



THE OBSTACLES TO DIVERSIFICATION

Wall Street's Kate O'Keeffe believes that economic diversification by developing entertainment is not a panacea

P3



ROBERT CAHEN'S ANTHOLOGY

Robert Cahen is bringing to Macau a selection of 17 video installations that he has created over the past 37 years

P6

XINJIANG ATTACK KILLS AT LEAST 18



P11

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WORLD BRIEFS



CHINA has put on display the latest twin pandas born through artificial insemination as part of efforts to boost the numbers of its unofficial national mascot. Still mostly hairless and with their eyes yet to open, the sisters were met by adoring fans at a breeding center in the southwestern city of Chengdu on Tuesday. Their mother, seven-year old Kelin, gave birth to the twins early Monday.

PAKISTAN A spokesman for the international aid group Save the Children says Pakistan's government has allowed it to reopen its locked offices.

PHILIPPINES Two Philippine soldiers are killed and three others wounded in bomb attacks by Abu Sayyaf militants in a southern province.

AUSTRALIA-IRAQ Australia's prime minister says he felt for the five children of an Australian convicted terrorist in the Islamic State movement who became notorious last year for posing for photographs while clutching the severed heads of Syrian victims.

FRANCE Traffic has resumed in the tunnel beneath the English Channel, but lines are still long for trucks traveling between Britain and France following a day of disruption by striking port workers. Illegal migrants trying to sneak across to Britain are taking advantage of the snail's-pace traffic to sneak onto trucks boarding the shuttle trains that carry them through the tunnel.

More on backpage

Philippine casino bet on China fails to materialize

P2 GAMING



S. KOREAN FAMILIES: MEMBERS OF VICTIMS OF WW II SHOUT SLOGANS IN FRONT OF JAPANESE EMBASSY/AP PHOTO

Sex-slave statue sits between South Korea-Japan thaw

P14 WW2 ANNIVERSARY

Ian Sayson

IN February 2014, Melco Crown Entertainment Ltd. co-Chairman James Packer described the construction of the City of Dreams casino in Manila as a “bet on China.” Sixteen months on, the gamble hasn’t paid off.

With a government crackdown on corruption in China scaring customers away from Macau, where gaming revenue has fallen year-on-year for four straight quarters, the opportunity appeared to be there for other Asian gambling hubs to cash in.

Instead, the anticipated flood of high-rollers from China to Manila’s three casino resorts has so far failed to materialize. The market value of operators like Melco Crown Philippines Resorts Corp. and Bloomberry Resorts Corp. has been shredded as investors fled, making Philippine casino stocks among the world’s worst performers this year. Profits will tumble 56 percent across the industry in 2016, JPMorgan Chase & Co. forecast this week.

“The chain reaction from Macau hit everyone,” said Noel Reyes, chief investment officer at Security Bank Corp., who manages the best-performing Philippine equity fund in the past year. “Expectations VIP players will come in large numbers didn’t happen. The stocks have fallen quite significantly but not everyone is rushing back in, and there’s no clear light at the end of the tunnel.”

Casino shares have crashed even as the benchmark Philippine Stock Exchange Index has climbed 4.4 percent this year, peaking at a record high in April amid official forecasts for two straight years of 8 percent economic growth.

Shares of Bloomberry, which operates Solaire, have lost 27 percent this year, and Resorts World Manila operator Travellers International Hotel Group Inc. has slumped 35 percent. Melco Crown Philippines tumbled 56 percent as earnings disappointed investors, outpacing even the 36 percent loss at Wynn Macau Ltd., the Chinese territory’s worst-performing casino stock.

Bloomberry added 0.8 percent to 9.08 pesos at the close of trade in Manila, paring a gain of as much as 2 percent, while Travellers was unchanged. Melco advanced as much as 3.8 percent before closing unchan-



Casino dealers work on their respective games during the media tour of the Solaire Casino

GAMING

House doesn’t always win as Philippine casino bet on China sours

ged at 6.01 pesos, the lowest level since December 2012.

JPMorgan Chase & Co. downgraded Melco’s stock to underweight from overweight in

■ **The anticipated flood of high-rollers from China to Manila’s three casino resorts has so far failed to materialize**

a report dated June 21, and cut its 12-month price target by 63 percent to 5.80 pesos.

Arrivals to the Philippines from China, the country’s fourth-biggest tourist market, fell

by about 33 percent to 93,043 in the first quarter as the Chinese government stepped up its anti-corruption drive. A simmering territorial dispute between the two nations over islands in the South China Sea also deterred travelers.

Geopolitics “seems to be getting in the way of seeing plane-loads of tourists,” Cristino Naguiat, chief executive officer of the Philippine Amusement & Gaming industry body, said earlier this month.

Bloomberry fell to a first-quarter loss of 533 million pesos (11.8 million) as costs spiked with the expansion of the Solaire casino, increased marketing expenses and provision for bad debts. Travellers’ profit rose 1.6 percent to 1.74 billion pesos, while Melco Crown Philippines, which opened City of Dreams in December, posted a record 3.09 billion-peso loss.

“The first-quarter results raised the question; can there be

“**The chain reaction from Macau hit everyone**

NOEL REYES

aggressive growth without the numbers coming from China?” said Richard Laneda, an analyst at COL Financial Group Inc. in Manila. “The growth in earnings didn’t match the pace most wanted to see. The market isn’t overreacting, there’s genuine uncertainty.”

Some investors are overestimating the impact of the China market, and the slump in Philippine gaming stocks is excessive, according to Marc Reyes-Lao, an analyst at BPI Securities Corp. in Manila.

Combined profit at Bloomberry, Travellers and Melco Crown

Philippines is forecast to jump 47 percent to 13.61 billion pesos next year from 2015, and to 15.59 billion pesos in 2017, according to analyst estimates compiled by Bloomberg. Based on share-price forecasts, Philippine gaming stocks will return at least 40 percent in the next 12 months.

“The dismal stock performance is not totally fundamentally driven,” Reyes-Lao said. “It’s partially because of negative sentiment towards the industry brought about by China’s campaign against corruption. Investors have overreacted.”

JPMorgan reckons those earnings forecasts are “too optimistic.” In the report this week led by analyst Daisy Lu, the bank said Manila casinos are increasingly reliant on China for high-rolling VIP traffic and therefore vulnerable to the government’s corruption crackdown and scrutiny on casino marketing.

For investors including BDO Unibank Inc., the country’s largest money manager, the odds need to improve considerably before they put more chips on the table.

“For long-term investors, this might be a good time to buy, since they have been badly beaten up,” Frederico Ocampo, chief investment officer at BDO, said in an interview on June 15. “We need to see more compelling indicators that things have turned out for the better.” **Bloomberg**

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ANALYSIS

Lack of infrastructure hinders local diversification

Brook Yang

THE circumstances of Macau's dominant gaming industry were far different over a year ago when the Wall Street Journal's global gaming reporter, Kate O'Keeffe, spoke to France Macau Business Association (FMBA) guests about the city's takeover from Las Vegas as the world's largest gaming capital. The veteran reporter gave a speech at the same occasion yesterday, but this time she questions whether Macau can seek solutions from Las Vegas' recovery and successfully transform itself into a more diversified entertainment hub.

Ms O'Keeffe cited analyses that suggest "Macau in 2015 is Las Vegas in 2009." Some observers eye Las Vegas as the solution to Macau's industry recovery. However, the journalist believes that diversification by developing entertainment is "not really



Kate O'Keeffe

the solution of how to fix all of Macau's problems."

"There are actually some serious problems with the idea that Macau – number one – can, and – number two – should become more like Las Vegas. The first problem is Macau's infrastructure (...); another major issue is a little more philosophical: should Macau even want to be like Las

Vegas?" she questioned.

Becoming a more diversified entertainment hub was how Las Vegas recovered from its slump in 2007. By focusing on non-gambling elements, the resort town was able to renew its revenue records; by the 2014 fiscal year, only 37 percent of its revenue was generated from gambling operations. "But the real problem is that earning is still way off the pre-crisis level. (...) So it's not all rosy there; it's a ton of investment now that hasn't been super-profitable," added the speaker.

With a wave of new investments in Macau having been caught up in the industry downturn and other unanticipated circumstances, Ms O'Keeffe indicated that the gaming operators are now "between a rock and a hard place," where slowing or scaling down the constructions won't be an option.

The industry has recently fo-

cused on the meltdown in the mass market, following the plunge in the VIP segment. Although many are excited about the high margins for mass gamblers, the speaker doubted that the gains from margins will be able to make up for losses in VIP revenue.

"It's needing twelve mass-market players to replace just one VIP player. So it's not been quite so easy to replace the VIP sector like that," she said, adding that the mass-market segment itself has been having unanticipated troubles, such as a decline in visitor arrivals and their lower spending at the gambling tables.

"The decline has happened because basically everything that could go wrong has gone wrong," suggested Ms O'Keeffe. "Amid the chaos, the 20-million-dollar-plus investment in new casino projects that had initially been seen as a big growth driver in Macau is now being seen as pos-

sibly a liability to some people."

The speaker further suggested that the region is not going to see the growth it's seen over the past decade again, as "non-gambling activities are not going to be as explosive a revenue generator as the VIP gambling industry has been."

"I think Macau really has a long way to go to become a more diversified city. There's a lot of work that needs to be done at the casino operator level. Then there's a whole other more important set of things that need to be done for the local people of Macau," she stressed, indicating that the issues that citizens are coping with every day – such as lack of transportation, public housing and medical facilities – are the prominent factors that also hurt the city's business environment.

"A lot of these problems we are seeing today have been building for so long. You didn't see the negative impact from them fully, because you were overwhelmed so much by the great performance at casinos," she said, before concluding with a thought on Beijing's policy toward the MSAR: "I think it is that they are forcing Macau now to address all those issues, as it can no longer just rely on the casino operations."

