



MOP7 MILLION SWINDLED IN PHONE SCAMS THIS YEAR

Police have reported 158 phone scam cases since the beginning of the year, with a sum of over MOP7,000,000 fleeced

P4



DE NIRO OPENS ASIA'S FIRST NOBU HOTEL IN COD MANILA

P8



FUNDING TO PROMOTE TAIWAN STUDIES EXPANDED TO MACAU

Macau, Belgium, South Korea, Israel, Vietnam and India were added to the "Taiwan Studies" project funding list yesterday

BACKPAGE



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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS

S KOREA U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry accuses North Korea of a litany of crimes and atrocities while reassuring South Korea of America's "ironclad" security commitments. More on p13

AFGHANISTAN A Taliban attack on a district government headquarters in Afghanistan's southern Uruzgan kills at least seven people — five policemen, a former district chief and a school principal.

INDIA A Mumbai nurse who was in a vegetative state for 42 years after being sexually assaulted while working in a hospital has died, authorities say. More on p12

JAPAN China's aircraft carrier ambitions demonstrate the continuing importance of the mammoth ships in the western Pacific, a senior U.S. Navy officer says as America's Japan-based carrier begins a long journey home.

JAPAN-USA A fatal crash of a U.S. Marine Corps Osprey in Hawaii renews safety concerns in Japan, where more of the hybrid aircraft are to be deployed.

AP PHOTO



USA Amtrak trains begin rolling between New York and Philadelphia, the first time in almost a week following a deadly crash in Philadelphia, and officials vow to have safer trains and tracks while investigators work to determine the cause of the derailment.

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BLOOMBERG



COTAI 2.0

USD27 billion bet on reversing law of supply and demand . P2

GAMING

Operators bet USD27 billion on reversing law of supply and demand

Stephanie Wong and Christopher Palmeri

TAKE a tour of south Macau and it's hard to tell that the world's biggest gambling hub is contracting. On a vast piece of reclaimed land, dusty with cement mixers and dump trucks, all six of the city's casino operators are building new resorts.

Galaxy Entertainment Group Ltd. will open the first of the new hotel-casinos May 27, including an area modeled after New York's Broadway theater district. Melco Crown Entertainment Ltd. plans to finish the next project later this year, complete with Asia's tallest Ferris wheel. Sands China Ltd. follows with a property featuring a half-size replica of the Eiffel Tower.

Welcome to Macau's alternate reality. Casinos are betting USD26.6 billion that if they add hotel rooms and casino tables, they might be able to stop the decline in revenue and start them rising again. It's the opposite of textbook economic principles: More supply will mean more demand. Everyone in the industry is watching to see if it will work.

"Galaxy's openings will be the first major test for the industry on whether new capacity will drive visitation and gaming revenue recovery," said Jamie Zhou, an analyst at Macquarie Securities Ltd. "The question now is what kind of customers they will bring and how much gaming revenue are they going to drive. That's what on everyone's mind."

The new resorts are aimed at positioning Macau beyond hard-core

gambling for Chinese high-rollers to a Las Vegas-style recreation hub for families and couples, with restaurants, entertainment and shopping in addition to casinos. It's part of the reinvention mandated by Macau's government for casino operators to focus on developing tourist attractions after China's anti-graft crackdown and slowing economy kept away high rollers. The operators are adding non-gaming features to their resorts in hopes of winning more gaming tables from the government.

Galaxy is betting on a Broadway theme at its revamped casino with

The operators are adding non-gaming features to their resorts in hopes of winning more gaming tables

Brazilian belly dancers and sold-out headline act from 64-year-old Cantonese pop singer Alan Tam. Across the street, the Hong Kong-based company hopes to lure shoppers by offering more luxury stores at the second phase of its main Galaxy Macau casino in the reclaimed Cotai area.

To the south of the new Galaxy resorts, Melco Crown's Studio City project boasts a Batman theme ride, the soaring Ferris wheel and a nightclub from

Ibiza, Spain-based Pacha at its Hollywood-inspired resort, which even roped in actors Brad Pitt and Leonardo DiCaprio for a promotional film directed by Martin Scorsese.

Across the street, billionaire Sheldon Adelson, whose eight-year-old Venetian resort features musicals including *Cats* and *Beauty and the Beast*, is building the Parisian Macao with the half-sized Eiffel Tower.

The "if you build it, they will come," philosophy has long been prevalent in the casino industry. Almost 19,000 hotel rooms will be added between now and 2018, increasing the total number to more than 47,000, according to data from Bloomberg Intelligence. Las Vegas currently has about 150,000 rooms.

There's no overcapacity though, Zhou of Macquarie said. Macau's hotels are at 84 percent occupancy rate on average in the past 10 quarters. Most casino operators give out 90 percent of rooms to high rollers for free, he said.

The last time Las Vegas saw a major increase in rooms was in 2008 and 2009 when 16,000 rooms were added, a 12 percent increase, according to statistics from the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority. Those new projects, including MGM Resorts International's CityCenter, Wynn Resorts Ltd.'s Encore and Las Vegas Sands Corp.'s Palazzo, opened in the midst of the financial crisis and subsequent recession.

Then, Wynn Resorts cut salaries, Sands was forced to raise money to avoid bankruptcy, and MGM had to sell a casino to refinance debt and shelved a planned Atlantic City development.

Average annual hotel occupancy dropped from 90 percent in 2007 to 80 percent two years later, while the typical daily room rate slid 30 percent to \$92.93. Those numbers have yet to return to their 2007 peaks.

Jim Murren, chief executive officer of MGM Resorts International which is building a \$2.9 billion resort in Cotai scheduled to open in late 2016, said the Macau operators have much stronger balance sheets than the Las Vegas companies did during the recession.



It is unlikely Macau will see the same kind of crash in room rates and profits that put Las Vegas casino operators on the brink of insolvency, he said.

"There is no chance of that happening in Macau," he said in a May 4 interview. "The room supply is not significant. We have 500 rooms at the MGM Macau. We're renting rooms every night at the Mandarin next store. Vegas had a large base and we all added in the teeth of the recession. We had a global meltdown."

Still, hotel occupancy rate in Macau has already dropped to 77.3 percent in the first quarter from 85 percent in the previous three months. Galaxy is introducing hotel promotions to mark the openings, while Sands China offers discounts of up to 50 percent.

With fewer high-stakes gamblers coming to Macau, room rates would be driven down and attract more lower-spending tourists - not necessarily the kind of patrons casinos would hope for, Anthony Wong, an analyst at UBS AG. Macau's success has been built on high-rollers who account for about 70 percent of the total market, he said.

Macau saw its first annual decline in casino revenue last year and may face a 21 percent drop this year. More than \$20 billion in market value of six casino operators has been wiped out so far this year.

Gambling accounts for more than 90 percent of casino operators' revenue in Macau and only 37 percent in Las Vegas, according to Zhou of Macquarie.

The industry's plan is to use more hotel rooms to draw more overnight tourists, who spend four times more than day-trippers, according to data from Bloomberg Intelligence. Visitors in Macau, two-thirds dominated by Chinese, currently stay on average 1.4 days, it said. In Las Vegas, they stay about three to four nights

on average, Wong at UBS said.

In the east of Cotai, cranes were erected around billionaire Steve Wynn's new resort fronted by maroon glass panels. Nearby, workers built bamboo scaffolding around the structure of SJM Holdings Ltd.'s Versailles-style Lisboa Palace as the Macau government pushes ahead with plans to turn itself into a world tourism center.

"Companies are spending all that big money on something that has yet to be proven to work in Macau," Zhou said. "It proved to work in Vegas, but it took them 15 years - it's going to take a long time for Macau to get there." **Bloomberg**

GALAXY II GETS 150 TABLES

THE GOVERNMENT has permitted the allocation of only 150 new gaming tables for the second phase of the construction of the Galaxy Entertainment casino-resort, which is due to open in Cotai on May 27, *Jornal Tribuna* reported yesterday.

The gaming operator had requested 400 tables, but the government "proved to be inflexible" with the cap on tables (3% annually). According to *Tribuna*, "Galaxy Entertainment will be forced to transfer gaming tables from other casinos within the group" to the new complex.

UBS reported that recently "there has been busy activity on the existing Galaxy Macau main floor in re-positioning tables, slots and ETGs which could be in preparation for the re-allocation of some tables to phase 2 from phase 1. We also expect a few junkets (less than 3-4) to have the appetite to open new VIP rooms in Galaxy phase 2." "We think the market [was expecting] around 150 new tables for Galaxy...an allocation below [that number] could be negative to [market] sentiment," UBS analysts wrote.



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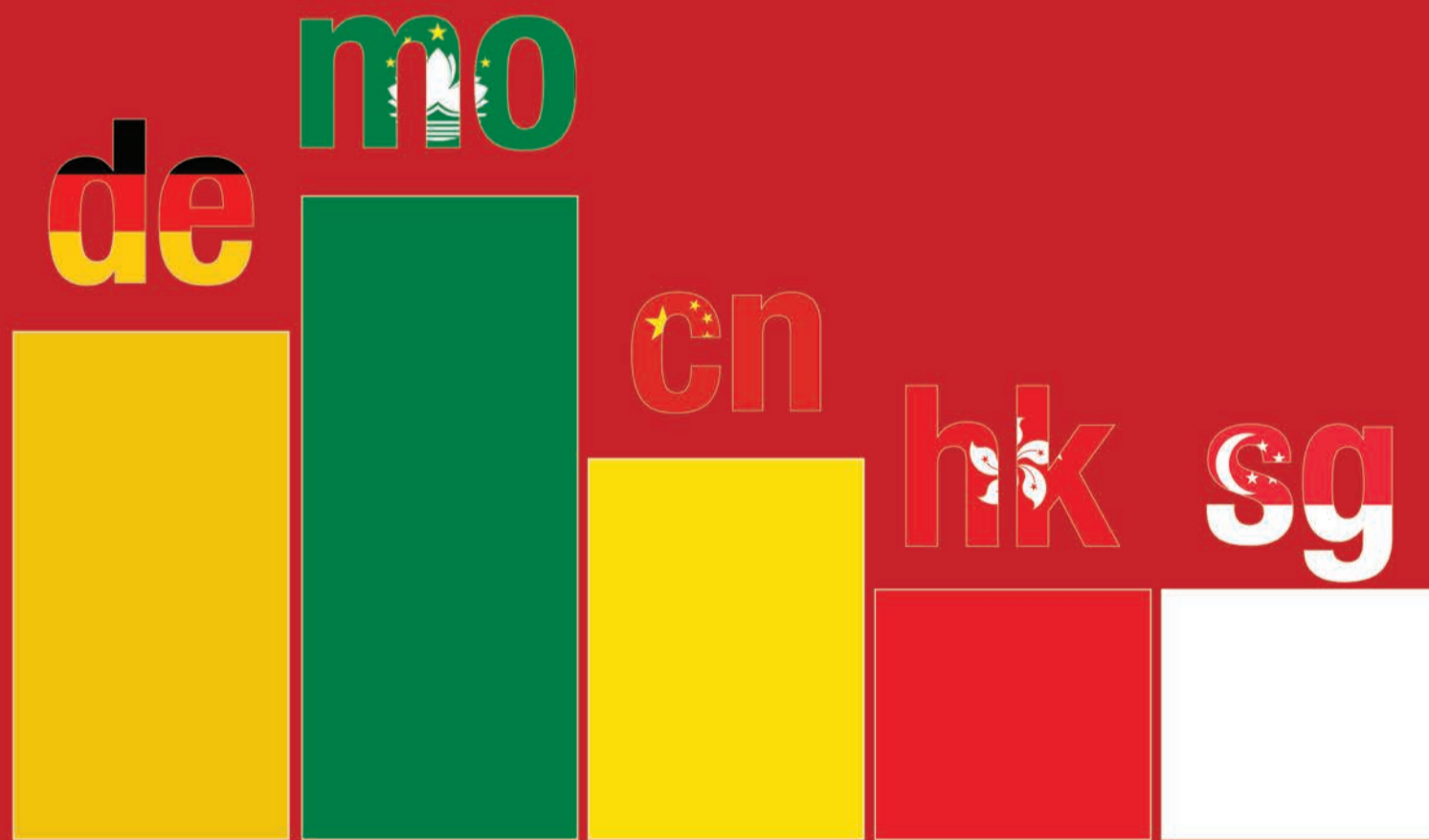
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COUNTRY RANKINGS

