Their goal hit our team's morale hard."

Madrid began attacking right from the start, with Gareth Bale heading over the crossbar of Gianluigi Buffon's goal from a Marcelo assist in the very first minute and Karim Benzema failing to find the target five minutes later. Benzema was picked for the sole striker position even though the France international only recently began full training with the rest of the squad following an injury.

Ronaldo fared no better minutes later with a dipping free kick that Buffon tipped over the bar.

Although Madrid was enjoying plenty of possession, its midfielders found it difficult to threaten a composed Juventus defense. **AP**

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opinion

Kapok
 Eric Sautédé



EMBRACE A FULL BAN!

When conflicts of interests are too blatant, public debate can only be farcical, and yet it is revealing of the challenges confronting the new government. The recent exchanges between some legislators and the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam are a remarkable case in point.

Ever since he took office in December 2014, Mr Tam has made no secret that his number one concern would be "public health" and shortly after a comprehensive survey on the "Regime for the prevention and control of smoking" was released at the end of January, he announced, supposedly "on his own" - or so are we led to believe by not so-friendly commentators - that the government would submit a revised piece of legislation within the first half of 2015 that would make way for a full ban on smoking inside casinos, thus implying that VIP rooms would be involved and smoking lounges on mass floors no longer allowed. Mr Tam reiterated that engagement in April during the policy address, and again this week, while reporting to the legislators.

On Mr Tam's side, there is an ever-growing corpus of medical studies showing that second-hand smoking is in fact as bad as direct inhaling, recommendations made by the World Health Organization (agreed to by China's Ministry of Health since 2007) noting that there is no existing technical solution that will equate to non-smoking, and quite a significant number of business-minded pieces of scholarship attesting that smoking bans have not had an adverse impact on revenues in business sectors of direct concern, and essentially the hospitality sector. Clearly, full smoking bans in public places are the trend, so much so that even permissive New Orleans has banned smoking in bars, casinos and other public areas starting on April 22nd.

Mr Tam has also on his side the spirit of the law that was passed in 2011—the first aim of the law being "to protect [the citizens] from exposure to tobacco smoke"—, the fact that the main causes of death in Macao are aggravated by the exposure to tobacco smoke, and the wish expressed by the frontline workers of the industry to see a full ban on smoking being implemented—87.20% of those directly exposed, the croupiers and casino floor staff. Moreover, in the broader context of China—something far more prevalent these days—the National People's Congress has committed the country to "full implementation of the smoking ban in public places" ever since it voted in the 12th Five-Year Plan in March 2011.

Adversely, Mr Tam is pitted by the gaming industry that has been relentless in trying to lobby every level of government—including Beijing in March during the double congress—in favor of airport-style smoking lounges, with separate ventilation systems and negative pressure in relation to adjacent areas, in accordance with the regulation published by the Chief Executive in March 2014. Several casino operators, including one with a seat in the legislature, have argued that voiding the previous (and rather recent) regulation would make limited (and costly) sense, and moreover that gambling revenues have been in shambles since June last year and thus a full smoking ban could translate into an additional loss estimated at 15%—no methodology given, but the figure is repeated over and over again.

The problem is that it took an extraordinary amount of time to pass the initial law (16 months, to be precise) back in 2011, and this in no small thanks to Mr Chan Chak Mo (a representative for culture!), one of the most vocal voices against Mr Tam today and the number one defender of the food and beverage industry—his group, Future Bright, is everywhere to be seen in all casinos and just lost 95.6% of its profits in the first quarter of 2015. The problem is then that casinos benefited from a three-year reprieve. The problem is that many casinos failed the health bureau tests and everybody was playing cat and mouse with the new regulations.

More compliance with the spirit of the law might have prevented a change in tune. Lobbying failed, now there is only room for embrace.

THE RICHEST EXAGGERATION: WEBSITE WRONGFULLY CLAIMS STANLEY HO'S DEATH

In a profile of Angela Leong described as a "Macau-based entrepreneur [who] has an estimated net worth of USD2.3 billion as of March 2013 according to Forbes," by the website therichest.com there are three instances claiming her husband, Stanley Ho, "38-years her senior," is dead. "Since its founding, Leong has been serving as the director of Sociedade de Jogos de Macau which is a casino company owned by Stanley Ho, her late husband," the site states.

"Angela Leong was married to Stanley Ho who was 38 years her senior. She has five children with Ho, though they were not officially married. The couple's children are Sabrina, Arnaldo, Mario, Yau-kai, and Alice."