AD

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MICKAEL OBRENOVITCH

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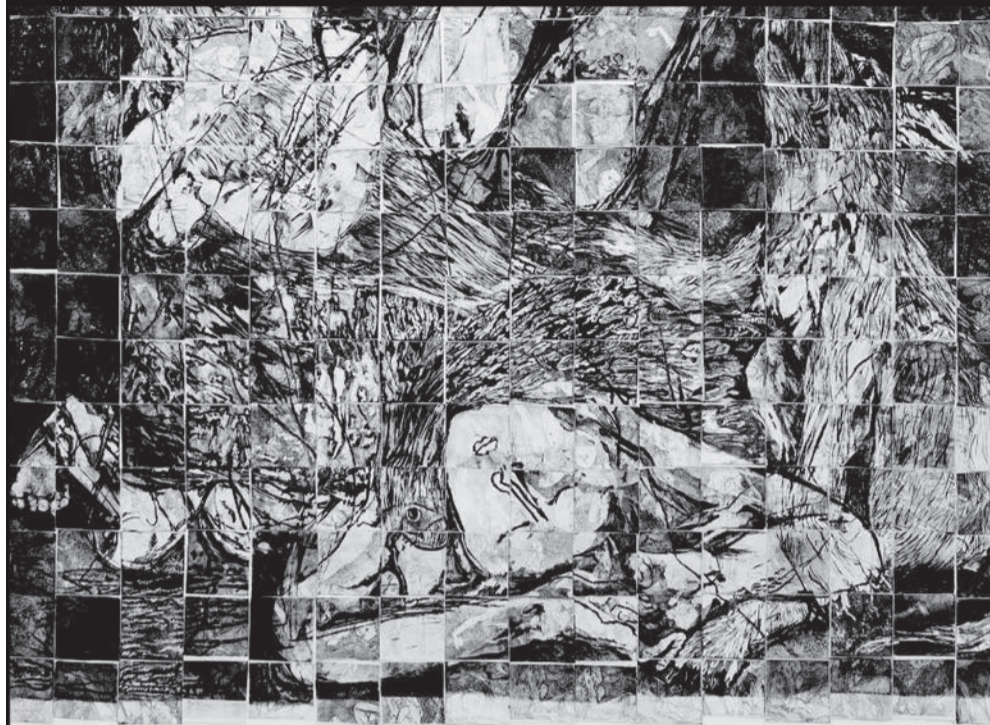
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“ THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' ”

Local young photographer launches book and exhibition



Ao Ngan Wa

LOCAL young photographer and writer Ao Ngan Wa (Kate) will be launching her first book "MOVE__" and a photography exhibition titled "Living Souls" this coming Tuesday at the Rui Cunha Foundation.

Born in Macau, Kate studied and graduated from university in Taiwan before deciding to explore the world by traveling around Europe and Asia,

as reported in an MDT feature last year in June.

"MOVE__" is about Kate's travel stories. She has been volunteering and photographing her experiences while on the road, particularly since she hitchhiked all the way from Tibet to Nepal.

"She writes about a totally different travel style to show the fearless character of the 90s generation. She brings to life the truly inspiring stories of her experiences on the road," according to a press release.

The book aims to encourage people to step out of their comfort zones and take up new challenges.

The exhibition will feature photos and portraits taken during Kate's travels in places such as China, Tibet, Nepal, Sweden and Germany. People featured in her pictures include couchsurfing hosts, people she met along the way, and passers-by.

The "Living Souls" exhibition will be on display at the Rui Cunha Foundation until July 4. The book launch ceremony will take place next Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. at the foundation's gallery. **CP**

Group argues for harsher drug penalties



Iong Kong Io

THE group that is working on proposals to amend the anti-drug trafficking law has advocated for heavier penalties to be imposed on people found to have committed drug offenses. A report made by the group was presented yesterday, stating that the current penalties fail to have a deterrent effect. According to the document, the group believes that drug consumers, who currently can be sentenced to between 45 and 60 days in prison, should be sentenced to penalties that vary between three and six months.

Regarding those involved in

drug trafficking, the report suggests that the minimum sentence should be lifted from three to five years. It also advises that authorities should have the power to force suspected drug abusers to give blood for analysis, in order to obtain evidence.

The president of the Social Welfare Bureau, Iong Kong Io, who is also the vice-president of the Anti-drug Committee, said that the report will now be analyzed by the Legal Affairs Bureau. He expects that a bill can be assessed by the Legislative Assembly before year-end. **PB**



GDP expected to contract 24 pct in 2015, EIU says

THE Economist Intelligent Unit (EIU) has significantly increased its economic contraction forecast for the Macau economy in 2015 to 24 percent, according to a report produced on June 17.

In its previous report for this year, produced five days before on June 12, the EIU outlined a contraction forecast of just 6 percent. The EIU also increased its 2016 growth projection for the Macau economy from 5.3 percent in the June 12 report to 6.7 percent in the most recent report.

Predictions relating to gross fixed capital formation, or investment, also changed from one report to the next. While in the June 12 report the EIU predicted a contraction of 2.0 percent this year, and an increase of 8.4 percent in 2016, the report produced five days later

expects declines in both years: down 3.7 percent this year, and 24.2 percent in 2016.

The EIU's inflation rate forecasts were also revised, chan-

■ EIU analysts expect an increase in casino revenues in the final few months of the year

ged from 4.0 percent and 4.9 percent in 2015 and 2016 respectively, in the June 12 report, to 4.5 percent and 3.6 percent

respectively, in the next report.

The EIU explained that this significant review of Macau's figures for 2016 was based on the continued anti-corruption campaign in China. The campaign is having a significant effect on revenues from casinos, which are the main source of income for Macau, and this impact is expected to continue next year.

However, the EIU analysts expect an increase in casino revenues in the final few months of this year, albeit at a much lower level than previously seen, which explains the economic growth forecast for 2016.

The equally significant change in terms of gross fixed capital formation derives from an expected abrupt drop in private investment, as the hotel and casino complexes in the Cotai area are due to be completed. **MDT/Macauhub**

ONE SHOT NEWS



Chinese State Councilor and Minister of Public Security Guo Shengkun (r) met yesterday with Macau's Secretary for Security Wong Sio Chak in Beijing

Health centers to remain open until 10 p.m.

The health centers located at Tap Seac Square and Ocean Gardens will be closing each night at 10 p.m. from July 20. The announcement was made yesterday afternoon by the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam. The revamp was made possible after the hiring of ten new staff members, including a physician, a nurse and a pharmacist.

Grand Prix organizer to change



The Sport Development Board will take over organizing the Macau Grand Prix in 2016, according to Radio Macau. The motorsport race is currently organized by the city's Grand Prix Committee, headed by João Manuel Costa Antunes. The Coordinator of the Grand Prix, who formerly presided over the Macau Government Tourist Office, is expected to continue to lead GP preparations this year alongside the GP deputy coordinator Davina Chu. However, Ms Chu was recently appointed as a full-time member of the Cultural Industries Fund.

Robert Cahen's installations featured at the Museum of Art

Brook Yang

A pioneer of international video art, French artist Robert Cahen is bringing to Macau a selection of 17 video installations that he has created over the past 37 years. Titled "Traverse," the exhibition is set to commence tomorrow at the Macau Museum of Art (MAM) and will run until September, compelling visitors to reflect on the meaning of life through a string of ordinary moments.

The artist shared his image interpretations with local media in a preview tour yesterday, revealing an otherworldly existence in the themes of travel, encounter, life, death and transition.

"My works are characterized by a constant exploration of the concept of 'transition.' Transitioning from fixed image to motions, from one place to another, from one time and space to another, my works start from transforming the impressions I perceived into images," he explained, discussing his journey in video creation since the 1970s.



Robert Cahen (left) pictured yesterday in Macau

With the works' purpose being to prompt viewers to think and reflect on life, Cahen told the Times that all the images were fetched from living moments, such as nature and the ways by which people come across it.

"It's very important [that] we are alive and try to understand life, try to share impressions, to work, to fight for life in a way. We have to understand why we

are here, and what is fantastic, to be alive," he stressed.

Mr Cahen suggested a certain amount of time is necessary for contemplation when viewing his video installations. Through his signature slow-motion images, and by exploring the interaction of sound and graphics, Cahen's works ingeniously create a poetic atmosphere using the most ordinary images. By utilizing

techniques such as inserting, overlapping, reverse processing, fading in and out, the artist also presents viewers with another take on reality.

"Every piece of my art uses slow motion. Each one tries to extend a brand new space among things that are invisible to each other. My works are like an open-ended talk, where viewers will find projections of themselves in the slow motions, eventually being able to tell their own stories," he explained.

The exhibits date from 1978 to 2015, including an acclaimed milestone of 1980s international video art – "Just Enough Time" – and his two latest installations, the visual elements of which feature Macau.

"When I was younger, I was full of energy and didn't think about what I was going to do; now I have more time to think and to have a different point of view. I see the earth from above before I was on the earth and now I fly a little in the sky," said the artist, acknowledging changes in his creations throughout the decades.

AD

Macau Daily Times contest



Disney
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at The Venetian Macao



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Beauty and the Beast production. International tour cast, photographed by Helen Maybanks. © Disney

Disney Theatrical Productions, NETworks and Broadway Entertainment Group are delighted to announce that, in celebration of Disney's Beauty and the Beast's 20th anniversary on the stage, the show is visiting Macao for the very first time as part of the forthcoming International tour. The English-language production is playing at The Venetian Theatre of The Venetian Macao from June 13 to July 26, 2015 as part of a tour which also visits Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Kazakhstan, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, and Indonesia. This is another Broadway musical that Sands China Ltd. has brought to Macao. Based on the 1991 Academy-Award winning animated feature film, Disney's Beauty and the Beast premiered on Broadway in 1994, where it was nominated for nine prestigious Tony Awards and ran for 13 years. It still ranks as one of the longest-running and highest-grossing Broadway shows of all time. Since its debut, the title's visibility and success have expanded globally with subsequent productions produced around the world. Since licensing of the title began in 2004, there have been productions in 22 countries, seen by more than 35 million people, translated into 8 different languages with over 28 thousand performances - equivalent to a run of 67 years, generating over \$1.7B in revenue.

Big retailers feel pressure on Confederate flag merchandise

Tom Murphy, Business Writer

EVEN as national retailers pull Confederate flags from shelves and websites after the shooting deaths of nine black church members in South Carolina, manufacturers that produce the divisive symbol say that sales are now surging.