Visitors to the Macau Daily Times website originate from 175 countries, the top 15 being Macau, Germany, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia, Portugal, European Union, Japan, Italy, India, Brazil, France, Thailand and Taiwan.

THE Judiciary Police have reported a total of 158 phone scam cases since the beginning of the year, with a sum of over MOP7,000,000 swindled. This amount of money exceeds the entire amount of more than MOP6,000,000 taken in the 375 cases recorded last year.

However, the number of cases recorded in the first five months of this year was similar to that of the equivalent period last year. The authorities appealed to the public, encouraging them to remain vigilant when receiving telephone calls which demand personal information such as names, accounts and passwords.

According to the security force's data, the number of cases recorded in 2014 was more than double that of the preceding year, with a new type of fraud rearing its ugly head since April.

62 percent of the telephone-based fraud cases recorded in 2015 have so far been related to the impersonation of mainland officials. According to previous cases, scammers usually started the conversation by fraudulently identifying themselves as a security authority, or as a staff member working for a post office or a bank.

To further convince their victims, the crooks would forge

CRIME

MOP7m already swindled in phone scams this year, more than in whole of 2014



websites and arrest orders, or even create fake caller identification. Regardless of the ways in which they fabricated their story, the police said that their ultimate purpose was to ensure that victims handed over money

to be deposited into mainland bank accounts. The authorities, however, rejected the media's assumption that mainland Chinese had been involved in most cases.

Over the previous week, the

PJ authorities have been notified of seven cases of telephone deception. One of these included a "guess who" -type scenario while another two were examples of "mainland security impersonation." The final four

were akin to "official impersonation", but no losses were incurred.

Last Thursday night, an Indonesian-born local received a call purportedly by his friend back in his hometown, who asked him for RMB 90,000 for bail as he was under detention in mainland China with three of his friends.

The victim then remitted RMB 60,000 to a mainland account offered by the scammer. Three hours later, he failed to reach the caller by phone and after contacting his friends and family, realized that it was a scam.

In two other cases, university students from the mainland were scammed by two different callers posing as company staff. The callers accused the students of being involved in illegal activities and threatened that they would be denounced to authorities, unless a payment was made.

Both victims came to realize the scams only after having their money sent to an unknown bank account. **Staff reporter**

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Developing tourism as a way to sustain heritage



Francesco Bandarin

Catarina Pinto

AS government resources used to manage cultural heritage are set to decline in the near future, the former director of the UNESCO World Heritage Center, Francesco Bandarin, has suggested that tourism be used as a way to effectively sustain heritage.

Speaking at a panel session on "Creative Tourism: New Engine of Economy," held yesterday at the BOAO Asia Development Forum, which took place between Sunday and today, Mr Bandarin recalled that, "resources that have been made available for heritage are decreasing, and there's no way that in the future we can count on the same amount of resources that governments have made available in the past for heritage management."

Mr Bandarin, who teaches Urban Planning at the School of Architecture of Venice, Italy, added that, "there's a financial crisis ahead and tourism is the

only possibility – if we can manage it and effectively turn it into something positive – to sustain heritage in the future."

He believes that this is a pressing matter that should be addressed in order to improve the relationship between tourism and heritage.

According to Mr Bandarin, tourism is one of the fastest growing industries across the world, generating a huge turnover due to global mobility and the desire among people worldwide to explore new places. However, he stressed that the impact of tourism also poses challenges to different nations, particularly when it comes to the management of cultural heritage.

"Tourism is a fantastic human experience, but I also see it as a potential threat. There are two sides to it. One side is that it brings economic development and this region of the world in particular has seen enormous development," he recalled.

At the same time, he added that countries have to deal

with environmental, historical and social changes prompted by tourism. According to Mr Bandarin, "we have not yet invented good resources which could make heritage and tourism two compatible entities."

The professor said that many discussions and policies have been held to balance the demand for tourism and cultural heritage management. However, not all of these discussions have been successful, and therefore governments should look for solutions elsewhere. In his

opinion, the cultural industries sector could help rebalance the cost and benefits of tourism.

The director of the Macau Government Tourist Office (MGTO), Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, described a set of challenges Macau is currently facing as it strives to become a World Center for Tourism and Leisure.

Carrying capacity, for instance, is one of them. Macau receives millions of tourists, all of whom tend to visit the same areas, namely its historic and World Heritage sites. She also recalled that the image of Macau is still very much influenced by casinos.

"We are trying to present a more balanced view as a place where tourism products are diversified and we have different things to attract people to come and engage in different activities," she said.

Another challenge is the single source market, as Macau attracts mainly mainland Chinese visitors. "We are also trying to attract more international visitors to make Macau a real World Center for Tourism and Leisure," she recalled.

Ms Fernandes stressed that the city has been addressing these challenges by promoting new tourism routes that take visitors to other parts of town while also developing community tourism. Furthermore, she said that the department is now exploring evening entertainment in different areas of town so as to encourage visitors to stay longer.

The BOAO Asia Development Forum is jointly organized by the BOAO Forum for Asia, Macau Youth Federation and the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST).

TOURISM MASTER PLAN TO BE COMPLETED IN ONE AND A HALF YEARS

THE DIRECTOR of the Macau Government Tourist Office (MGTO), Helena de Senna Fernandes, revealed yesterday that Macau's tourism development master plan will be completed in about a year and a half. Speaking at the BOAO Asia Development Forum, she stated that, "the ten-

der just closed and we are now on the edge of awarding it. It will take around one and a half years to finish the entire master plan." The plan is intended to outline strategies which will allow Macau to become "accessible to the world," and to diversify its tourism products.

Melina Leong leaves Sands China



Melina Leong has resigned from Sands China Ltd, where she has worked for the past 10 years, in order to dedicate more time to her family. "Having worked for 30 years and with 10 years at Sands, I definitely had spent more time at the company and with my colleagues than I spent at home and with my family. In order to have the luxury of time to do the things I need to do or want to do, after much consideration, I have decided to leave the company," she said in an email released yesterday. Lately, Ms Leong was serving as COO of Cotai Water Jet, a Sands China subsidiary. This followed years of leading the public relations department at SCL, and more recently as senior vice-president for public relations and community affairs. "It is not an easy decision," Ms Leong said, adding that "I went through an unforgettable and dynamic 10 years with Sands and am proud to be part of a very professional team."

G2E Asia 2015 opens today in Cotai



G2E Asia will this week celebrate its 9th consecutive conference in Macau when it kicks off at the Venetian today. Running from May 19 to 21, G2E Asia is the biggest gaming trade event of the year and features three main components. The main hall exhibition provides a platform for gaming producers and suppliers to showcase their latest products to the world with casino executives and qualified buyers on hand from around the world. This year, more than 160 exhibitors are confirmed to represent everything from table games and slots manufacturers to industry consultants, media publications and any number of casino products. This year, G2E Asia joined forces with the Monaco International Clubbing Show for the first time, offering an unprecedented chance for buyers to experience "top audio-visual and nightclub equipment." The G2E Asia Conference enables visitors to hear from industry leaders and experts on a range of topics related to the gaming industry.

Neighborhood group poll reveals Estoril Hotel revamp unknown to many

RESPONDENTS to a poll conducted by a sub-group under the auspices of the General Union of Neighborhood Association (Kai Fong) have expressed a general acceptance of the government's plan to revamp the Estoril Hotel, which would undergo at least four years of renovations to be developed into a recreational and art hub for students.

Around 60 percent of those interviewed agreed on the preliminary blueprint while 70 percent supported the idea of turning the entire Tap Seac Square into a youth-based district for arts, culture and leisure.

However, the result showed that only half of those surveyed had been informed of such a plan, which the poll organizer insisted that the government further po-

pularize it in society.

The poll also disclosed that local citizens had mixed opinions on the specific architectural details proposed for the venue as well as on its future functions.

Around 73 percent of the respondents were in favor of building a parking lot at the venue to address the demand in that particular area.



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Brook Yang

BILLS to amend the External Trade Law and the Affordable Housing Law obtained their first approval by the Legislative Assembly (AL) yesterday, suggesting faster procedures for customs clearance of MICE merchandise and for affordable housing applications.

The plenary session held yesterday also passed the final reading of amendments to the current Commercial Code, which will abolish bearer shares. Moreover, the AL passed a revision on its Rules of Procedure and the amended public budget for 2015.

Introducing the draft bill amending the External Trade Law, the Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong Vai Tac, told lawmakers that the changes are aimed at facilitating the city's developing MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions) and logistics industries.

By introducing into Macau's legal regime the internationally-accepted ATA carnet – a customs and temporary import-export document known as a “passport for goods,” the amendment will allow merchandise to be exempted from duty and import tax if it will be re-exported within 6 months.

Regarding a new option that allows goods to “clear customs before declaration,” some lawmakers were concerned that looser regulations may imply a hidden risk. According to Leong, the temporary goods into the city are currently mainly exhibits, whereby a convenient customs clearance will be conducive to the sector.

The bill also suggests implementing a licensing system on cargo transshipments, in order to effectively oversee the transit of sensitive and regulated goods. Under the current External Trade Law, regulated cargo is permitted to transit through Macau as long as it is declared. “The licensing is to regulate goods that will be controlled in the future, such as psychotropic substances,” added the Macao Economic Services deputy di-



Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong Vai Tac, attends the plenary session of the Legislative Assembly

AL PLENARY

Faster procedures in customs and affordable housing approved

rector, Chan Tze Wai.