Finally therichest.com claims that, "Since Ho's death, Angela Leong took control of SJM Holdings, the former's core gambling business."

Macau Daily Times contacted SJM sources who denied the claim. "Stanley Ho is alive and well," Ms Mimi Chan told MDT yesterday.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	10-30 Good
High Density Residential Area	10-30 Good
Ambient	20-40 Good

SOURCE: D5IMG

WORLD BRIEFS

JAPAN research Honda Motor Co. is recalling an additional 4.89 million vehicles around the world for a new type of problem in Takata air bag inflators, for which Japanese rivals Toyota and Nissan have already carried out recalls.



HUNGARY The Hungarian government has reiterated its "firm opposition" to a plan by the European Union to require countries to share the burden of immigrants who are arriving in Europe by crossing the Mediterranean Sea. Janos Lazar, who leads Prime Minister Viktor Orban's office, said yesterday it was "out of the question" for Hungary to take in such refugees and the country would try to block any EU quota system.

USA President Barack Obama and leaders from six Gulf nations were heading to Camp David yesterday to work through tensions sparked by the U.S. bid for a nuclear deal with Iran.



USA In the past three days, Christie's in New York City has sold over USD1 billion worth of art, a frenzied spectacle that showcases the world's rising class of uber-wealthy and its appetite for trophy art. Wednesday's evening sale featured Freud's "Benefits Supervisor Resting," which is considered one of the British artist's most celebrated works. It sold for \$56.2 million, including buyer's premium.

ART

Celebrated Chinese painters scour the city for exhibition inspiration



Zhang Yong, Jiang Jian Wen, Zhou Gang, Zhang Jian Chun

FOUR A-list watercolor painters from the mainland are currently in town seeking inspiration for a collaborative exhibition, featuring a total of 40 Macau-themed paintings that aim to depict the city's European-style legacy as well as its oriental urban-scape.

Zhou Gang, Deputy Dean of the Design School at the China Academy of Art told the Times that the unique cultural diversity of the city, expressed in local architecture, would be the source of inspiration. Most artists among the group who arrived yesterday afternoon have already visited the city several times, yet what Zhou described as a

Macau is an important place for passing on western watercolor painting to China

ZHOU GANG
 CHINA ACADEMY OF ART

"picturesque city" still made them excited about the event. Despite no further details

about the exhibition having been confirmed, the artists hoped to put their paintings on display back in the mainland, as it would encourage interaction between artists and students on both sides.

According to Zhou, it was Macau who opened the gates to the concept of western painting for China. "Macau is an important place for passing on western watercolor painting to China. In the past, it is via Macau, as the first stop, the western watercolor painting could make its way through China. Starting from Macau, it went to Hong Kong then mainland China," he said.

Their four-day stay in the city was merely the start of their artistic endeavors, which would need at least a year back home to complete. Yet the prominent Chinese painter told the Times that the days spent in the city were for understanding its atmosphere. The Taipa Houses-Museum, Sir Robert Ho Tung Library, the historic area behind the Ruins of Saint Paul and the casino-scape at Cotai were the destinations that intrigued the artists most. **Staff reporter**

Police raid Macau scammers' luxury condo in KL

POLICE busted a Macau scam syndicate with the arrest of 13 Chinese nationals in a raid on a luxury condominium unit at Jalan Yap Kwan Seng in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, the Malaysian government news agency Bernama reported.

According to Bernama, city police chief Tajudin Md Isa said the suspects, comprising six men and seven women aged between 20 and 48, were picked up during the Ops Pelican raid at 3.50pm.

Police also seized 11 laptops, four WiFi modems, cash of RM570 and Chinese currency valued at 2,555 from the suspects.

Tajudin said the police had been carrying out investigations into the syndicate over the past year following a report lodged by a man who was cheated by the syndicate of almost RM10,000.

"The victim reported that he received a phone call, claiming that he had made a charge of RM6,232.40 on his AmBank Visa

Gold credit card", Tajudin told a press conference yesterday, as quoted by the news agency.

"When he said he did not own such a card, the suspect asked him to call a Bank Negara officer to lodge a complaint at a telephone number given by the suspect", the KL police chief continued.

"When the victim called the number and spoke to the officer, who he believed to be at Bank Negara, he was instructed to change his ATM pin number and to transfer his money into two new accounts for safety reasons."

Tajudin said the man realized that he had been cheated when he went to the bank to ask for the RM9,998 he had just transferred and found that the money was missing. "Police believed there are more members of the syndicate still at large and we will track them down as soon as possible," he added.