"I don't sell the Confederate flag for any specific group, I just sell the flag," said Kerry McCoy, owner and president of Arkansas' FlagandBanner.com. "This is America. Everybody has a right to be represented whether you are a history buff or a nut."

McCoy said her company expects to sell about 50 of the flags over the next week. That's about half of what they typically sell in a year.

Amazon, Sears, eBay and Etsy said Tuesday (yesterday, Macau time) that they would remove Confederate flag merchandise from their websites. Sears does not sell the merchandise inside Sears or Kmart stores. Target said it pulled its historic Confederate costume from its web site, but said it did not carry Confederate flags or decor that bore that image.

Google, meanwhile, blocked digital ads featuring Confederate flags after concluding they violated the Internet company's policy against marketing messages promoting content that could be "generally perceived" as an expression of hate toward a group of people. The ban included Google Shopping, which consists of merchant ads. Links to Confederate flags are still being shown in Google's general search results.

The wave of merchandise bans came a day after Wal-Mart Stores Inc. said that it would remove all Confederate-themed items from its store shelves and website after the South Carolina shooting suspect, Dylann Storm Roof, appeared in photos holding the flag.

Other national retailers say they do not sell, or never have sold, Confederate items.

White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest, asked about the retailers pulling flags from stores, said those are "decisions for individual businesses to make." He added that the businesses' decisions were consistent with the president's position. **AP**

Asian stocks rise as Japan's Nikkei 225 hits highest since 1996

Yuji Nakamura and Yuko Takeo

ASIAN shares gained for a fifth day as Japan's Nikkei 225 Stock Average rose to the highest level in 18 years.

The MSCI Asia Pacific Index added 0.2 percent to 150.22 as of 5:42 p.m. yesterday in Tokyo. The Nikkei 225 increased 0.3 percent to 20,868.03, the highest since December 1996. Stocks gained as investors weighed economic data for clues on the timing of higher interest rates amid optimism that a deal on Greek aid is within reach.

Despite the prospects for higher interest rates in the U.S., "equity markets have decided that bond yields are going to go up, but not enough to really do a lot of damage to the growth prospects or valuations at this stage," said Ric Spooner, chief market analyst in Sydney at CMC Markets. "The markets appear to have taken the view" that an agreement in Greece "is a foregone conclusion."

E-mini futures on the Standard & Poor's 500 Index slipped less than 0.1 percent after the underlying measure advanced 0.1 percent on Tuesday. Purchases of new homes climbed in May to a 546,000 annualized pace, the strongest since February 2008, according to Commerce Department data. Another report from the agency showed orders placed with factories for business equipment rose last month for just the second time this year.

The chances are about 50-50 that the U.S. economy will improve



A worker looks up to check an electronic stock indicator of a securities firm showing Tokyo's Nikkei 225 prices in Tokyo

enough for the central bank to boost borrowing costs in September, said Federal Reserve Governor Jerome Powell, who expects policy makers to move again in December. 10-year Treasury notes climbed on Tuesday after the comments.

In Greece, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras is seeking to shore up support at home for proposals aimed at ending the indebted nation's five-month standoff with creditors. Euro-area finance ministers were meeting yesterday to try to secure an agreement to prevent Greece from defaulting. Analysts say a solution

will be found. The Stoxx Europe 600 Index rose 1.2 percent on Tuesday.

Japanese shippers and brokerages pushed the Nikkei 225 through its dot-com era peak. The measure is up 20 percent in 2015, climbing for a fourth year, amid optimism about the outlook for Japan company earnings and corporate governance improvements. The Topix index added 0.2 percent yesterday.

The Shanghai Composite Index rose 2.5 percent, extending a two-day rally to 4.7 percent. Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index added 0.3 percent. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

CEM HOLDS INAUGURATION CEREMONY FOR CUSTOMER LIAISON COMMITTEE 7TH TERM



CEM held its Inauguration Ceremony for the 7th Term of CEM's Customer Liaison Committee (CLC) at the Sheraton Macau Hotel on Tuesday evening. Guests attending the Inauguration Ceremony included Kou Ming, Economic Affairs Department Deputy Director of the China Liaison Office, Arnaldo Santos, Director of the Office for the Development of the Energy Sector, Lu Lu Cheong and José Chui, Former CLC Pre-

sidents, Vong Kok Seng, CLC President, Lei Chi Fong and Lun lok Meng, CLC Vice Presidents, presidents and representatives of the local associations participating in the CLC, CLC members, as well as CEM senior management. Witnessed by the guests, Committee members of the new term were awarded certificates of nomination by Arnaldo Santos and Bernie Leong, Chairman of CEM's Executive Committee.

MGM SUPPORTS ENERGY SAVING WEEK FOR A GREENER MACAU

To serve as a responsible corporate citizen and to benefit society, MGM Macau has been supporting Energy Conservation Week organized by the Office for the Development of the Energy Sector (GDSE), which took place last week from June 14 to 20. As the gold prize winner of the "Macao Green Hotel Award", MGM proactively organized a series of internal initiatives during the Week to make

a positive contribution with the motto "Create a Better Tomorrow Today", including turning the lights off for one hour, creating a low-carbon dining menu, holding a smart home living seminar and reducing air conditioner usage intensity. MGM also established a Green Team to motivate staff to participate in environmental protection activities and help initiate effective environmental and sustainability solutions.



SANDS RESORTS COTAI STRIP KICKS OFF 'DREAMWORKS SPECTACULAR SUMMER'



The DreamWorks Experience at Sands Resorts Cotai Strip Macao is celebrating its second anniversary with the launch of the DreamWorks Spectacular Summer, a program that will immerse kids and fun-loving adults in new attractions, activities and promotions.

The summer fiesta, available from July 1 to September 30, will take kids on a journey through new DreamWorks experiences,

with the DreamWorks Kung Fu Panda Academy taking center stage. This limited-time, five-zone interactive obstacle course will challenge children's physical abilities and problem solving skills, while stimulating their creativity.

Finally, a Penguins of Madagascar Summer Feast with The DreamWorks Gang and DreamWorks Experience Kid's Corner will round off the summer offerings.



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MOZAMBIQUE is a target country in the internationalization of China Three Gorges and China State Grid and two major hydroelectric projects that are being launched are of interest to these Chinese groups and their Portuguese subsidiaries.

Paul Muxanga, chairman of the Cahora Bassa Hydroelectric Dam (HCB), said recently that the long-awaited construction of the northern plant of the Cahora Bassa hydroelectric facility should be initiated soon, a project which, according to the Portuguese financial daily *Diário Económico*, is "in the sights" of the two Chinese groups.

CTG, in partnership with EDP – Energias de Portugal of which it is the largest shareholder with 21.35 percent, wants to be involved in the future construction of this 1,250 megawatt facility, at a cost estimated by the Mozambican government at USD413 million, said the Portuguese newspaper.

China State Grid, which is the largest shareholder of Portuguese power grid company REN, which owns 7.5 percent of HCB, is positioned as a competitor to CTG in the project.

A spokesman from REN said the project for the northern plant was "very relevant to HCB" and that the company was observing its progress, as a shareholder of the Mozambican

Hydropower projects in Mozambique attract Chinese groups

■ Another project that is being targeted by China State Grid is the hydroelectric power station of Mpanda Nkua

hydroelectric company.

REN's business plan for 2015-18 provides for increased investment in internationalization to 900 million euros in emerging markets in Africa and Latin America.

EDP has said that Mozambique "is a strategic market" that "can be an important vector of internationalization" for the company, which "will contribute to the strategic development of the



Cahora Bassa Hydroelectric Dam

sector in the country, particularly the North Cahora Bassa project, to the extent that the Mozambican government sees fit."

Another project that is being targeted by China State Grid is the hydroelectric power station of Mpanda Nkua, designed to be the second largest hydroelectric

facility in the country and awarded to Brazilian construction companies in 2010, but which ran into funding difficulties.

China State Grid also intends to finance and build the dam and the Mozambican authorities decided to alter the Mpanda Nkua management company's sha-

reholder structure.

Brazilian construction company Camargo Corrêa was not happy with this move and has demanded compensation for the investment it has made in the project and the return of guarantees provided in return for the concession contract, according to the Mozambican press.

The latest plans indicated that China State Grid would take between one third and 40 percent of the Mpanda Nkua facility, less than the 60 percent it wanted, while South Africa's Eskom, the plant's future client would have 20 percent, Électricité de France (EdF) and Brazil's Eletrobras would have between 10 and 15 percent each, and the rest would be divided between Mozambican state power company EDM and private Mozambican companies.

With an installed capacity of 1,500 megawatts, the power plant is a key asset for the profitability of the transmission line that will be managed by power transmission company Sociedade Nacional de Transporte de Energia (SNTE).

The new transmission line, which will connect the center to the south of Mozambique, is a partnership between China State Grid, which holds a 46 percent stake and responsibility for financing the project, with REN, which kept a 14 percent stake, while Eskom and EDM have 20 percent each. **MDT/Macauhub**

Thousands of Portuguese companies rely on Angola

MORE than half of the 9,440 Portuguese companies that export to Angola have the West African country as their only foreign market said Portuguese daily newspaper *Público* citing official statistics.

The data requested by the newspaper from the National Statistics Institute (INE) showed that last year 5,256 businesses were entirely dependent on Angola for their sales



Pedestrians walk along Rua Serpa Pinto street in the Chiado district of Lisbon, Portugal

to foreign markets.

In value terms, the products placed in Angola by

these 5,256 companies reached 1.234 billion euros, equivalent to 41 per-

cent of the total raised from Portuguese exports to Angola in 2014.

The lack of diversification and heavy exposure to the Angolan market of thousands of micro and small and medium enterprises makes them vulnerable to financial threats, the newspaper said, citing problems that are currently faced by the Angolan economy due to falling oil prices.

Until 5 June, about two

weeks after its launch, there were 312 applications to access the credit line to ease the liquidity situation of companies operating in Angola, launched by the Portuguese government, and funding requests amounting to a total of 121 million euros (about 20 percent of the total available).

INE figures showed that there are another 660 companies that depend on Angola for between 91 and 99 percent of their fo-

reign sales, in addition to another 522 with an exposure of between 76 and 90 percent.