Also to be speeded up through legal amendment is the application procedure for affordable housing units. As the bill proposes moving up the drawing process of selecting applicants, rather than first conducting a thorough review of all applicants' qualifications, the Housing Bureau can save 15 months time processing some current 4,2000 applications to a batch of 1,900 apartments.

Lawmaker Au Kam San questioned that the revised procedure may leave a sizable amount of rejected applicants in the dark of not knowing whether they are qualified, given the previous figure that about thirty percent of applicants might be unqualified. Lawmaker Chui Sai Peng also added, “it is very

important for the applicants to know whether they are qualified [for affordable housing], it affects their decisions on many things such as whether to get married.”

In response, the bureau head Leong Kam Wa stressed that the current preliminary evaluation process has created a long queue that's at a standstill and has thus put the bureau's work in difficulty. The Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, further reaffirmed to the lawmakers that “the partial amendment is merely to solve a problem of administrative procedure, and will followed by a thorough review of the Affordable Housing Law.”

Rosário's secretariat was again under fire during the

AL's final reading of this year's amended budget. Drawing on the bill's foreseen budget balance cuts of 63.7 percent, from MOP51.86 billion to MOP18.85 billion, lawmakers urged the government to control its cost overruns in undergoing major public works.

The estimated budget revenue was also adjusted downwards by 22.4 percent from MOP154.66 billion to MOP 119.97 billion; whereas the estimated public expenditure slightly rose by 0.05 percent to MOP83.76 billion. The bill also raised the ceiling for tax exemption for companies by doubling the income standard to MOP600,000. Lionel Leong noted that the measure would benefit 90 percent of local small- and medium-sized

enterprises.

During the meeting, 32 lawmakers in attendance also unanimously voted in favor of an amendment to the Commercial Code to abolish bearer shares. Once the bill takes effect, bearer shareholders will have a period of one year to convert their shares into registered ones. Otherwise, their shareholder's rights will be terminated and they can only convert the shares through lawsuits, although their holding will not be abolished.

Moreover, the AL passed a revision on its Rules of Procedure. The new rules added that launching of a hearing process during debates must be premised on the AL's competences stipulated in the Basic Law such as clarifying the public interest.

Commission of Audit slams DSSOPT over Taipa Central Park construction

THE Commission of Audit (CA) has slammed the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) over the management of the Taipa Central Park construction works. In a report released yesterday, CA recalled that the construction project did not meet quality standards and deadli-

nes that had been initially set out.

CA said it found flaws in construction supervision and execution works, which led to delays and a “waste of resources,” even putting users' safety at risk.

The construction project was awarded to a contractor for around MOP441

million and should have been completed within 876 days. However, it dragged on for an additional 351 days, reaching a total of 1,227 days. Furthermore, the works cost MOP50 million more than initially planned.

“This situation unveiled DSSOPT's poor management of the project,” the

report read. CA stated that DSSOPT failed to better manage and supervise the scheme's execution.

DSSOPT yesterday issued a statement saying it agrees with the CA report and will adopt measures to prevent a similar handling of projects in the future. The bureau



pledged to improve supervision of construction works awarded to different contractors.

The Taipa Central Park comprises a public garden, a car park and swimming pools. CP

Robert De Niro opens Asia's 1st Nobu Hotel in Philippines



Hollywood actor Robert De Niro, second from right, joins his partners Japanese culinary Chef Nobu Matsuhisa, third from left, Hollywood film producer Meir Teper, left, and Melco Crown Entertainment casino executives James Packer, second from left, and Lawrence Ho, fourth from left, in a ribbon-cutting ceremony

Teresa Cerojano, Manila

ROBERT de Niro and his business partners formally opened Asia's first Nobu Hotel in Manila yesterday as the luxury brand gears up for global expansion.

The 321-room hotel within the bayside casino and entertainment City of Dreams complex opened to the beat of traditional drums and shower of gold and silver confetti.

De Niro and his Nobu Hospitality partners, renowned chef Nobu Matsuhisa and Hollywood producer Meir Teper, led the ribbon cutting with Australian billionaire James Packer and Macau ty-

coon Lawrence Ho, co-chairmen of the complex operator Melco Crown Entertainment.

The Oscar-winning actor says he is not only lending his name to the project but is personally involved in it.

"I've looked at what everything is, I am aware very much about the design, and so on and if there's anything I don't like I say it," de Niro said in an interview.

"To me you have to do more than lend your name, you gotta be there in order to just be more a part of it and really believe in it," he added.

Nobu Hospitality will open eight other Nobu city hotels in the next two years, said Trevor Horwell, chief execu-

tive officer.

The first Nobu Hotel opened in Las Vegas in 2013 in a venture that evolved from Nobu Restaurants.

De Niro said the hotel was part of a vision sold to him and his partners by Ho and Packer. He said it's going to draw people and eventually help the Philippines.

"(Ho and Packer) are both great visionaries so we felt very comfortable they looked very carefully at the market," Horwell added.

The hotels planned in the next two years are in North America, the Middle East and London. Nobu wants to grow more in Asia, but will do it selectively, he said. **AP**

GAMING

Okada finds partner for Manila casino

JAPANESE gaming tycoon Kazuo Okada's group may have finally found a local partner to start commercial operations of its USD2 billion casino-resort project along Manila Bay next year, The Philippine Star reported yesterday.

Officials of Tiger Resorts Leisure and Entertainment Inc., an affiliate of Japan's Universal Entertainment Corp., told The Star that they would announce their local partner "in the very near future" and are on track to open the project by 2016.

"Given that we have submitted a request for extension of our provisional license for the first quarter for 2017, we are actively targeting to open the property by 2016," the officials told the Manila-based newspaper.

Tiger Resorts executives said the first phase of the \$2-billion Manila Bay Resorts project would include a hotel, casino, night club as well "the iconic fountain and a variety of gastronomic restaurants to delight the Filipino palate."

Tiger Resorts is one of four licensees of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) to operate in Entertainment City, which is envisioned to become the country's gaming hotspot.

The Okada Group, however, is barred from starting commercial operations for the megacasin project without a local partner under the country's foreign ownership rule.

Century Properties Group Inc. of former ambassador Jose Antonio was supposed to be Okada's local partner for the project before their partnership went sour.

Century Properties was supposed to be in charge of developing a luxury residential and



Kazuo Okada, chairman of Universal Entertainment Corp.

commercial project on a five-hectare property at the 44-hectare Manila Bay Resorts project.

Yet according to The Star, the two parties announced last week that they have patched things up following a recent "top-level" meeting.

With their issues amicably settled, Century Properties decided to withdraw its case against the Okada group.

But whether or not the two firms will pursue a partnership for the \$2-billion Manila Bay Resorts project in Entertainment City remains in question as officials from both sides declined to comment.

Manila Bay Resorts is set to be the third of four integrated resort-casinos to open in Pagcor's Entertainment City.

Bloomerry Resorts Corp.'s Solaire Resort and Casino was the first to open in the gaming hub, followed by Macau-based casino giant Melco Crown Entertainment Ltd.'s City of Dreams Manila.

corporate bits

WORLD GAMING GROUP ACQUIRES INSIDE ASIAN GAMING



World Gaming Group (WGG) – the parent company of WGM Daily – and B2B gaming industry publication Inside Asian Gaming (IAG) have announced the signing of an agreement for WGG to acquire Must Read Publications, publisher of IAG.

The agreement means that, alongside gaming consumer magazine WGM, the two gaming industry publications will now come under the WGG banner.

Mr Kareem Jalal, Founder

and Editor of IAG, said "IAG has come a long way over the past 10 years, growing alongside the industry it has steadfastly covered. Now, as Asia's gaming industry stands on the verge of its next phase of transformational change – from Cotai and Manila Bay to Incheon and Russia's Primorye gambling zone – it's time to take things up a notch. With its energy, resources and commitment to the region, WGG offers the ideal support

to make that happen.

"It's a natural and complementary fit. Bringing our companies together creates several opportunities for taking not just IAG, but also WGG's various other brands even further."

WGG CEO Andrew W Scott said "Since we founded World Gaming Magazine – since rebranded WGM – back in 2009, we wanted to establish Macau's leading gaming consumer magazine. We've long admired the way Kareem has built IAG into Asia's leading gaming B2B magazine. It only seemed natural to bring the two together under the same parent company. This will benefit the industry and the players and demonstrates WGG's long term commitment to the Asian gaming industry."

VPROPERTY REBRANDS AS GOHOME.COM.MO



iProperty Group and Macau property portal vProperty.com yesterday announced the change of the brand's name to GoHome.com.mo.

This rebrand program signifies that the company is entering a new stage. With the

merge into Hong Kong property portal GoHome.com.hk, the company hopes to establish GoHome as the leading property portal across Hong Kong and Macau.

Over the past 10 years, Macau has been growing at a sig-

nificant speed.

Investment in the Cotai Strip has reached 150 billion, driving economic growth in the property sector. Likewise in Macau's neighborhood, Hengqin Island in Zhuhai is developing, leading to promising property market prospects. With the gradual integration of the two regions, there is a need for an integrated property portal for Macau and Zhuhai with comprehensive market information.

The rebranded GoHome.com.mo provides one-stop information with the latest market updates for Hong Kong, Macau and Zhuhai, serving as a platform to offer homebuyers and investors property searches, information and trends. It is also an online platform for property agents to promote their properties.

CHINESE bank card company UnionPay has reached an agreement with Portugal's Unicre enabling Chinese cardholders to use their cards in Portugal through the Portuguese automatic payment system, Unicre said in a statement.

Until the establishment of this agreement signed Friday between the two companies, Chinese tourists had to subscribe to other payment services such as Visa or MasterCard in order to pay for their purchases in Portugal.

The agreement, due to be put in place on 1 July, enables UnionPay cards to be used for purchases at over 45,000 points of sale in the country, using Redunicre automatic payment terminals, the largest network of its kind in Portugal.

The Chinese company estimates that at the end of 2015, its cards will be accepted at around 80 percent of Portuguese establishments such as hotels, restau-

China UnionPay establishes agreement with Portugal's Unicre



rants and shops.

UnionPay was founded in 2002, has about 4.6 billion cards issued, allows for inter-bank and inter-regional payments with cards issued by China's commercial banks and has agreements with similar companies in over 150 countries, so that its customers can use bank cards when traveling.

In 2008, Portuguese state bank Caixa Geral de Depósitos signed an agreement with the UnionPay, so that holders of Chinese cards could withdraw cash at any ATM in the Portuguese Multibanco system. MDT/Macauhub

Third edition of the International Cabo Verde Agribusiness Fair begins on 29 May

THE 3rd edition of the International Cabo Verde (Cape Verde) Agribusiness Fair begins on 29 May at the Cabo Verde International Fair facilities

with the participation of over 100 domestic and foreign companies, the Cape Verdean press reported.