Between January and April, the value of exports to Angola fell 24.4 percent (to 725 million euros) compared to the same period of 2014 and in the first quarter China and South Korea (though in the latter case there may have been an effect timely extraordinary) overtook Portugal to become the two largest external suppliers of Angola. **MDT/Macauhub**



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Beijing says 'Golden Triangle' source of most dangerous drugs



Packages of methamphetamine and heroin

SOUTHEAST Asia's lawless 'Golden Triangle' region remains the overwhelming source of the heroin and methamphetamine sold in China, the country's Cabinet said in a report issued yesterday.

The report said 90 percent of the 9.3 tons of heroin and 11.4 tons of methamphetamine seized in 2014 was produced in the region that incorporates parts of Laos, Myanmar and Thailand and borders China's southern province

of Yunnan.

By contrast, heroin from the Golden Crescent region that includes Afghanistan, the world's biggest opium producer, accounted for less than 2 percent of the drug seized in China, it said.

"From an overseas perspective, the Golden Triangle continues to be for China the most dangerous drug-producing region," said the report, the government's first comprehensive look at drug use

in China.

The report underscores the persistence of the regional threat, despite China's efforts to boost cross-border cooperation to crack down on the rebel armies and criminal gangs that run the drug trade in the mountainous area along the Mekong River.

China began running joint river patrols with Thailand, Laos and Myanmar following an attack on two Chinese cargo boats on the Mekong in 2011 that resulted in the massacre of their 13 crew members.

The Cabinet report said synthetic drugs such as methamphetamine and ketamine have overtaken heroin in popularity in China. The country largely eliminated opium use after the 1949 communist takeover of power but saw drug abuse come roaring back in the 1980s after social controls were relaxed.

China currently has about 3 million registered drug users, it said, adding that estimates of those who have tried drugs run as high as 14 million amid a population of 1.4 billion.

Drug users are getting younger, come from more diverse backgrounds and are experimenting with a wider range of substances, including cocaine from South America, the report said. **AP**

Bank of China says it will cooperate with Italians in probe

Erika Kinetz, Shanghai

THE Bank of China said it would cooperate with Italian prosecutors seeking to indict the bank and hundreds of Chinese migrants following a massive money-laundering probe reported by The Associated Press earlier this month.

In a statement Tuesday, the bank said it has not received any formal prosecution documents from Italian authorities. But company secretary Yeung Cheung Ying said the bank will "provide timely disclosure in accordance with the relevant laws and regulations."

Italian officials are seeking to charge 297 people, including four senior managers of the bank's Milan branch, as well as the branch itself.

Prosecutors said more than 4.5 billion euros (USD5.1 billion) in proceeds from counterfeiting and other illicit activities was sent to China using a money-transfer service part-owned by Chinese migrants. Nearly half that money went through the Bank of China's Milan branch, which had an exclusive contract with the money transfer network, prosecutors said.

Ratings agency Standard and Poor's said an indictment would be unlikely to impact the bank's credit rating, given its sizeable asset base of 16 trillion yuan (\$2.6 trillion) and the "very high likelihood of extraordinary support from the Chinese government."

Bank of China shares were up 0.7 percent, to HKD5.44 in morning trade in Hong Kong yesterday. **AP**

Alibaba investing in 'Mission: Impossible - Rogue Nation'

THE film arm of e-commerce giant Alibaba Group said yesterday it will invest in the next "Mission: Impossible" movie in its first Hollywood venture, adding to a flood of Chinese money into the global film business.

Alibaba Pictures Group Ltd. announced the agreement with Paramount Pictures Corp. They gave no details of how much Alibaba would invest in "Mission: Impossible - Rogue Nation" but said they will collaborate in online ticketing, promotion in China and merchandising.

"Mission: Impossible - Rogue Nation is our first step toward internationalization and Alibaba Pictures looks forward to collaborating with more international movie studios," said Zhang Qiang, CEO of Alibaba Pictures, in a statement.

The film, starring Tom Cruise, premieres July 31 in the United States.

Chinese companies have sealed a series of deals with Hollywood and other foreign production partners in an effort to capture more of the profits from China's fast-growing market.

Alibaba Pictures said it has established a presence in Los Angeles to pursue other possible investments and collaboration. Until now, the company has focused on film and TV production and distribution in mainland China.

Alibaba started in e-commerce by launching one of China's first websites in 1999 and has expanded into entertainment, online finance and other areas.

In June, Chinese conglomerate Fosun International Ltd. announced that it would invest in Studio 8, a Hollywood production company. Also in June, Relativity Media and Jiangsu Broadcasting Corp. announced an agreement to produce film and television content for Chinese and foreign markets. A Beijing firm, DMG, was a co-producer of "Iron Man 3." **AP**

About 5,000 people protest rumored Shanghai chemical plant

AT least 5,000 residents of a Shanghai suburb protested yesterday over a report that a petrochemical plant may be moved to their neighborhood, although authorities dismissed the report as untrue.

The protest reflected growing public concern about the environmental impact of projects such as petrochemical plants, as well as the public's deep distrust of local governments.

Over the past several years, residents of many Chinese cities have taken to the streets to oppose environmentally hazardous projects, a method they believe to be the most effective in influencing local officials who often shut the public out of decision-making.

Under police watch, thousands of demonstrators gathered yesterday evening outside the local government compound in Jinshan district, holding up banners and chanting slogans against the possible relocation of a paraxylene plant to a planned chemical zone in Jinshan. Paraxylene is a hazardous chemical used to produce fibers and plastics.

The district government issued a statement saying the plant, now in Pudong district, would not be relocated but closed down.

The government held a public session earlier yesterday at which officials assured residents that the planned chemical zone would be properly managed. It also urged the public not to assemble illegally and not to believe in rumors or spread them.



Protesters march in Ningbo city in Zhejiang province, demonstrating against the proposed expansion of a petrochemical factory

Exposure to paraxylene can cause eye, nose and throat irritation. In April, six people were hospitalized after an explosion at a paraxylene plant in Fujian province. **AP**

Attack in Xinjiang kills at least 18

AT least 18 people were killed after ethnic Uighurs attacked a police checkpoint in Xinjiang, Radio Free Asia reported, the deadliest incident documented in China's far western region since at least September.

The knife-and-bomb attack occurred Monday in the city of Kashgar, the report said, as the Muslim minority group observes the holy month of Ramadan under tight restrictions on religious activities. The assailants killed police officers after speeding through the traffic checkpoint and were then killed themselves by police, the report said.

While the number of dead on either side of the clash was unclear and some of the casualties may include bystanders, RFA cited a district police officer as saying at least 18 were killed. That could make it the region's deadliest incident since at least 50 were killed in attacks in September.

The violence is the latest in a series of attacks in the region and elsewhere in the country blamed by Chinese authorities on Uighur separatists. President Xi Jinping has overseen a nationwide crackdown against alleged Uighur terrorists, that led to several shootouts, mass



Paramilitary policemen with shields and batons patrol near the People's Square in Urumqi, Xinjiang region

arrests and a stadium trial at which people were sentenced to death.

A person at the Xinjiang regional press office hung up the phone when called for comment and two subsequent calls went unanswered. A person contacted at Tianshan

Web, the region's official news portal, denied any attack had taken place, and wouldn't give a name.

In some parts of Xinjiang Uighurs risk fines or detention for wearing veils or growing beards and some are warned against observing Islam's ho-

liest month. Communist local authorities have "encouraged" party members, civil servants, teachers and students not to fast during Ramadan "for the sake of their health, work and study," state media has reported. Uighurs account for almost half of Xinjiang's 22

million inhabitants.

Chinese authorities announced last month that they had dismantled 181 "terrorist groups" in a yearlong crackdown after a bombing killed 39 people in the regional capital of Urumqi, according to the official Xinhua News Agency. **Bloomberg**

HONG KONG

Last remaining pro-democracy protest tents cleared out

PRO-DEMOCRACY protesters sat at their tents outside Hong Kong government headquarters before authorities removed the camp that was the last vestige of the street protests that erupted last September.

The Lands Department said it removed 27 tents and marquees yesterday, the deadline for clearing out the camp, marking 270 straight days of demonstrations at the same site.

Department representatives read an ultimatum, saying that anything left in the public areas in front of Legco could be removed, and that the government reserved the right to pro-

secute what it calls "illegal occupiers," according to the South China Morning Post.

Two protesters were taken away by police, including one who was identified by demonstrators as Wang Dengyao, a Chinese activist who survived the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown in Beijing, Reuters reported.

There was little resistance from around 20 others who watched quietly as the site was cleared away, their sodden tents and possessions thrown into dump trucks.

Tens of thousands of activists occupied downtown streets at the peak of the protests against

a Beijing-backed election plan, and most of the last few protesters left after Hong Kong lawmakers rejected the election plan on June 18.

Street tensions appear to have eased off, but radical protesters and "localists" demanding greater Hong Kong autonomy have vowed to keep fighting even as China shows signs of tightening its grip on the former British colony, Reuters added.

The vote vindicated the activists, but Hong Kong and Beijing officials have said, regardless of the defeat, that election candidates still would be handpicked by a 1,200-member panel of local elites. **AP/MDT**

Regulator asks 3 local milk producers to recall goat infant formula

Natasha Khan

CHINA recalled several batches of goat infant formula after excessive nitrate and insufficient selenium were found in samples, its food regulator said.

Batches from three local manufacturers in Shaanxi province didn't meet standards, China's Food and Drug Administration said in a statement Tuesday. The companies were asked to stop production and sales, while also recalling products.

Chinese consumers have shunned local milk products since infant formula, contaminated with chemical melamine, was blamed for the deaths of at least six infants in 2008, one of several high-profile food safety scandals. The country's demand for foreign dairy brands has caused Hong Kong to limit purchases and stressed postal services as far away as the Netherlands.

The market size of infant formula - categorized as targeting newborns to children that are seven years old - in the dairy market was about 62 billion yuan (USD10 billion) to 65 billion yuan, according to a release last year from Yayi International Inc., a listed Chinese manufacturer of goat baby milk powder that wasn't named in yesterday's release.