The first two editions of the International Agribu-

siness Fair were attended by over 150 companies and the event is an initiative of the Business Development and Innovation Agency of the Ministry of

Rural Development and the Leeward and Windward Chambers of Trade, Industry, Agriculture and Services.

The purpose of the In-

ternational Agribusiness Fair, according to its organisers, is to promote, and stimulate small and medium enterprises while boosting the supply of goods and services, especially to the tourism sector, which has seen rapid growth in the last decade.

Alongside this fair, the

Windward and Leeward Chambers of Commerce will promote the 3rd Promotion Event for Business Growth (Acexx).

The 3rd Acexx chambers of commerce intend to facilitate trade relations between suppliers and customers, promoting face-to-face commercial meetings. MDT/Macauhub

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Dozens injured in protests over railway project

AP PHOTO



MORE than 30 police officers and 38 civilians were injured in southwestern China during a weekend protest by residents who feared that a planned railway would bypass their community, authorities said yesterday.

The protest was the latest in which Chinese citizens have taken to the streets in an attempt to influence government decision-making after feeling excluded from the process.

The county government of Linshui said in a statement that more than 100 protesters charged police and burned vehicles on Saturday, and

that 40 people were detained. It said 20 more were detained Sunday when crowds gathered again. It wasn't immediately clear if the 60 remained detained or were held briefly and released.

Local police and government officials did not answer calls or declined to talk to The Associated Press yesterday.

The demonstrators demanded that the proposed railway linking Chongqing and Dazhou go through their city, saying the nearly 1 million residents of Linshui urgently need their first rail link. They marched over the weekend after hearing

reports that it could take another route through the bigger city of Guang'an, which already has railway service.

According to the Financial Times, the demonstrators were particularly incensed by the decision to change the railway route to pass through Guang'an, the birthplace of former paramount leader Deng Xiaoping, considered the architect of modern free-market China.

Residents complained that Guang'an is already served by several rail lines despite having half the population of Linshui. They accused the government

of favoring Guang'an for purely sentimental political reasons, according to state media reports.

Mr Deng died in 1997 but there is a long tradition of Beijing building monuments and heaping largesse on remote locations favored by current and former senior Communist party leaders, the FT wrote.

Even global companies are not immune to the allure of investing in the hometowns of party grandees.

Volkswagen owns a large factory in Yangzhou, the hometown of former President Jiang Zemin, in a move that

senior Volkswagen executives have privately described as a "gift" to Mr Jiang, who still wields enormous influence behind the scenes despite retiring from his last post in 2004.

Photos and videos posted on social media showed demonstrators filling the streets and holding banners saying the rail link would help the local economy. Residents carried signs saying "We want development, prosperity and a railway", the FT reported.

■ Demonstrators were incensed by the decision to change the route to pass through Guang'an, birthplace of Deng Xiaoping

The provincial railway construction office said yesterday the route is yet to be finalized and that it would take into account the residents' wishes.

The state-run Global Times newspaper said in an editorial yesterday that local governments should use an open and fair process in selecting the route.

"Police force can be of some use but it cannot win people's hearts and minds," it said. "The solution should lie in how local governments make decisions."

The editorial warned against making unprincipled concessions under public pressure, and said a well thought-out decision would be the government's best defense. **VM/Agencies**

Beijing defends fishing ban, brushes off Vietnam's protest

CHINA yesterday rejected Vietnam's protest over Beijing's seasonal fishing ban in the South China Sea, underscoring their dispute over ownership of islands and marine resources in the area.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said the summer moratorium was an annual event and that China was merely fulfilling its international responsibilities and obligations to conserve fish stocks. "China's position on the South China Sea is consistent and clear," Hong told reporters.

Vietnam had issued a statement late Saturday criticizing the ban as a "worthless decision" and reasserting Vietnam's claim to the disputed Paracel Islands and their surrounding waters.

BLOOMBERG



Tensions spiked a year ago when China parked a giant oil rig near the islands. Anti-China demonstrations in Vietnam left at least four Chinese dead, while ships from the sides sparred in the waters surrounding the rig.

The rig's deployment was seen as part of a Chinese strategy to strengthen its footprint in the South China Sea, where China's extensive claims overlap with territory claimed by Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia and Brunei.

Despite its tough talk, the government in Hanoi has limited options, considering Beijing's massive military and huge financial resources. Vietnamese officials are believed to be split between a faction that favors a tough line against Beijing and stronger ties with the U.S. and one that favors a quiet compromise with China.

China has faced growing criticism over its island reclamation drive, with frictions over the issue clouding a visit to Beijing by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry over the weekend. **AP**

Alibaba sued for profiting from fakes

Joe McDonald
Business Writer, Beijing

THE owner of fashion brands Gucci and Yves Saint Laurent has accused Alibaba group in a lawsuit of profiting from sales of counterfeit goods despite the Chinese e-commerce giant's pledge to combat the trade in fakes.

The lawsuit by France's Kering SA and a group of its brands in a New York court is a setback for Alibaba's effort to assure companies and regulators it is doing enough to keep counterfeits off its online sales platforms.

The Alibaba defendants "knowingly encourage, assist, and profit from the sale of counterfeits," said the lawsuit, filed Friday in U.S. federal court in Manhattan.

Alibaba said it believes the complaint has "no basis" and said the company will fight it.

"We continue to work in partnership with numerous brands to help them protect their intellectual property, and we have a strong track record of doing so," said a company statement. "Unfortunately, Kering Group has chosen the path of wasteful litigation instead of the path of constructive cooperation."

Alibaba, the world's biggest e-commerce company by sales volume, has launched a series of initiatives to keep counterfeit goods off its platforms following complaints by trademark owners. The company says it has 2,000 employees dedicated to anti-counterfeiting and consumer protection work and spent 1 billion (USD160 million) on that in 2013-14.

China has long been seen as a leading source of counterfeit

AP PHOTO



Pedestrians walk past a shopping mall selling luxury brands in Beijing

goods ranging from unlicensed copies of designer clothing and Hollywood movies to fake cancer drugs.

The latest lawsuit accuses Alibaba not just of failing to stop sales but of permitting merchants on its platforms even if they openly say they sell unlicensed copies. The suit accuses Alibaba of mail fraud and racketeering, including processing payments for goods it knew were counterfeit.

The 144-page complaint says Alibaba's computer algorithms were "intentionally designed" to offer counterfeits when con-

sumers search for brand names. It says that when "knockoff," a term for a counterfeit, was used in a search, Alibaba's system added "handbag."

The plaintiffs ask the court to order Alibaba to disclose its revenue from sales of counterfeit watches, handbags, clothing and other goods so damages can be assessed.

Other plaintiffs include Kering brands Balenciaga, Bottega Veneta and Luxury Goods International.

"This lawsuit is part of Kering's ongoing global effort to maintain its customers' trust

in its genuine products and to continue to develop the creative works and talents in its brands," the company said in a statement.

The complaint is Kering's second in a year against Alibaba.

Kering sued the Chinese company in July, also in New York, but later withdrew the suit, saying the two sides agreed to "work together in good faith" to protect intellectual property ensure a "healthy and vibrant e-commerce ecosystem for consumers, merchants, and brand-owners alike."

Alibaba founded in 1999 by

Jack Ma, a former English teacher, is one of China's oldest Internet sites.

Its sales platforms include Taobao, an online bazaar used by consumers and small entrepreneurs; Tmall for brands to sell to consumers; AliExpress, a global retail marketplace, and Alibaba.com, a wholesale site.

The company raised \$25 billion in an initial public offering last year on Wall Street. It reported a profit of 2.9 billion yuan (\$463 million) for the three months ended March 31 on revenue of 17.4 billion yuan (\$2.8 billion). AP

BLOOMBERG



China's Premier Li Keqiang

Planes, trains and copper: Li goes to Latin America

CHINESE Prime Minister Li Keqiang visits Brazil, Colombia, Peru and Chile from today to May 26 with a coast-to-coast railway and trade talks on the agenda for his meetings with government and business leaders.

Li's visit with Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff will complete the BRIC cycle for Chinese leaders, after he and President Xi Jinping last week hosted Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi just days

following Xi's visit to Moscow.

From 2009 to 2014, China's demand for raw materials resulted in a trade deficit with Brazil, a leading supplier of iron ore and soybeans, and Chile and Peru, both major copper producers. Since the fourth quarter of last year, the balance swung to China's favor, according to figures from Brazil's government.

China may buy more airplanes from Brazil, home to Embraer SA.

China has already imported more than 100 aircraft from Brazil, according to Tong Daochi, assistant director-general of the Commerce Ministry. China will need another 900 aircraft with 70 to 130 seats in the next 20 years, Paulo Cesar Silva, head of Embraer's commercial jet business, said in an interview with Bloomberg Television in Singapore.

Another initiative, sometimes referred to as the "Two Oceans" railway, aims to make it

easier for cargo to move across South America - and also provide a faster link to China. Li will sign feasibility documents for the link from Peru's Pacific coast to Brazil's Atlantic coast, according to the official Xinhua News Agency. About a third of Brazil's railways were built at least 60 years ago, Xinhua said.

"This isn't a one-way plan from China's perspective, and it's not correct, as some have asserted, that the only reason for our interest to develop Latin American infrastructure is for our own imports," said Zhou Zhiwei, executive director of the Brazil Center at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. Bloomberg

MALAYSIA

Ordinary people help migrants as Asia struggles with crisis

Eileen Ng and Jocelyn Gecker,
Kuala Lumpur

FOR hundreds of migrants stranded at sea in sinking boats, the first helping hand came not from governments but from fishermen who towed them to safety. The desperation of migrants from Myanmar and Bangladesh has not compelled neighboring countries to take them in, but has inspired compassion — and pleas for help — from ordinary people across Southeast Asia.

Sympathetic Malaysians have launched donation drives to help feed migrants who have flooded ashore in the past two weeks. In Indonesia, where fishermen rescued three boats last week and saved 900 lives, villagers have donated clothing and home-cooked meals.

Aid groups estimate that thousands more migrants — who fled persecution in Myanmar and poverty in Bangladesh — are stranded in the Andaman Sea after a crackdown on human traffickers prompted captains and smugglers to abandon their boats.

But more than two weeks into the spiraling humanitarian crisis, the stance of Southeast Asian governments remains unchanged — none wants to take the migrants in, fearing that accepting a few would result in an unstoppable flow. A political cartoon in Thailand's *The Nation* newspaper yester-



Newly arrived migrants gather at Kuala Langsa Port in Langsa, Aceh province, Indonesia

day summed up the official reaction, showing a boatload of Muslim Rohingya refugees being kicked back to sea by people on the shores of Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Myanmar and Bangladesh.

“On the one hand, we’re seeing governments quibbling and struggling to find ways to deal with these boat people. But on the other hand, it’s encouraging to see that the people in this region have responded very generously to these

boat people,” said Vivian Tan, a Bangkok-based spokeswoman for the U.N. refugee agency, UNHCR.