Sales of infant formula goat milk powder accounted for 0.7 percent of the total, the company said at the time. That market share was projected to rise to 5 percent by 2020, according to the release.

Nitrate - widely present in water and soil - is harmless to humans by itself but the risk of toxicity increases when it encounters certain types of bacteria, the country's food and drug regulator said in the statement. Selenium is an essential component of infant formula, it said. **Bloomberg**

Adil Jawad, Karachi

WIND from the sea and pre-monsoon rains cooled southern Pakistan yesterday, likely marking the end of a scorching heat wave that killed at least 749 people, authorities said.

Temperatures in hard-hit Karachi dropped to 34 degrees Celsius, meteorologist Abdur Rasheed said. Hospital officials said admittances had dropped compared to previous days, when dehydrated patients lay in corridors and outside of clinics.

The port city has been in the grip of a heat wave called the worst in at least a decade, with temperatures reaching 45 degrees Celsius. Hours-long power outages, little running water and the majority of people fasting for the Muslim holy month of Ramadan had worsened

the situation.

Karachi, home to some 20 million people, suffers under an inefficient power grid and a shortage of potable water. The power outages also affected the sporadic water supply in Karachi, where those who can afford it rely on tankers of water being delivered to their homes.

Mohammad Sabir, a top government official, said at least 749 people had died as a result of the heat wave in Sindh province, of which Karachi is the capital.

During the heat wave's worst days, Karachi's residents tried to find running water to cool off at public taps or broken pipes. Some bathed with their clothes on, while others washed their hands, faces and heads. As power outages rolled across the city, women and children walked down roads looking for shelter after leaving their small, hot

PAKISTAN

Wind, rains cool heat wave that killed at least 749



People rush a police officer to a hospital as he suffers from heatstroke at a local hospital in Karachi

homes.

"We're forced to sleep in the streets," resident Muzafar Khan said.

Political parties running the southern province and the federal government blamed each other for the disaster while debating the issue in parliament yesterday. Some said those in Karachi couldn't find cars to carry the coffins of their dead to the cemetery and even if they made it, gravediggers overcharged them.

"I literally wept when I heard a poor man didn't have money to pay to a grave digger," opposition lawmaker Abdul Rashid Godil said. **AP**

SOUTH KOREA

MERS infections rise to 179 with 4 more cases

THE number of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) infections in South Korea increased to 179 yesterday as four more cases were added, the health ministry said.

Among the four cases was a 50-year-old woman who contracted the virus from the 14th patient at the emergency room of the Samsung Medical Center in Seoul, according to the Ministry of Health and Welfare.

She stayed at the hospital for three days through May 29, indicating that the 177th patient was confirmed positive more than 10 days after the 14-day incubation period.

Such patients developing symptoms even after the incubation period are expected to emerge sporadically.

No deaths were reported for two straight days, leaving the death toll at 27.

Thirteen more patients were discharged from hospitals as they completely recovered after being infected, raising the total discharged to 67.

Excluding the dead and those discharged, 85 infectees are under currently treatment. Among them, 16 are still in an unstable condition.

The number of those quarantined increased from 2,805 on Tuesday to 3,103 yesterday. **Xinhua**



HOSPITALS SUSPEND SERVICES AS MERS OUTBREAK SPREADS

TWO MAJOR hospitals in South Korea's capital suspended services to patients yesterday in a bid to stop the spread of MERS after four new cases of the deadly virus were reported, the AFP news agency revealed. Samsung hospital, where nearly 90 patients, visitors and medical staff have contracted the MERS virus, declared a 10-day suspension of most services on June 14 to stem its spread. But as the number of new infections has continued

to grow, authorities have decided to extend the partial shutdown "indefinitely". Another major Seoul hospital, Konkuk University Medical Centre, has also stopped admitting new patients and performing surgery after four cases were reported in recent days. Almost all infections so far have taken place in hospitals and the World Health Organization said it had found no evidence suggesting transmission of the virus outside hospital.

AUSTRALIA

Canberra to be among largest shareholders in China-led bank

Rod McGuirk, Canberra

AUSTRALIA announced yesterday it will become a founding member of a Chinese-led Asian regional bank and its sixth largest shareholder.

Joining the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank presented Australia with great opportunities to work with its neighbors and largest export market, China, to drive economic growth and jobs, Foreign Minister Julie Bishop and Treasurer Joe Hockey said in a joint statement.

"It provides massive new opportunities for Australia to join with 56 other countries as founding members in building the essential infrastructure for Asia, which will facilitate more trade in agriculture, in resources and ultimately in services that will be to the great benefit of everyday Australians," Hockey later told Parliament.

Hockey will attend the Articles of Agreement signing ceremony in Beijing next week. The bank is expected to be operating by the end of the year.

Australia will contribute around 930 million Australian dollars (USD720 million) to the AIIB over five years and will be the sixth largest shareholder, the statement said.

"The governance of the AIIB will be based on best practice, ensuring that all members will be directly involved in the direction and decision-making of the bank in an open and transparent manner," it said.

The bank is intended to finance investments in railways, cargo ports and other trade links. Beijing has pledged to put up most of its initial \$50 billion in capital and says that total will rise to \$100 billion.

The U.S. government had objected that the bank would undercut existing institutions such as the World Bank and might allow looser lending standards.

The Chinese finance minister, Lou Jiwei, tried to ease such concern in March by saying in comments reported by the official Xinhua News Agency that the bank would reinforce established institutions and "vigorously push forward the global economy."

Negotiators from 57 governments including Australia completed work on the bank's charter last month. **AP**



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WW2 ANNIVERSARY

Sex-slave statue sits between South Korea-Japan thaw



A South Korean protester holds up a banner with images of South Korean President Park Geun-hye, left, and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in front of Japanese Embassy during a rally marking the 50th anniversary of the normalization between the two countries, in Seoul

Sam Kim

OUTSIDE Japan's embassy in Seoul sits a statue of a diminutive Korean girl - a symbol of the animosity that divides the U.S.'s Asian allies decades after World War II.

The monument commemorates thousands of women forced by the Imperial Army into sexual servitude during Japan's 35-year occupation of the Korean peninsula. While the leaders of Japan and South Korea haven't held a formal summit since coming into office, there are signs of a thaw in relations.

President Park Geun Hye attended the Seoul commemoration Monday of five decades of diplomatic ties with Japan after her foreign minister visited Tokyo for talks over the weekend for the first time since she came to power in 2013. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe attended a similar ceremony in Tokyo.

"Together with President Park, I want ties to further improve over the next half century for the benefit of people in both

■ The comfort women issue has been the thorniest dividing the two and has fueled deep public resentment toward Japan

countries and for the next generation," Abe said at the start of a meeting Monday with South Korean Foreign Minister Yun Byung Se in Tokyo. "It's important to hold frank talks with each other."

Any improvement in relations would be welcomed by the U.S., which is looking to its allies to help contain a nuclear-armed North Korea and respond collectively to China's regional rise.

"South Korea is taking a clear turn in direction on Japan,"

said Park Cheol Hee, director of the Institute for Japanese Studies at Seoul National University. "South Korea has also reached a judgment it can't be left behind at a time China and Japan are starting to improve relations."

Park risks being diplomatically outmaneuvered by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who has moved to overcome similar historical animosities with China and has now held two meetings with President Xi Jinping. Weeks after talks with Xi in Indonesia in April, Abe traveled to the U.S. and became the first Japanese prime minister to address a joint-session of Congress. He was hosted at a state dinner by Obama.

Park was offered a more low-key meeting with Obama this month, amid signs the administration is tiring of the war issue dividing its allies. In February, senior U.S. diplomat Wendy Sherman said the historical disputes were "frustrating" and vilification of former enemies "produces paralysis, not pro-

gress." Park had to postpone her U.S. trip due to an outbreak of Middle East respiratory syndrome in South Korea.

The Japan-South Korea relationship faces a host of other challenges beyond the so-called comfort women. Efforts to bolster intelligence and logistics coordination between the two countries - both within range of North Korean missiles - have been on hold since 2012. A territorial spat over a set of islets claimed by both countries has also fueled tensions.

"I'm very disappointed the government is wavering," said Kong Jea Su, a 91-year-old South Korean man who was forced to work in a mine in Kyushu, Japan, between 1943 and 1945. "I've been fortunate enough to survive, but those who didn't would be mortified to see Korea become close to Japan without the historical issues resolved completely."

Park has an economic imperative to improve ties because tensions have hurt trade between the nations that both rank as each others' third-big-

gest trading partner. Bilateral commerce fell to USD87 billion last year from \$108 billion in 2011.

Korean officials have begun of late to signal a willingness to separate the historical spats from broader bilateral issues. Yun said the South Korean government would maintain a "two-track policy" of seeking better ties. His visit to Tokyo followed a meeting in May of the nations' defense ministers - the first since 2011.

The comfort women issue has been the thorniest dividing the two and has fueled deep public resentment toward Japan. The women will file a \$20 million lawsuit against Japan in San Francisco next month, Ahn Shin Kwon, who runs a shelter for them, said by phone.

Park has demanded Japan accept responsibility for forcing women into military brothels and offer compensation to the dozens of surviving South Korean comfort women. Japan contends a 1993 government apology over the army's conduct and the 1965 treaty normalizing ties should have settled the issue.

During Abe's U.S. visit, a civic group flew an 86-year-old former comfort woman to Washington to try to garner U.S. attention on the issue and join protests over the visit.

Only 1 percent of South Koreans think Japan has "sufficiently" apologized for its conduct, with 96 percent saying it's fallen short, while 65 percent of Japanese think the apologies have been adequate, according to a survey released June 18 by South Korea's Donga Ilbo and Japan's Asahi newspapers.

Abe - while publicly questioning whether the Imperial Army forced the women into service - has agreed to talks on the issue. Park said in an interview with the Washington Post earlier this month that a deal was possible. The foreign ministers agreed Sunday to aim for a three-way summit with China by the end of the year, South Korea's Foreign Ministry said on its website.

Park's government will also cooperate with Japan's push to have 23 of its Meiji-era industrial sites obtain UNESCO World Heritage status through "harmonious talks," the ministry said. South Korea has demanded registration recognizes some of the sites used forced Korean laborers or be blocked.

And as long as she sits staring at the Japanese embassy in Seoul, the comfort-woman statue remains another roadblock to an agreement. Erected in 2011, the monument serves as the focal point of weekly anti-Japanese protests in Seoul and Japan has signaled that she must be removed as part of a broader agreement. **Bloomberg**

Lori Hinnant and Angela Charlton,
Paris

FRANCE

Hollande calls in US envoy over NSA spying

FRANCE summoned the U.S. ambassador to the Foreign Ministry and the French president held a high-level emergency meeting yesterday following revelations by WikiLeaks that the U.S. National Security Agency had eavesdropped on the past three French presidents.

President Francois Hollande called the U.S. spying an “unacceptable” security breach.

The documents appear to capture top French officials in Paris between 2006 and 2012 talking candidly about Greece’s economy, relations with Germany, and American spying on allies. While there were no huge surprises, the release of the documents late Tuesday (French time) angered and embarrassed French officialdom.

U.S. Ambassador Jane Hartley was summoned to the French Foreign Ministry, according to government spokesman Stephane Le Foll. Hollande is also sending France’s top intelligence coordinator to the United States shortly, to ensure that promises made after earlier NSA spying revelations in 2013 and 2014 have been kept, Le Foll said.

Calling the spying “incomprehensible,” Le Foll told reporters “France does not listen in on its allies.”

The U.S. Embassy had no immediate comment on the WikiLeaks revelations.

U.S. National Security Council spokesman Ned Price released a statement Tuesday evening saying the U.S. is “not

AP PHOTO



In this June 22 file photo, French President Francois Hollande speaks during a media conference at an EU summit in Brussels

targeting and will not target the communications of President Hollande.” Price did not address claims that the U.S. had previously eavesdropped on Hollande or his predecessors, Nicolas Sarkozy or Jacques Chirac.

Hollande convened two emergency meetings yesterday as a result of the disclosures: first

with France’s top security officials, then with leading legislators.

At a Cabinet meeting yesterday, Le Foll said, “We reminded all the ministers to be vigilant in their conversations.”

Two of the cables — dealing with then-President Sarkozy and his predecessor, Jacques Chirac — were marked “USA,

AUS, CAN, GBR, NZL” suggesting that the material was meant to be shared with Britain, Canada and other members of the so-called “Five Eyes” intelligence alliance.

The disclosures, which emerged late Tuesday in French daily newspaper Liberation and investigative website Mediapart, mean that France has joi-

ned Germany on the list of U.S. allies targeted by the NSA.

“This involves unacceptable acts that have already given rise to discussions between the United States and France,” Hollande said in a statement after an emergency defense council meeting. The statement said France has reinforced protective measures, without elaborating.

The release appeared to be timed to coincide with a vote in the French Parliament on a bill allowing broad new surveillance powers, in particular to counter terrorist threats. The Senate approved it Tuesday and the lower house of parliament was expected to give it final approval yesterday.

There was no instant confirmation on the accuracy of the documents, which covered intercepts from 2006-12. WikiLeaks, however, has a track record of publishing intelligence and diplomatic material.

An aide to Sarkozy told The Associated Press that the former president considers these methods unacceptable. There was no immediate comment from Chirac.

France is among several U.S. allies that rely heavily on American spying powers when trying to prevent terrorist and other threats. AP

NETHERLANDS

Dutch court orders carbon emissions cuts to protect citizens

Mike Corder, The Hague

IN a sweeping victory for Dutch environmental activists that could have global repercussions, a court ordered the government yesterday to cut the country’s greenhouse gas emissions by at least 25 percent by 2020.

The ruling by The Hague District Court could lay the foundations for similar cases around the world, said the director of the organization that took the government to court on behalf of 900 Dutch citizens.

The plaintiffs argued — and the court agreed —

that the government has a legal obligation to protect its people against looming dangers, including the effects of climate change on this low-lying country, much of which is below sea level and vulnerable to rising sea levels caused by global warming.

“This is a great victory — the judge said exactly what we wanted and had the courage and wisdom to say to the government ‘you have a duty of care toward your citizens,’” said Marjan Minnesma, director of Urgenda, the group that filed the case.

Climate activists in the packed courtroom

clapped and cheered as Presiding Judge Hans Hofhuis read the ruling. “A courageous judge. This is fantastic,” said Sharona Ceha, another Urgenda worker. “This is for my children and grandchildren.”

Dutch government lawyers swiftly left the courtroom after the judgment and could not immediately be reached for comment.

The court said, based on current government climate policy, the Netherlands will cut its emissions by only 17 percent by 2020, compared with benchmark 1990 levels.

“The state must do more to avert the imminent danger caused by climate change, also in view of its duty of care to protect and improve the living environment,” read a statement from the court.

The Dutch government can appeal the ruling to a higher court.

It remains unclear exactly how the court can enforce its ruling. It has the power to impose fines for failure to carry out its orders, but never uses such powers against the government and Urgenda did not request such a move, said judge Peter Blok. AP

AP PHOTO



Urgenda Foundation director Marjan Minnesma hugs lawyer Roger Cox, left, after a Dutch court ordered the gov’t to cut the country’s emissions by at least 25 pct by 2020

what's ON



MACAU HANDOVER HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS
DONATED BY LAU SIN PENG
TIME: 10am-7pm (Closed on Mondays, No admission after 6:30 pm)
UNTIL: December 31, 2015
VENUE: Multi-function Hall, Handover Gifts Museum of Macao
ADMISSION: MOP5 (Free on Sundays and public holidays)
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

PHOTOGRAPHS OF MACAU OLD SHOPS
TIME: 10am-7pm (Closed on Mondays, No admission after 6:30 pm)
UNTIL: December 31, 2015
VENUE: Macau Museum of Art, Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
ADMISSION: MOP5 (Free on Sundays and public holidays)
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

WESTERN VIEWS ON CHINA: PAINTS OF THE 19TH CENTURY ABOUT CHINA
TIME: 10am-7pm (Closed on Mondays, No admission after 6:30 pm)
UNTIL: December 31, 2015
VENUE: Macau Museum of Art, Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
ADMISSION: MOP5 (Free on Sundays and public holidays)
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

THE PAST – MASTERS OF MACAU: AN EXHIBITION OF POETRY, CALLIGRAPHY, PAINTING AND SEAL-CARVING 2015
TIME: 10am-7pm (Closed on Mondays, no admission after 6:30 pm)
UNTIL: July 19, 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

Offbeat

ISLAMIC STATE GROUP BLOWS UP 2 MAUSOLEUMS IN SYRIA'S PALMYRA



General view of the ancient Roman city of Palmyra, northeast of Damascus, Syria

A Syrian official says the Islamic State group has destroyed two mausoleums in the historic central town of Palmyra. Maamoun Abdulkarim, the head of the Antiquities and Museums Department in Damascus, tells The Associated Press that one of the tombs belongs to Mohammad Bin Ali, a descendant of Islam's Prophet Muhammad's cousin Imam Ali.

Abdulkarim said yesterday that the tomb was just north of Palmyra.

He said the second tomb was of a Sufi scholar known as Nizar Abu Bahaa Eddine, who was in the town 500 years ago. The tomb is close to the town's famed archaeological site.

Since the Islamic State group captured Palmyra last month, there have been fears that the extremists would blow up archaeological sites as they have in Iraq.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
18:20	The Illusionist (Repeated)
19:10	Montra do Lilau (Repeated)
19:40	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:30	Miscellaneous
22:10	The Illusionist
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Documentary Serie
00:05	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

cinema

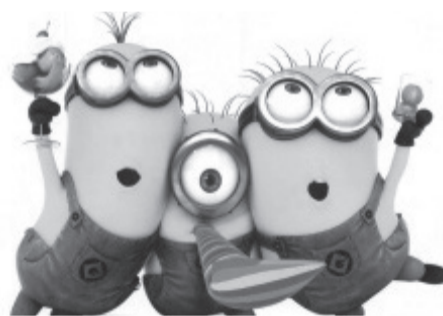
CINETEATRO

25 JUN - 2 JUL



TED 2
ROOM 1
2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm
Director: Seth MacFarlane
Starring: Mark Wahlberg, Amanda Seyfried, Morgan Freeman
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 115min

SPL 2: A TIME FOR CONSEQUENCES
ROOM 2
2.30, 4.45, 7.15pm
(1 - 2 JUL) 2.30, 4.45
Director: Cheang Pou-soi
Starring: Tony Jaa, Wu Jing, Simon Yam, Zhang Jin, Louis Koo
Language: Cantonese/Mandarin (Cantonese/English)
Duration: 120min



MINIONS
ROOM 2
(1 - 2 JUL) 7.30 pm
Director: Pierre Coffin, Kyle Balda
Language: Cantonese (Chinese/English)
Duration: 91min

JURASSIC WORLD
9.30 pm
Director: Colin Trevorrow
Starring: Chris Pratt, Bryce Dallas Howard
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 124min

FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD
ROOM 3
2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm
Director: Thomas Vinterberg
Starring: Carey Mulligan, Matthias Schoenaerts
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 94min

MACAU TOWER

04 JUN - 01 JUL

JURASSIC WORLD
(3D) 2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm
Director: Colin Trevorrow
Starring: Chris Pratt, Bryce Dallas Howard
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 124min

this day in history



1950 UN CONDEMNS NORTH KOREAN INVASION

North Korea has invaded South Korea at several points along the two countries' joint border. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has denounced North Korea's actions as a breach of the peace and has called for an immediate ceasefire.

The United States President Harry S Truman has gone a step further and urged western nations to go out to Korea and help repel the communist invasion. "By their actions in Korea, communist leaders have demonstrated their contempt for the basic moral principles on which the United Nations is founded," he said.

The invasion took the international community by surprise, even though the American Economic Cooperation Administration has its biggest mission - about 2,000 staff - in South Korea.

The seven-power commission of the United Nations in Korea (Uncok) confirmed North Korean troops crossed the border - known as the 38th parallel - in 11 places after artillery bombardments were reported in South Korea at 0400 local time.

Uncok has identified northern forces in the Ongjin peninsula and the north-western town of Kaesong and northerly town of Chunchon and landings on the east coast around Skagnung, almost 40 miles from the border.