“The public response has been overwhelming and governments really need to follow this example and let people disembark as soon as possible,” Tan said.

One prominent Islamic scholar in Malaysia noted that the government is still searching for a Malaysia Airlines plane believed to have crashed at sea

over a year ago, “while those who are still alive, we leave to die out at sea.”

“Where is our humanity?” Asri Zainal Abidin, a former state mufti in Malaysia, wrote on his Facebook page.

Navy ships from Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia intercepted boats last week packed with desperate, hungry migrants, giving them food and water and then sending them away — a move that drew strong international criticism. The U.N. warned that pushing away boats of starving people could create a crisis of “floating coffins.”

■ Sympathetic Malaysians have launched donation drives to help feed migrants who have flooded ashore in the past two weeks

It also sparked outrage in Malaysia, a predominantly Muslim country, where sympathetic citizens and Muslim groups have launched donation drives to collect food, clothing and medical aid for a boatload of more than 1,100

migrants who landed at a Malaysian island on May 10 and are being held at a detention camp.

Another prominent Malaysian, Marina Mahathir, a social activist and daughter of former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, issued an appeal last week for anyone with seaworthy boats to send aid to the migrants still at sea.

“Our chief concern is those still out at sea because this is a real humanitarian crisis,” she said. “We need to provide some sort of solution. I don’t think we can wash our hands of this.”

An online petition calling on the Malaysian government to put humanity before politics has more than 7,000 signatures. It says, “We the people want incoming migrants who have been abandoned at sea by traffickers to be rescued and cared for by our elected Malaysian government.”

Malaysia is the current chair of the 10-country Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and has called for a meeting of the foreign ministers of Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand tomorrow.

But Malaysian officials have said they will not take in more refugees. Malaysia is the desired destination for most of the migrants — it has already hosted more than 45,000 Rohingya over the years, according to the U.N. — but now says it can’t accept any more.

The Rohingya Muslims have faced decades of state-sanctioned discrimination in Myanmar, which is predominantly Buddhist. In the past three years, Rohingya were targeted by violent mobs of Buddhist extremists, leaving hundreds dead and sparking an exodus of more than 120,000 people, according to the U.N.’s refugee agency.

The U.N. has called the Rohingya one of the most persecuted groups in the world.

In Indonesia, the world’s most populous Muslim nation, officials have appealed to villagers on loudspeakers not to get too close to the migrants who were towed ashore in eastern Aceh province by fishermen, fearing they could spread disease.

But villagers have ignored the orders. Hundreds have thronged the two warehouses where the migrants have been housed since their Friday arrival, bringing rice, instant noodles, clothing and even some home-cooked meals.

“We have to help them, because they are our brothers,” said Hayaturrahman Djakfar, who came with a group that donated sarongs, towels, headscarves, children’s clothes and food. “And because they are struggling for a better life and protection. There is no reason not to help them.” **AP**



Ethnic Rohingya migrants sift through used clothing donated by local residents at a temporary shelter in Langsa, Aceh province

Matthew Lee
Diplomatic Writer, Seoul

SOUTH KOREA

Kerry slams Pyongyang, vows security for Seoul

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry yesterday accused North Korea of a litany of crimes and atrocities while reassuring South Korea of America's "iron-clad" security commitments.

Kerry blamed North Korea for continuing to break promises, make threats and "show flagrant disregard for international law" by continuing provocative nuclear and missile activity while oppressing its own people. He said North Korea's "horrific conduct" must be exposed and vowed to ratchet up pressure on Pyongyang to change its behavior, particularly since it has rebuffed repeated attempts to restart denuclearization negotiations.

"They have grown the threat of their program and have acted with a kind of reckless abandon," Kerry said, referring to North Korea and its leadership, less than a week after South Korea's spy agency said North Korean leader Kim Jong Un ordered his defense chief executed with an anti-aircraft gun for complaining about the young ruler, talking back to him and sleeping during a meeting Kim presided over.

That allegation, if true, adds to concerns about the erratic nature of Kim's rule, particularly after Pyongyang claimed last weekend it had successfully test-fired a newly developed ballistic missile from a submarine.

Kerry called the reported killing just the latest in a series of "grotesque, grisly, horrendous, public displays of executions on a whim and fancy." He said that if such behavior continued, calls would grow in the international community for North Korea to be referred to the International Criminal Court.

South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung-se said "the severity of recent threats and provocations" made it essential to bolster the security relationship.

The actions come despite a recent U.S. diplomatic over-



U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry waves after delivering a speech at Korea University in Seoul

■ Kerry accused N Korea of a litany of crimes and atrocities while reassuring S Korea of America's "ironclad" security commitments

ture to North Korea to discuss resuming denuclearization talks that have been stalled for the past three years. The U.S. quietly proposed a meeting with North Korea in January, before the U.S. and South Korea began annual military exercises that North Korea regards as a provocation. The two sides, however, failed to agree on who could meet and where.

Kerry noted North Korea's refusal to return to the table, saying "all they are doing now is isolating themselves further and creating greater risks to the region and to their own country." He said the U.S. remained open to talks but only if "we have some indication

from the leader of North Korea that they are serious about engaging on the subject of their nuclear program."

Kerry also expressed hope that the successful conclusion of a nuclear deal with Iran would send a positive message to North Korea to restart negotiations on its own atomic program. Kerry said he believed an Iran agreement could have "a positive influence" on North Korea, because it would show that giving up nuclear weapons improves domestic economies and ends isolation.

"Perhaps that can serve as an example to North Korea about a better way to move, a better way to try and behave," he said.

International negotiators are rushing to finalize a nuclear deal with Iran by the end of June under which Iran's program would be curbed to prevent it from developing atomic weapons in exchange for the lifting of international sanctions that have crippled its economy.

International nuclear talks with North Korea, which has already developed atomic weapons despite previous attempts to forestall it, broke down in early 2009. A 2012 food-for-nuclear-freeze deal between Pyongyang and Washington fell apart soon after being settled. The North has continued atomic tests and other belligerent behavior, including ballistic missile launches.

North Korea conducted its first nuclear test in 2006 and is now believed to have at least 10 such weapons despite some of the toughest international sanctions in existence. It conducted its third nuclear test in February 2013, and U.S.-based experts forecast that it could increase its nuclear arsenal to between 20 and 100 weapons by 2020.

In addition to talks on issues related to North Korea, Kerry in Seoul will be laying the groundwork for a visit to Washington in June of South Korean President Park Geun-hye. Kerry is to deliver a speech on cyber security and related issues. Kerry will use the opportunity to lay out U.S. efforts to combat the threats and to stress the importance of a free and open internet, according to U.S. officials.

South Korea has faced hacking attacks it has blamed on North Korea, and the United States accuses the North of being behind the massive attack on Sony Pictures last year that resulted in new U.S. sanctions.

Kerry told students yesterday at prestigious Korea University that authoritarian Pyongyang, with the lowest rate of access to the Web in the world, was the opposite of ultra-wired, democratic Seoul. Kerry linked poor Internet freedom to questionable human rights and a stifled economy without innovation or freely exchanged ideas. **AP**

INDIA

Nurse dies after 42 years in coma after rape

A Mumbai nurse who was in a vegetative state for 42 years after being sexually assaulted while working in a hospital has died, authorities said yesterday.

Aruna Shanbaug, 67, suffered severe brain damage when she was sodom-

ized and strangled with a metal chain by a hospital worker in 1973. The man, a ward attendant, left her to die in the hospital's basement, where she was found 11 hours later. She was 25 years old at the time.

Shanbaug was diagnosed

with pneumonia last week and was on a life support system for the past few days, said Pravin Bangar, medical superintendent at Mumbai's King Edward Memorial Hospital.

Shanbaug's case sparked a debate over India's euthanasia laws after a



Mumbai-based author and friend of the nurse petitioned the courts to

stop force-feeding her through a tube so her suffering would not be pro-

longed.

India's Supreme Court rejected the petition filed by Pinki Virani, who had sought euthanasia for Shanbaug, saying the court should "end her unbearable agony."

The petition was opposed by nurses at the hospital, who took turns caring for her for more than four decades after Shanbaug's family said they were unable to support her.

The attacker was released after serving a 7-year jail term. **AP**

USA

Extreme athlete Potter dies in Yosemite BASE jumping accident

Dean Potter, renowned for his daring and sometimes rogue climbs and BASE jumps, was one of two men killed after jumping from a 2,290-meter promontory called Taft Point in Yosemite National Park. Someone called for help late Saturday after losing contact with Potter, 43, and his climbing partner, Graham Hunt, 29. Park ranger Scott Gediman said a search-and-rescue team looked for the men overnight but couldn't find them. On Sunday morning, a helicopter crew spotted their bodies in Yosemite Valley. The men wore wingsuits — skin-tight suits with batwing sleeves and a flap between their legs — to help them glide. However, parachutes designed to slow their descent had not been deployed, Gediman said. BASE stands for buildings, antennas, spans (such as bridges), and Earth (such as cliffs and mountaintops) that jumpers can parachute from. The sport is illegal in all national parks, and it was possible the men jumped at dusk or at night to avoid being caught by park rangers.

NIGERIA

10 Boko Haram camps destroyed in forest

Nigeria's military says it has destroyed 10 Boko Haram camps, killed many militants and captured heavy weaponry in the northeastern Sambisa Forest. This comes after a surge in attacks by the Islamic extremists including suicide bombings, assaults on a business school and villages and a repelled night-time raid by hundreds of fighters on the biggest military base in northeast Nigeria. One soldier was killed by a land mine and two were wounded when troops overran 10 Boko Haram camps on Saturday, said the Defense Ministry spokesman, Maj. Gen. Chris Olukolade, in a statement Sunday night. Olukolade and other Nigerian officials had said Boko Haram's main fighting force was trapped in the vast Sambisa Forest following a 14-week multinational offensive that drove them out of dozens of towns and villages where they had declared an Islamic caliphate.

IRAQ

Islamic State killed hundreds as it took Ramadi

Sinan Salaheddin and Ahmed Sami, Baghdad

ISLAMIC State militants likely killed up to 500 people — both Iraqi civilians and soldiers — and forced 8,000 to flee from their homes as they captured the city of Ramadi, a provincial official said yesterday, while the government-backed Shiite militias vowed to mount a counter-offensive and reclaim the Anbar provincial capital.

The statements followed Sunday's shocking defeat of Iraq's security and military forces as the militants swiftly took control of Ramadi, sending government forces there fleeing in a major loss despite the support of U.S.-led airstrikes targeting the extremists.

Bodies, some burned, littered the city's streets as local officials reported the militants carried out mass killings of Iraqi security forces and civilians. Online video showed Humvees, trucks and other equipment speeding out of Ramadi, with soldiers desperate to reach safety gripping onto their sides.

"We do not have an accurate count yet," said an Anbar spokesman, Muhannad Haimour. "We estimate that 500 people have been killed, both civilians and military, and approximately 8,000 have fled the city." The figures could not be independently confirmed, but Islamic State militants have in the past killed hundreds of civilians and soldiers in the aftermath of their major victories.

The estimates given by Haimour are for the past three days, since Friday, when the battle for the city entered its final stages. The 8,000 figure is in addition to the enor-



In this Saturday, May 16, photo, Iraqis flee from their hometown of Ramadi, Iraq, rest near the Bzebib bridge, 65km west of Baghdad

mous exodus in April, Haimour said, when the U.N. said as many as 114,000 residents fled Ramadi and surrounding villages at the height of the violence.

Sunday's defeat recalled the collapse of Iraqi forces last summer in the face of a blitz by the extremist group across much of northern and western Iraq. Later, IS declared a caliphate in areas under its control in Iraq and neighboring Syria. Backed by airstrikes

from a U.S.-led coalition since August, Iraqi forces and allied militias have recaptured some of the areas seized by the Islamic State over the past year, but the latest defeat in Anbar calls into question the Obama administration's hopes of relying solely on air power to support Iraqi forces in the battle against IS as well as whether these forces have sufficiently recovered from last year's stunning defeats. **AP**

BURUNDI

President fires ministers, sends army to quell protests

ARMED soldiers were deployed yesterday for the first time in Burundi to quell street protests, putting the military into a precarious position amid persistent demonstrations against the president's bid for a third term.

A group of soldiers confronting hundreds of demonstrators almost opened fire on each other amid a dispute on whether to use lethal force against them, sharply illustrating the difficult position the military has been thrust into.

In an apparent effort to assert greater control over the military, President Pierre Nkurunziza fired his defense minister, Pontien Gacyubenge, who earlier this month had said the army would play a neutral role in the street protests and respect the Constitution. Nkurunziza also replaced International Affairs Minister Laurent Kavakure and Trade Minister Ma-



Soldiers from a special unit disperse a group of protesters by firing in the air in the Musaga neighborhood of Bujumbura

rie Nizigiyimana, Presidential spokesman Gervais Abayeho said.

The protests began three weeks ago after the ruling party named Nkurunziza as its candidate in June elections. The situation grew even more volatile last week when a general announced a coup, which collapsed within two days. Poli-

ce had tried to crush the protests at the cost of at least 15 lives, but since Nkurunziza returned to the presidential palace this weekend after loyalist troops overwhelmed the rebel faction, the army appears to have inherited the role of putting down the demonstrations.

In Bujumbura's Musaga neighborhood, armed soldiers faced off with hundreds of angry protesters who called for Nkurunziza to reverse his decision to seek another term in office, which many say is unconstitutional.

An Associated Press reporter in Musaga, where protesters put up barricades of burning tires, saw two soldiers fire into a crowd of protesters, who had repeatedly shouted, "Shoot us." No casualties were seen.

The soldiers who fired the shots were then ordered to leave the front line, sparking a rift between soldiers who

opposed shooting at protesters and those who supported such action. Amid the standoff, the group opposed to shooting at protesters cocked their guns and threatened to shoot their colleagues if they fired into the crowd.

"The military is shooting at us, you have seen for yourselves," said protester Alfred Nsengumukiza. "They came here pushing and shoving us and also doing the same to journalists, then they opened fire."

No police were seen in Musaga and Cibitoke, a sign that the army, which previously had acted as a buffer between angry protesters and the police, has now taken over operations against demonstrators. The soldiers are armed with machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades.

Seventeen security officials, including five generals, accused in the attempted coup were charged Saturday with attempting to destabilize public institutions, said lawyers of some of the suspects. Maj. Gen. Godefroid Niyombare, the former intelligence chief who announced the coup on Wednesday, remains at large. **AP**

USA 9 dead in Texas biker gang shooting

Nomaan Merchant, Waco

A shootout among rival motorcycle gangs at a popular Texas restaurant left nine bikers dead and 18 injured, and it sent panicked patrons and bystanders fleeing for safety, a police spokesman said Sunday (yesterday, Macau time).

The violence erupted shortly after noon at a busy shopping center about a 90-minute drive south of Dallas. Waco police Sgt. W. Patrick Swanton said eight people died at the scene of the shooting at Twin Peaks restaurant and another person died at a hospital.

The nine killed were all members of biker gangs, he said, as were the 18 people who were taken to hospitals with injuries that include stab and gunshot wounds. Some victims are being treated for both, he said.

"This is probably one of the most gruesome crime scenes I've ever seen in my 34 years of law enforcement," Swanton said, later adding, "I was amazed that we didn't have inno-



A McLennan County deputy stands guard near a group of bikers in the parking lot of a Twin Peaks restaurant in Waco, Texas

cent civilians killed or injured."

At least 100 people have been detained for questioning, Swanton said late Sunday night.

Swanton said at least five rival gangs gathered at Twin Peaks for a meeting that he said focused on turf and recruitment, two areas where the groups

have often clashed. Preliminary findings indicate a dispute broke out in a bathroom, escalated to include knives and firearms and eventually spilled into the restaurant parking lot, he said. There were 150 to 200 gang members inside the restaurant at the time. Shots were

fired inside and outside the restaurant, he said.

McLennan County Sheriff Parnell McNamara, whose office is involved in the investigation, said all nine who were killed were members of the Bandidos or Cossacks gangs.

Swanton described the interior of the restaurant after a Sunday night walk-through, saying it was littered with bullet casings, knives, a club, bodies and pools of blood. Authorities would be working the rest of the night to process the reams of evidence, he said.

Police were aware of the meeting in advance, Swanton said, and at least 12 Waco officers in addition to state troopers were outside the restaurant, part of a national chain that features scantily clad waitresses, when the fight began.

"We've been made aware in the past few months of rival biker gangs ... being here and causing issues," Swanton said.

Officers shot armed bikers, Swanton said, adding that the actions of law enforcement prevented further deaths. It was not

known if any of the nine dead were killed by police officers.

Swanton said that the restaurant's operators also were aware of the meeting in advance, and he described the management as uncooperative with authorities in addressing concerns.

"Apparently the management (of Twin Peaks) wanted them here and so we didn't have any say-so on whether they could be here or not," Swanton said.

A statement sent Sunday night on behalf of Jay Patel, operating partner for the Waco franchise, said, "Our management team has had ongoing and positive communications with the police," and added that the restaurant was cooperating with the investigation.

Swanton addressed Patel's statement late Sunday night, calling it a "fabrication."

Rick Van Warner, a spokesman for the Dallas-based corporate franchisor, said the company is reviewing the circumstances surrounding the shooting and is "seriously considering revoking" the Waco location's franchise agreement. AP

AD

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what's ON


WISDOM FROM THE MINIATURES
 – EXHIBITION OF SUN JIANGTAO'S STAMP
 COLLECTION OF THE LIBERATED ZONE

TIME: 9am-9pm

UNTIL: June 7, 2015

VENUE: Temporary Exhibitions Gallery of IACM,
Av. Almeida Ribeiro, 163

ADMISSION: free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4100

ART OF INK

– MIO PANG FEI CALLIGRAPHY EXHIBITION

TIME: 10am-7pm

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

UNTIL: July 5, 2015

VENUE: Macau Museum of Art,

Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE

ADMISSION: MOP5

(Free on Sundays and public holidays)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

AFA 8TH ANNIVERSARY EXHIBITION

– NEW WORKS BY MEMBERS

TIME: 12pm-7pm

(Closed on Sundays and public holidays)

UNTIL: May 30, 2015

VENUE: Estrada da Areia Preta No. 52, Edifício da

Fabrica de Baterias N.E. National, 3rd Floor, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6064

ABSTRACT PAINTINGS

FROM THE MAM COLLECTION

TIME: 10am-7pm

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

UNTIL: May 24, 2015

VENUE: Macau Museum of Art,

Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE

ADMISSION: MOP5

(Free on Sundays and public holidays)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

COLLECTING ART, LIVING TEACHING:

MACAU SOCIETY FOR EDUCATION IN ART

2015 EXHIBITION OF MEMBERS' WORKS

TIME: 10:30am-6:30pm (Closed on Mondays)

UNTIL: May 24, 2015

VENUE: 10 Fantasia -A Creative Industries Incubator,

10, Calçada da Igreja de S.Lázaro, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 4582

CUBA TOUCH

– INSIGHT INTO THE DAILY LIVES IN CUBA

TIME: 10am-6:30pm

UNTIL: July 20, 2015

VENUE: Dare to Dream Gallery, Calçada Da Barra

No. 16 R/C LJ A, Edif. San Chak, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2896 2820

ORGANIZER: Dare to Dream

Offbeat

**EUROPEAN OFFICIALS SING "WE ARE
THE WORLD" AT NATO MEETING**

In a distinctly different note for a military alliance meeting, European officials ended a NATO meeting with a spirited rendition of "We Are The World."

Taking a break from issues such as the war in Ukraine and instability in the Middle East, NATO and other officials accepted an invitation by a Turkish band to sing a "last song for peace" at a dinner last week hosted by Turkey as the alliance's foreign ministers met near the Mediterranean city of Antalya.

The foreign ministers of Greece and Turkey Mevlut Cavusoglu and Nikos Kotzias were seen singing and swaying arm-in-arm to the tune of the 1985 charity song. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg, EU Foreign Policy chief Federica Mogherini and others also joined in the sing-along.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
17:35	Brazil Avenue (Repeated)
18:30	TDM Sports
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Interview
21:45	Happy Endings S2
22:10	Brazil Avenue
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

cinema

CINETEATRO

14 MAY - 20 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



Frank Dobson

**1997 LABOUR TO STUB OUT
TOBACCO SPONSORSHIP**

The sponsorship of sports events by tobacco firms is to be outlawed, according to Labour's Health Secretary, Frank Dobson.

The announcement, made in a speech to the Royal College of Nursing's annual conference in Harrogate, could spell the end of the British Formula One Grand Prix.

Other sports like rugby, snooker, darts, cricket and ice hockey could also lose around £10 million in sports sponsorship in Britain.

Mr Dobson told the conference: "We will ban tobacco advertising. It will cover all forms, including sponsorship."

But he acknowledged the move would come as a severe blow to sports organisers of major events like the Silk Cut Challenge Cup snooker final and the Embassy World Professional Darts Championship.

"We recognise that some sports, like some smokers, are heavily dependent on tobacco sponsorship. We will therefore give them time and help to reduce their dependency on the weed," he said.

In an uncompromising speech he said: "The tobacco industry kills around 120,000 of its customers every year. So it has to recruit 120,000 new smokers to its ranks each year to make up for the casualties."

He said the final details would have to be ironed out before a draft White Paper was published in the coming months.

Health professionals are delighted by the move, promised during the recent election campaign that saw Labour to a resounding victory.