Their statement also contained details of machine-gun attacks by four 'Yak' aircraft on military and civilian airfields outside the South Korean capital Seoul, destroying aircraft and jeeps and setting fire to petrol tanks.

President Syngman Rhee of South Korea - who denied early rumors of war - told Uncok at least 36 North Korean tanks and armored cars had been counted on their way to Seoul by the shortest routes.

The North Korean wireless station, in the capital Pyongyang, justified the invasion saying communist forces were counter-attacking against border incursions by the South Koreans in the early hours of the morning and reported a state of war shortly after noon local time.

After an emergency meeting with his cabinet South Korea's foreign minister Ben Limb urged the people of the republic to resist the "dastardly attack".

The UN Security Council met at Lake Success, Detroit after the Korean Ambassador John Myung Changan sent an urgent petition to the State Department in Washington.

Korea has been divided since the Japanese withdrawal at the end of World War II left the USSR occupying the area north of the 38th parallel and the US to the south.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

For the first time the UN asked broadcasters - including the BBC and Voice of America - to transmit the UN ceasefire resolution to North Korea.

The republican government fled Seoul and the following day America offered military aid - including air and sea support - to South Korea.

On 28 June North Korean troops entered the capital and took control. The UN invoked military sanctions shortly afterwards.

President Truman and his government interpreted the invasion as Russian-backed communist aggression.

The USSR and North Korean authorities claimed they were responding to attacks from the republican south. The war cost about two million lives.

Fighting did not stop until 1953 with the signing of the armistice on 27 July.

But a peace deal has never been reached. American troops remain stationed in the de-militarized zone on and around the 38th parallel separating North and South Korea.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
You're feeling even more impulsive than usual today, so expect some wild times as you frolic and jump from fun and games to serious silliness. Your people may not be able to keep up with you!

Taurus
April 20-May 20
You've got to be more patient with that one oddball or creep who doesn't fit in with your group. A show of tolerance today is sure to pay off in the long run, even if you have to grit your teeth to get there.

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21
You should just go easy on whoever is nearby today — they've got enough to worry about! It's one of those days when you can be a great comfort to someone if you make the decision to offer support.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Your impulsive side is shaking up some part of your life today — so see if you can build on this new foundation! It may not feel perfectly comfortable, but you should be able to work out a compromise.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
You need to revel in today's amazing energy — you are glorious! It's a good day for you to push your career forward or to ask out that hottie you've had your eye on for a few weeks (or more).

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22
Try to just relax and breathe deeply when you confront today's big issue. You may want to lash out or fight back, but flexibility is the key to success today. You can lay down the law next week.

Libra
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
You are in charge of something big and bold today — so make sure that you're getting something out of everyone involved! It's a really good time for you to step up and keep everyone informed.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
A display of power late in the day takes you by surprise and may derail your plans — but you can come back! Just bide your time and check out this new player, as you are sure to find a weakness soon.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
You feel terrific today — and your great energy is more than a match for any little problem that may pop up. You should excel at whatever you do, which sets the bar higher for the future.

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You're having some problems related to work — or the search for work, possibly. Try not to take them too seriously and see if you can get your friends or colleagues to lend you their ears.

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
You have got to find a middle ground between your friends and your work — or whichever two aspects of your life feel most opposed. It's easier than you'd think on a day like today!

Pisces
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
You have got to deal with a blurred boundary between fantasy and reality today — but that's something you're getting good at! You may have to get a friend to back you up this time.



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	21	30	smog
Harbin	21	32	thundershower/clear
Tianjin	23	32	overcast
Urumqi	20	32	clear
Xi'an	22	23	heavy rain
Lhasa	11	25	drizzle/cloudy
Chengdu	21	31	moderate rain
Chongqing	22	30	overcast/moderate rain
Kunming	18	26	shower
Nanjing	21	28	thundershower/drizzle
Shanghai	21	31	shower/moderate rain
Wuhan	20	31	cloudy/moderate rain
Hangzhou	22	34	cloudy
Taipei	27	31	drizzle/moderate rain
Guangzhou	27	32	moderate rain
Hong Kong	26	29	drizzle/moderate rain
WORLD			
Moscow	17	29	cloudy
Frankfurt	11	17	drizzle
Paris	12	20	overcast/drizzle
London	12	19	overcast/drizzle
New York	21	33	moderate rain

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Room in a casa; 5- Ball girls; 9- Beet variety; 14- Mars' Greek counterpart; 15- Nephew of Abel; 16- Madagascar monkey; 17- Exactly; 18- Magazine founder Eric; 19- Helpful; 20- Emblem; 22- Sprinkle; 23- Stationery brand; 24- Fuming; 28- Delightful; 34- Head garland; 38- Two-piece piece; 39- Thicken; 40- Break away; 41- Most loyal; 43- Square; 44- Seance sound; 47- Tufted; 48- The production of maps; 51- Sums owing; 52- Sojourn; 57- Analyze a sentence; 61- Animate; 63- Healing plants; 64- Hawaiian island; 66- Gym counts; 67- Back streets; 68- Like some appliances; 69- Drop ___ (moon); 70- City near Kobe; 71- It's about a foot; 72- Enmity;

DOWN: 1- French composer Erik; 2- Smell, usually a pleasant one; 3- Bounded; 4- The Jetsons' dog; 5- ___ ex machina; 6- Necessitate; 7- ___ vivand; 8- Compass dir.; 9- Keep secret; 10- Heave; 11- Asian river; 12- Subterfuge; 13- Delineated; 21- Done; 25- Umbrella part; 26- Cabinet dept.; 27- Roof covering; 29- Develop; 30- Worthless person; 31- Olive genus; 32- Lion's share; 33- Major ending; 34- Just ___; 35- St. Petersburg's river; 36- Super server; 37- Depression in a surface; 42- Pertaining to a sovereign; 45- Short trader?; 46- Bit of butter; 49- Potemkin setting; 50- Pretended; 53- Lineage; 54- ___ barrel; 55- Bus station; 56- Come next; 57- ___ Alto; 58- Woeful word; 59- Columnist Barrett; 60- Look for; 62- Pleasant; 64- Barker and Bell; 65- Cologne cry;

Yesterday's solution

H	R	A	T	E	R	I	C	S	A	B	C	S
B	E	A	H	A	S	I	A	R	O	U	E	
C	I	R	C	U	M	S	T	A	N	T	I	A
A	D	E	P									
C	O	A	L		C	E	L	A	B	O	N	
N	D	I	S		C	R	I	M	I	N	A	
R	E	D	S	E	A		C	O	E			
C	I	L	I	A		O	E	R	O	B	E	S
A	D	E			C	E	N		A	D	E	S
A	D	M		N	I	S	T	R	A	T	I	O
U	N	D	E	M		O	N	S	T	R	A	T
S	E	E	R		R	O	S	E		N	I	S
E	T	E	S		B	R	E	R		Y	E	M

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
- 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
- Water Supply - Report 1990 992
- Telephone - Report 1000
- Electricity - Report 28 339 922
- Macau Daily Times 28 716 081



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Taipa
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HKD 6,928sq ft
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Ref: 15015431

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WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

A look at the teams in the quarters

Anne M. Peterson, Edmonton

THE quarterfinals at the Women's World Cup are set. Here's a look at the upcoming matches, and how the teams have fared so far in Canada:

UNITED STATES VS. CHINA: This is the first World Cup meeting between the teams since the 1999 final, which the United States won on penalty kicks at the Rose Bowl.

The U.S. women have scored six goals during the tournament so far, but the defense has been solid. The team has gone 333 minutes without conceding a goal.

The second-ranked Americans finished atop Group D, the so-called Group of Death, defeating Australia and Nigeria and playing to a scoreless draw with Sweden. On Monday, the U.S. defeated No. 28 Colombia to open the round of 16.

The Americans will be without midfielders Lauren Holiday and Megan Rapinoe for the quarterfinals. Both are out after receiving two yellow cards.

"No matter who they put in, I know they're going to step up. Whoever it is has to, because we're in the quarterfinals. This is the World Cup. Obviously you win or you go home, and China's not a team to take lightly," said U.S. forward Abby Wambach.

China, ranked No. 16, has also displayed a stout defense during the tournament so far. The Chinese went 1-1-1 in Group A, finishing second to host Canada, scoring three goals and allowing three.

China advanced to the quarterfinals with a 1-0 victory over Cameroon.



China's Wang Shanshan (9) kicks the ball as Cameroon's Jeannette Yango (10) defends during the second-half of the FIFA Women's World Cup football game action in Edmonton

The match is scheduled for Friday night at Ottawa's Lansdowne Stadium.

GERMANY VS. FRANCE: This is widely considered the best match of the quarterfinals. Third-ranked France was stunned in the group stage by falling 2-0 to Colombia, but nonetheless finished atop Group F before defeating No. 8 South Korea 3-0 in the round of 16.

"We're happy to be in the quarterfinals," French coach Philippe Bergeroo said. "The Germans are the best team in the world according to the FIFA World Ranking, and so we'll give them all the respect they deserve."

Germany, under coach Silvia Neid, leads the field at the World Cup with 19 goals in the tour-

namment, compared with just two allowed. Anja Mittag and Celia Sasic have five goals apiece.

Germany finished atop Group B before defeating No. 5 Sweden 4-1 in its opening knockout-round match.

With Europe using the World Cup as part of its Olympic qualifying, France and Germany have secured berths in the 2016 Rio Games by advancing farther than any other eligible UEFA member.

Germany didn't make the 2012 London Games. France lost to Canada in the bronze-medal match. The game is Friday in Montreal.

CANADA VS. ENGLAND: It's all going according to plan for host Canada. The team is

through to the quarters and gets England in front of what is sure to be an amped-up home crowd.

"Coming back into BC Place will mean we'll get our home advantage, the 12th man will really kick in at this point and give us hopefully that sort of energy they did toward the end of the game to lift our team," Canada coach John Herdman said.

Canada, ranked No. 8, was the surprise bronze medal winning at London in 2012, and the team's next step is to finish strong at the World Cup. Because England competes as part of the United Kingdom at the Olympics, its quarterfinal berth does not count for qualifying for Europe's third berth in the 2016

Rio Games.