In a statement, the Imperial Cancer Research Fund said: "We welcome any moves to ban tobacco advertising and sponsorship."

A spokesperson for the British Medical Association added: "It's unacceptable for tobacco, the major cause of preventable ill health, to be linked with sport."

And a representative from anti-smoking group ASH said: "We're delighted and excited. We hope to be able to help the Government to work out a draft Bill."

The tobacco industry is now seeking urgent talks with the government to discuss the issue.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

In November 1997, the government decided Formula One racing would be exempt from the sponsorship ban. But weeks later, the press revealed that the prime minister, Tony Blair, had met representatives of Formula One before the decision was announced.

It also emerged that Formula One boss Bernie Ecclestone had donated £1 million to the Labour Party before the general election. Although Labour and Mr Ecclestone strongly denied any connection between the donation and the exemption, Labour gave him back his £1 million.

In December 1997, the European Union passed a law banning tobacco advertising and sponsorship - bar Formula one - across Europe.

It was overturned by the European Court of Justice after appeals from the tobacco industry.

In The UK tobacco advertising in shops and newsagents was outlawed in December 1999 and tobacco sponsorship of sports ended in 2003.

In July 2005 the European Union imposed a ban on tobacco advertising and sponsorship of sporting events, apart from events that are purely local.

After the British Grand Prix advertising ban came into effect, some tobacco producers switched to using logos or colour schemes similar to their usual adverts to promote their products at races.

This was a severe financial blow to snooker which had to look for new backing. The 2006 snooker World Championship was the first in 30 years not to be sponsored by Embassy cigarettes.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
You need a little bump. Energy is energy, no matter what form it takes. Let your ambition move you forward when it seems like nothing can make you any money.

Taurus
April 20-May 20
Everyone is shopping around these days, and on one is in a hurry to make purchases. That suits your Taurus nature just fine, but not your wallet. Do what it takes to generate enthusiasm for what you have to offer.

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21
Don't make things hard on yourself. Doing things the easy way means taking some advice. Your hopes and wishes will have to be put on hold, at least until this financial storm passes.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Don't react emotionally. That's harder than it sounds, especially if you're used to jumping with excitement at each change in the ticker tape. But with the financial forecast what it is, don't let yourself get easily aroused.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You learn something new every day. Some thought good times were here to stay, but even they have changed their opinion. Use this understanding to remind yourself that you're part of a larger cycle.

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22
Someone is feeling the pinch, and that's making them combative. But don't give in to anyone who pressures you to share your resources. If banks can reign in the lending, then so can you.

Libra
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
Don't let finances make you think everything has been turned on its head. The basics are still the same today as they were this time last year. Life is totally about relationships; always has been, and always will be.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
Your bottom line is less than attractive, but it could get downright ugly if you don't start taking some steps. Be methodical about it and pull yourself from the pink, before you wind up in the red.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
You are far from defeated, for one simple reason. Money really isn't everything. Don't let tight times suck the fun out of life. You can still get a lot done, and have fun with it, too.

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You have the basics, so don't let yourself get sucked into the general worry around you. Remember what really matters. Stability and security are still yours, even if riches are not.

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Financial freedom would be great, but it's not going to happen anytime soon. If daydreaming about it is part of your general pattern of avoidance, then shake your head and get back to work.

Pisces
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
Getting to financial stability is starting to feel like walking through a maze. You don't have the answers, but neither does anybody else. At least you're in the same fog as everyone else is.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	16	28	clear
Harbin	8	14	shower
Tianjin	17	26	cloudy
Urumqi	13	23	cloudy/clear
Xi'an	19	32	clear/cloudy
Lhasa	7	21	cloudy/overcast
Chengdu	21	32	cloudy
Chongqing	21	34	cloudy/clear
Kunming	16	28	cloudy
Nanjing	20	30	cloudy
Shanghai	19	28	overcast/cloudy
Wuhan	20	30	clear/cloudy
Hangzhou	20	28	overcast/cloudy
Taipei	23	34	cloudy/overcast
Guangzhou	24	30	thundershower
Hong Kong	26	30	shower
WORLD			
Moscow	7	13	drizzle
Frankfurt	10	23	cloudy/drizzle
Paris	8	21	drizzle
London	3	14	drizzle
New York	17	24	drizzle

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Up and ___; 5- Amble; 10- Not bright; 14- Wine valley; 15- Old-womanish; 16- Sigher's word; 17- Rocker Clapton; 18- Prongs; 19- Speed contest; 20- Reproduction by fission; 23- Image; 24- Granada gold; 25- Got out of bed; 28- Affirmative reply; 31- Sacked out; 35- Hawaiian dress; 37- Lair; 39- News letters; 40- Naive; 44- Make a lap; 45- Sum charged; 46- Make straight; 47- Exalt; 50- Literary monogram; 52- ___ my case; 53- CIA forerunner; 55- Singer Amos; 57- Amount a tablespoon can hold; 63- The Elder or The Younger; 64- Sao ___; 65- Most draftable; 67- Hurler Hershisser; 68- Chip maker; 69- Numbered rds.; 70- Floored it; 71- State Farm rival; 72- Speck;

DOWN: 1- "Wheel of Fortune" buy; 2- Sailors; 3- Large-scale; 4- Exaggerated sense of manliness; 5- Unleavened bread; 6- Like some bagels; 7- Squeal; 8- Robt. ___; 9- Type of question; 10- Rector; 11- Jai ___; 12- Resinous substances; 13- Compass pt.; 21- Freeze over; 22- "___ tu" (Verdi aria); 25- Get a smile out of; 26- Argument; 27- Boots; 29- Ford flop; 30- Become firm; 32- Montana city; 33- Tools for duels; 34- Failed to; 36- TV dial letters; 38- It may be picked; 41- Comparative suffix; 42- Monument; 43- Ear-shaped; 48- Spirit that haunts houses; 49- Fashion monogram; 51- Hot; 54- Photographic tone; 56- Alley Oop's girlfriend; 57- Field cover; 58- To ___ (exactly); 59- Having a sound mind; 60- Golf stroke; 61- Do ___ others...; 62- Internet writing system that popularized "pwn3d" and "n00b"; 63- Trigonometry ratio; 66- Enzyme ending



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- Fire department 28 572 222
- PJ (Open line) 993
- PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
- PSP 28 573 333
- Customs 28 559 944
- S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
- Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
- Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
- IACM 28 387 333
- Tourism 28 333 000
- Airport 59 888 88
- Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
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- Electricity - Report 28 339 922
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opinion

Extra Time

James Ellingworth, Sports Writer

VILLAS-BOAS TASTES SUCCESS IN RUSSIA

After rough spells in London, Andre Villas-Boas is tasting success in Russia.

The man known as AVB arrived at Chelsea in 2011 amid a blizzard of headlines hailing him as the heir to Jose Mourinho - a young Portuguese coach who, like Mourinho, had won a pile of trophies with FC Porto.

The honeymoon didn't last. At Chelsea, his long-term project to revive the club's fortunes lasted less than nine months. Then at Tottenham, he managed for a year-and-a-half before a 5-0 thrashing by Liverpool ended his tenure.

When Villas-Boas resurfaced with Zenit St. Petersburg, still only 36, another failure could have seen the former golden boy slip into obscurity.

Instead, he has thrived away from the limelight, leading Zenit to its first Russian title since 2012 on Sunday. His top scorer is Brazilian forward Hulk, once Villas-Boas' star striker at Porto and now reunited with his old boss.

In swapping the English Premier League for Russia, Villas-Boas left behind the comforts of the world's richest competition for the grittier reality of a league which pits big clubs like Zenit and CSKA Moscow against provincial clubs with small crowds, muddy fields and dilapidated Soviet-era stadiums.

Some clubs have no stadium at all - Zenit's opponent Sunday, FC Ufa, was only founded in 2010 and has played "home" games in cities across Russia this season because its own stadium is unfit for use.

Villas-Boas had a difficult start to life in Russia. Arriving in March 2014, he took over in the middle of a close title race and, despite winning seven of his first nine games in charge, lost out to CSKA by a single point.

Worse, Zenit's old hooligan problem resurfaced. With their team losing 4-1 to Dynamo Moscow in the penultimate game of the season, fans stormed the pitch. The sight of one bare-chested supporter punching Dynamo player Vladimir Granat was a dramatic contrast to the image of a modern European club that Zenit management had carefully cultivated.

This season Zenit has been untouchable. Villas-Boas' first full campaign in charge started with eight straight wins, with 26 goals scored and only four conceded. None of Zenit's title rivals came close to matching the performance of a team which has not lost a league game since November. The only black mark was a Champions League campaign which saw Zenit eliminated in the group stage.

Villas-Boas has developed into something of a peacemaker in Russia.

Under Zenit predecessor Luciano Spalletti, a dressing room full of expensive signings and big personalities regularly degenerated into civil war. At one stage, Hulk publicly demanded a transfer, and two senior players, both regulars for the Russian national team, were forced out of the club following disputes with Spalletti and club management.

That has been consigned to the past under Villas-Boas, who has managed to forge the disparate individuals into a team, ending the constant reports of dressing-room splits.

He's become a campaigner, too, speaking out against the racism still endemic in Russian soccer. When Hulk was targeted with monkey chants by Torpedo Moscow fans in March, Villas-Boas ensured the incident could not be swept under the rug.

"The game was a disgrace," he said on live TV. "The insults, the racist insults to Hulk, they go around the world and this is the image of the Russian Premier League."

Apart from the Portuguese coach's diplomatic skills, something else has helped, too - money. Zenit is bankrolled by Gazprom, the Russian state gas company, and it continued to pump funds into the club even as Russia's economy slid into recession.

Russia's economic crisis has hit football hard as many of the state-owned companies, oligarchs and regional governments that fund clubs cut back on spending. That has meant an exodus of players as Zenit's title rivals try to balance the books.

Soon after CSKA striker Seydou Doumbia made headlines across Europe with his three Champions League goals against Manchester City, he was sold to Roma to raise funds. Lokomotiv Moscow, which finished third last season, also saw key players leave.

Zenit's next challenge is to keep its team together. Midfielder Axel Witsel is already attracting interest from across Europe, and it's a safe bet that AVB will, too. AP

FOOTBALL | EUROPEAN LEAGUES ROUNDUP

Barcelona wins La Liga, Benfica clinches 34th national title



Benfica's Eduardo Salvio, left, from Argentina, goes for a high ball against Penafiel's goalkeeper Alireza Haghighi, from Iran, during the Portuguese league soccer match between Benfica and Penafiel at Benfica's Luz stadium, in Lisbon, Portugal

BARCELONA clinched its 23rd Spanish league title yesterday thanks to — who else — Lionel Messi.

It wasn't the only title to be handed out in Europe, as the Portuguese, Russian and Ukrainian leagues were also decided. In the Premier League, Arsenal stayed ahead of Manchester United in the fight for third place after a draw at Old Trafford.