While they haven't had a lot of goals — four in four games — the Canadians finished atop Group A before defeating Switzerland 1-0 to open the knockout round. Josee Belanger scored the goal.

England, ranked No. 6 by FIFA, scored its first knockout stage win at the World Cup with a 2-1 victory over Norway.

Canada and England met once before in the World Cup, a 3-2 win for England 20 years ago. The match is Saturday in Vancouver.

AUSTRALIA VS. JAPAN: Tenth-ranked Australia pulled off the upset of the elimination stage with a 1-0 victory over Brazil and star Marta.

Kyah Simon came off the bench to score the goal, Australia's first in the knockout stage of a World Cup. "Obviously beating a team like Brazil gives you a massive amount of belief and it feels good to reach this stage of the tournament but we want to go further," forward Samantha Kerr said.

Australia finished second in Group D, wrapping up with a 1-all draw with No. 5 Sweden. Simon leads the team with three goals, while captain Lisa De Vanna has two.

They'll face another tough opponent in defending champion Japan, which defeated the U.S. on penalty kicks four years ago in Germany.

Japan is the only team left in the field which has won all its games. The Japanese have allowed only two goals. Japan defeated the Netherlands 2-1 in the round of 16. The match is Saturday at Edmonton's Commonwealth Stadium. **AP**

James Ellingworth, Baku

THE second European Games should be in Western Europe following the inaugural event in Azerbaijan, the head of the European Olympic Committees said yesterday.

The 2019 games were originally awarded to the Netherlands, which pulled out two weeks ago following a political spat over hosting costs. "We have a policy in the EOC that we always like to have a geographical spread," Pat Hickey told The Associated Press.

"It would be my personal wish that we would have gone back to - I

Western Europe preferred to host 2019 European Games

The European Games have struggled for coverage in some media markets

don't like to call it Western Europe - the old part of Europe with the

second edition of the games. And Netherlands fitted the bill perfectly there.

"We would have liked to have the second event in the old part of Europe. That could be still possible but, if not, we'll proceed wherever we think the best place is."

Hickey said four cities expressed interest in holding the 2019 games after the Netherlands withdrew, but declined to name them. Two of

the candidates originally lost out to the Netherlands in bidding, and have approached the EOC again, while the other two are new to the process.

A decision is expected by the end of the year, he added.

"We'll try and do it faster because we're conscious to give the cities as much as time as possible for preparation," Hickey said.

The 20-sport inaugu-

ral games in Azerbaijan have not included top-level athletics or swimming. Swimming is for under-18s only, while athletics featured only Europe's lowest-ranked countries. Talks are underway to bring in a higher level of competition for 2019.

"We always knew from day one that athletics and swimming were not the real deal, so we had different expectations of that," Hickey said. He

added that a good personal relationship with new European Athletics head Svein Arne Hansen could help improve the athletics entries in 2019.

"After this is over, I'll sit down with him and I would hope that we would have a very good athletics event next time around," Hickey said. "Swimming we have to sit down and speak with as well."

The European Games have struggled for coverage in some media markets due to a schedule clash with soccer's Women's World Cup. Hickey suggested the 2019 games could be timed to avoid an overlap. **AP**

opinion

HK Observer

Robert Carroll



EMBERS FROM THE FIRE

The long road to the Basic Law's objective of universal suffrage has just got a lot longer. Now that the Legislative Council (LegCo) has voted down the proposals to introduce a one person one vote system, it will take years to get to the point where the LegCo will once again have the option of voting yes to a universal suffrage scheme for electing the Chief Executive – followed by a similar process for universal suffrage for voting in the Council. On the one hand, a 'yes' vote last week should have ushered in a new era in more representative politics; on the other hand, many saw it as effectively closing the door on that possibility. What went wrong, and why are we left with burnt embers?

It has been clear for many years that the pan-democrat side, and their forerunners, were not going to achieve their goals, or even be considered partners in the local political evolutionary process by Beijing. This is particularly evident when considering that among their members were those calling for the end of one-party rule in China and introduction of parliamentary democracy there – which is both unrealistic and antagonistic.

It has also been clear that the kind of electoral arrangements that Beijing would like to see here, as outlined last year by the National People's Congress Standing committee, are not accepted by many people here as a suitable end-point for the political evolution envisaged under the Basic Law. This, at least, is the view of most of the pan-democrat voters, who have historically made up the largest voter block in the directly elected segment of every LegCo election. A key question here – and a main sticking point in the debate over whether to accept the political reform package – was whether the proposals were really the end of the road, perhaps with some fine tuning to be thrown in for good measure at later stages.

That was crucial. If there had been a promise of future substantive revisions, leading to an overhaul of the process of selecting the Chief Executive, it would have been much harder for the pan-democrats to champion rejecting the accept-it-now-let's-improve-on-it-later arguments coming from the government and Beijing. As the situation stood under the new electoral proposals, there were still a majority of votes in the nominating committee who could be swayed by the Chinese government and big business. This would prevent a contender who is not blessed by both sectors from even being chosen as a last two or three runner, let alone being elected as Chief Executive.

The nominating committee for the Chief executive election under the vetoed proposals would have been a continuation of the existing flawed and unpopular system of choosing candidates. So surely, at some stage, this aspect should be changed to offer a model that is acceptable to the vast majority? There lies, at least, a possibility of agreement. But even that's a long way from widely touted public nomination model and wouldn't some movement to a middle ground be more sensible? So why was there not an offer of definite improvements to be made in the future? Why, if the establishment was so keen on getting the reform package passed, were they at a loss to offer more than generalizations such as, 'all political processes evolve, so ours will too'?

For the government to have insisted on the proposals, there seems to have been miscalculations: a misreading of public sentiment; a good dose of stubbornness; and/or, perhaps, some parties engineering a designed-to-fail package.

The pan-democrat leaders were able to claim the LegCo political reform vote defeat as a (Pyrrhic) victory. However, their veteran, aging leaders are now left with the challenge of an upcoming district Council and LegCo election in the next couple of years, a battle which may have to be fought by younger blood. Will the 'victors' be obliged to stand aside, having failed to gain concessions from Beijing and the government of Hong Kong? And how much of a poisoned chalice, in terms of relations with the central government, will they be passing on?

THE BUZZ HUNGARY TO BUILD FENCE ON SERBIAN BORDER

Hungary's foreign minister says the government has decided to build a temporary fence on the border with Serbia as fast as possible to stop the flow of illegal migrants. Peter Szijarto said yesterday that several laws needed to be amended before construction could begin but he did not say when the work on the border could start. Szijarto said the fence, which is opposed

by Serbia, "is not a bilateral issue. Relations with Serbia have never been as good as now." He said 61,000 illegal immigrants had entered Hungary this year, nearly all by crossing Hungary's southern border with Serbia. Most of those who request refugee status in Hungary quickly leave for other destinations in western Europe, like Austria, Germany and Sweden.



New TAP owners vow expansion in US, Brazil

TAP Air Portugal's new owners said yesterday they intend to expand operations to 10 more U.S. destinations and eight more in Brazil, while bringing more passengers from those countries into Europe.

David Neeleman, whose Gateway consortium is paying 354 million euros (USD397 million) for a 61 percent stake in the flag carrier, said at the formal signing ceremony he intends to inject fresh capital into the airline, which has debts of more than 1 billion euros. The deal's value could rise to 488 million euros depending on TAP's 2015 performance.

The new owners, who this month won the bidding to buy TAP, also plan to renew TAP's aging fleet of aircraft.

Neeleman founded the JetBlue airline in the Uni-

ted States and is the CEO of Brazil's Azul carrier, which flies to Florida. He holds U.S.-Brazilian citizenship and is partnering with Portuguese bus company owner Humberto Pedrosa in the consortium.

Regulators' endorsement of the sale could take months.

The sale survived several years of legal challenges, labor strikes and one failed attempt to sell in 2012 when the sole bidder failed to provide required finan-

cial guarantees.

The government has set aside 5 percent of the company to sell to employees.

Some analysts say the company's 7,500-strong payroll is bloated after seven decades of government management, but the government negotiated a deal with most of the company's trade unions whereby the new owners won't be able to make mass layoffs for at least two-and-a-half years after taking control. AP

SHORT LIVED ROUTE TO MACAU

A SHAREHOLDER of Air Macau, TAP Air Portugal inaugurated a shorted lived route to Macau in 1996. However, the direct link between Macau and Lisbon (with a stopover in Bangkok) was ephemeral due to its alleged lack of profitability. One of the factors that could explain the bad financial results is that many of the route passengers were traveling invited and free of charge.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT



Police officers stand guard as workers from the Lands Department prepare to remove protesters' belongings. Hong Kong authorities cleared out the last protest camp outside the government headquarters and legislature complex. Workers moved in yesterday to take down tents and other structures at the camp.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	10-30 Good
High Density Residential Area	25-45 Good
Ambient	20-40 Good

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS



IRAN The United States and other nations negotiating a nuclear deal with Iran are ready to offer high-tech reactors and other state-of-the-art equipment to Tehran if it agrees to crimp programs that can make atomic arms, according to a confidential document obtained by The Associated Press.

IRAN's ayatollah has hardened his stance in nuclear negotiations with world powers as a deadline for a final deal rapidly approach, saying he rejects a long-term freeze on nuclear research and wants to ban international inspectors from accessing military sites.

ARMENIA A standoff between police and demonstrators protesting a hike in electricity prices blocked the central avenue in the Armenia capital yesterday for a third straight day.



GREECE's leader is trying to bridge differences with creditors on a plan to make more reforms in Greece in exchange for bailout loans the country needs to avoid a potentially disastrous default next week.

USA Having agreed to consider removing the Confederate flag from South Carolina's Statehouse, lawmakers are now focusing their attention on saying goodbye to a colleague whose slaying in a mass church shooting has reignited debate about Civil War symbols in the South.

UK Royal officials say Queen Elizabeth II may have to move out of Buckingham Palace during much-needed renovations to the residence, which has not been redecorated since she took the throne in 1952. Officials say the palace needs an estimated 150 million pounds (USD237 million) of upgrades, including replacing old plumbing and wiring and removing asbestos.