Here is a look at the major action from Europe.

SPAIN. Messi scored the winning goal in the 65th minute as Barcelona beat dethroned champion Atletico Madrid 1-0 in the Spanish capital.

Messi slotted in a low shot after exchanging passes with Pedro Rodriguez. It was Messi's 41st goal of the season and powered Barcelona to its seventh league title in the last 11 years.

Real Madrid will finish runner-up despite Cristiano Ronaldo scoring a hat trick in a 4-1 win at Espanyol. It trails Barcelona by four points with one round left.

Atletico, which won the title last year in a winner-take-all finale at Barcelona, was left in third place.

ENGLAND. Manchester United will probably have to go the longer route to reach the group stage of the Champions League next season.

A 1-1 draw with Arsenal left United facing a likely fourth-place finish in the Premier League, which will send the team into the final qualifying round of the Champions League.

Ander Herrera opened the scoring for United in the 30th, but Tyler Blackett's late own-goal earned Arsenal a point that kept it in third place, two points ahead of United.

Manchester City is second behind Chelsea after beating Swansea 4-2 to move five points ahead of Arsenal, having played a game more.

PORTUGAL. Benfica clinched the Portuguese league title despite a 0-0 draw at Guimaraes after FC Porto was held 1-1 at Belenenses.

Benfica won its first back-to-back titles in 31 years and its 34th league crown in club history after it protected a three-point lead with one round to go. Benfica holds the head-to-head advantage with Porto.

Porto looked set to push the title race to the final round of the season after Jackson Martinez scored in the 44th minute, but Belenenses' Tiago Caeiro equalized with five minutes left.

ITALY. Roma came from behind to beat Udinese 2-1 and leapfrog city rival Lazio in the battle for second spot in Serie A.

Roma moved a point above Lazio. The two meet in the penultimate match of the season next weekend, four days after Lazio plays Serie A champion Juventus in the Italian Cup final.

Domenico Berardi netted a hat trick against AC Milan to give Sassuolo a 3-2 win. Milan had canceled out a two-goal deficit but had Giacomo Bonaventura and Suso sent off.

Cagliari was relegated as it lost 1-0 at home to Palermo, a result that guaranteed Atalanta safety despite a 4-1 loss to Genoa, while Torino beat Chievo Verona 2-0 and Hellas Verona won 2-1 against Empoli.

RUSSIA. Zenit St. Petersburg won the Russian Premier League for the fourth time Sunday, securing the title by drawing 1-1 with FC Ufa.

Zenit, which last won the championship in 2012, has dominated the league all season as its big-spending strategy finally paid off. One of its expensive acquisitions, Brazilian striker Hulk, scored Zenit's goal Sunday with a fierce free kick.

Sunday's draw gives Zenit an unbeatable eight-point lead with two games left to play.

CSKA Moscow and FC Krasnodar are fighting for the second of Russia's two Champions League spots. They are level on points after Krasnodar drew 2-2 with Torpedo Moscow on Sunday.

UKRAINE. Dynamo Kiev won the Ukrainian league title Sunday for the first time in six years.

Croatian defender Domagoj Vida scored the winner from a corner in the 84th minute to give Dynamo a 1-0 win over Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk. That gives Dynamo an unassailable seven-point lead over second-place Shakhtar Donetsk with two games remaining. Dynamo is two games away from completing an unbeaten season in the league, with 19 wins and five draws so far. AP

opinion

World Views

William Pesek, Bloomberg

JANET YELLEN TAKES A BACK SEAT TO CHINA

Traders have been panicking over the sudden rise in global bond yields triggered by the expected tapering of the Federal Reserve's stimulus programs. But an unlikely savior may emerge to limit the damage: China. That's the view of researchers at Oxford Economics, who think the world's second-largest economy is starting to eclipse the United States as the most influential player in setting global borrowing costs.

As the world's largest trading nation and holder of currency reserves, China has long held sway over economic activity in places ranging from Brazil to Indonesia. What's new is that the country's influence over global bond markets is beginning to eclipse that of the Federal Reserve. While traders still keep a close watch on decisions made by Fed Chair Janet Yellen in Washington, economic shifts in China are starting to matter even more for the global economy.

Oxford economist Adam Slater has run the numbers on three distinct growth scenarios for China: growth slowing in a controlled manner; a hard landing in which growth drops precipitously; and a sudden return toward growth in the 8 percent range.

The first is Oxford's baseline assumption, to which Slater assigns 55 percent odds. His models see growth easing to 6.6 percent this year and toward 5.3 percent by 2020. In this scenario, China's aging population, its slowing urbanization and President Xi Jinping's efforts to prioritize domestic consumption will all contribute to gradually slower growth. In that case, Slater says, China's slowdown won't necessarily "cause severe disruptions in global markets." Even if the Fed begins hiking rates in September, China's moderation will limit the fallout in bond markets. At most, Slater reckons U.S. 10-year yields would rise from 2.2 percent now to 2.9 percent by end of 2016.

Oxford estimates the second scenario - a deep downturn in China - is a 30 percent proposition and could leave U.S. 10-year rates at 1.7 percent by the end of next year. It assumes a "severe correction in the property sector combines with acute problems in parts of heavy industry leading to a serious bad loan problem in the banking sector," Slater says. "Both the supply of and demand for credit drop back, with the high leverage of many Chinese firms contributing to the latter effect."

The after effects would be broad and powerful, with Chinese property falling at least 10 percent and local government finances deteriorating even more dramatically. Next, foreign direct investment would plunge, the number of non-performing loans would skyrocket and stock markets from New York to Frankfurt to Singapore would slide. In that case, global GDP might average only 2.1 percent in both 2015 and 2016 instead of the currently expected 2.7 percent and 3 percent. That, in turn, would affect the calculations of central banks: the Fed would be less inclined to raise rates, the European Central Bank might keep rates at zero until perhaps 2020, and Japanese bond yields could remain at zero into 2017.

Surprisingly strong growth in China is scenario three. In that instance, China would fix its structural problems quickly and painlessly. "A stronger China," he says, "means strong world trade and GDP growth and faster rise in global bond yields." In the U.S., 10-year rates could rise toward 4.8 percent by 2020, while German bund rates might climb from their current 0.6 percent to 2.3 percent.

But there's a reason Oxford considers this the least likely scenario (Slater puts the odds at 15 percent). China's economy showed no signs of acceleration at the start of the second quarter: the most recent lending and investment data signaled the opposite. Fixed-asset investment, meanwhile, is the lowest in almost 15 years. Worse, China's default risks are soaring - a side effect of a USD20 trillion surge in credit since 2009 that's left many borrowers overextended.

Bond traders aren't the only ones keeping a closer eye on China's \$9.2 trillion economy - Yellen is, too.

THE BUZZ CHINESE TENNIS PLAYER LI NA'S LIFE STORY TO BECOME A FILM

Chinese filmmaker Peter Ho-Sun Chan is making a movie about Li Na, the country's biggest tennis star.

Chan's production company We Pictures said in a statement Saturday that the film will be based on Li's autobiography "Li Na: My Life" and will be released in 2016.

Li is one of China's best known athletes and became the first Asian tennis player to win a

Grand Slam tournament when she captured the French Open in 2011.

Chan says "Li Na had an impossible dream and found a way to turn it into reality. She broke rules and defied conventions and, against all odds, became a legend."

Li says "I am honored to have this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to tell my life story through a film."

EDUCATION

Funding to promote Taiwan studies expanded to Macau



TAIPEI'S Ministry of Education added 15 universities in 11 countries to the funding list of its "Taiwan Studies" project yesterday, in an attempt to gain more international partnerships to promote worldwide research interest in Taiwan, Central News Agency (CNA) reported.

The 11 new countries include six nations and regions which have previously never offered Taiwan Studies courses or exchanges - Macau, Belgium, South Korea, Israel, Vietnam, India - the ministry said in a statement.

Taipei signed up 30 uni-

versities in nine countries between 2003 and 2014 which will receive funding to promote Taiwan studies, defined as "interdisciplinary or academic research and teaching with institutional oversight on topics germane to the study of Taiwan."

Qualified universities with disciplines including but not limited to Sino-logy, East Asian Studies, and/or Chinese Studies are invited to submit proposals, the ministry said.

Funding is limited to one project per university. The maximum funding period for any approved project is five years, and the ma-

ximum funding available to any project in any one year shall not exceed USD100,000.

Meanwhile, Taiwan's Liberty Times reported that a youth camp organized by the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) for July aims to bring together university students from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau to discuss potential solutions to social challenges and related issues.

A total of 35 students from Taiwan, along with 15 from Hong Kong and Macau are to be selected to participate, it added.

The free program is accepting applications until Monday next week, the AIT said.

In collaboration with National Cheng Kung University and the US Consulate-General for Hong Kong and Macau, the AIT is to hold the camp from July 24 to July 26 at the university in Tainan. The camp includes interactive panels led by AIT officers and US exchange program alumni, volunteering and leadership activities, as well as cultural and historical site exploration in Tainan, the AIT said. **PC/Agencies**

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	5-25 Good	
High Density Residential Area	15-35 Good	
Ambient	15-35 Good	

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

USA A move to write new war powers to authorize the Obama administration's 9-month-old battle against Islamic State militants stalls in Congress. President Barack Obama doesn't seem to mind, and many lawmakers have little interest in having what would be the first war vote in Congress in 13 years.

YEMEN An Iranian official says Saudi Arabia should not be the one hosting talks on Yemen's conflict since the kingdom is involved in the crisis with Saudi-led airstrikes targeting the country's Shiite rebels.

UKRAINE Two Russian officers captured while fighting in war-torn eastern Ukraine are being transported to the capital, Kiev, a Ukrainian military spokesman says.



AP PHOTO

GERMANY Chancellor Angela Merkel says the Ebola crisis in western Africa has shown the world in a painful way that a global catastrophe plan is needed to deal with future epidemic outbreaks. Merkel told the World Health Assembly yesterday that "the struggle (against Ebola) is only won if there are no new cases and if we have learned the lessons from this crisis: we should have reacted earlier."

MACEDONIA's four main political leaders are to resume talks in attempt to carve out a way to resolve a crisis that has roiled the country for months. Yesterday's meeting, organized by Western diplomats, was set to be attended by conservative Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski, main opposition Social Democrat head Zoran Zaev and two ethnic Albanian political leaders. Macedonia faces one of its deepest political crises, stemming from opposition claims that the government illegally wiretapped 20,000 people.

UK A BBC reporting crew spent two nights in a Qatari prison after being arrested while trying to meet migrant workers in the nation that will host the 2022 World Cup, the British broadcaster said yesterday.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

AP Photo/Tsering Topgyal



Hot days. Indian boys cool themselves at a fountain on a hot day in New Delhi yesterday. An intense heat-wave continues to grip several parts of north India with most cities crossing the 40 degrees Celsius mark.