



528 FIRE INCIDENTS
The latest statistics from the Fire Service indicate that the region has seen a decline in the number of blazes

P2



FAULTY REGULATIONS, CHAN MENG KAM SAYS
There's currently no penalty for public housing unit grantees who delay moving into their assigned flats

P4

NEW MEASURES TO PROP UP STOCKS



P11 CHINA

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WORLD BRIEFS



PHILIPPINES-CHINA
The Philippines asks an international tribunal to declare China's vast territorial claims in the South China Sea invalid, saying Beijing's island-building and other acts have trampled other nations' maritime rights and irreversibly damaged coral reefs.

PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN
One-day peace talks between Afghan officials and Taliban representatives ended with both sides agreeing to meet again after the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan, Pakistan's Foreign Ministry says.
More on p14

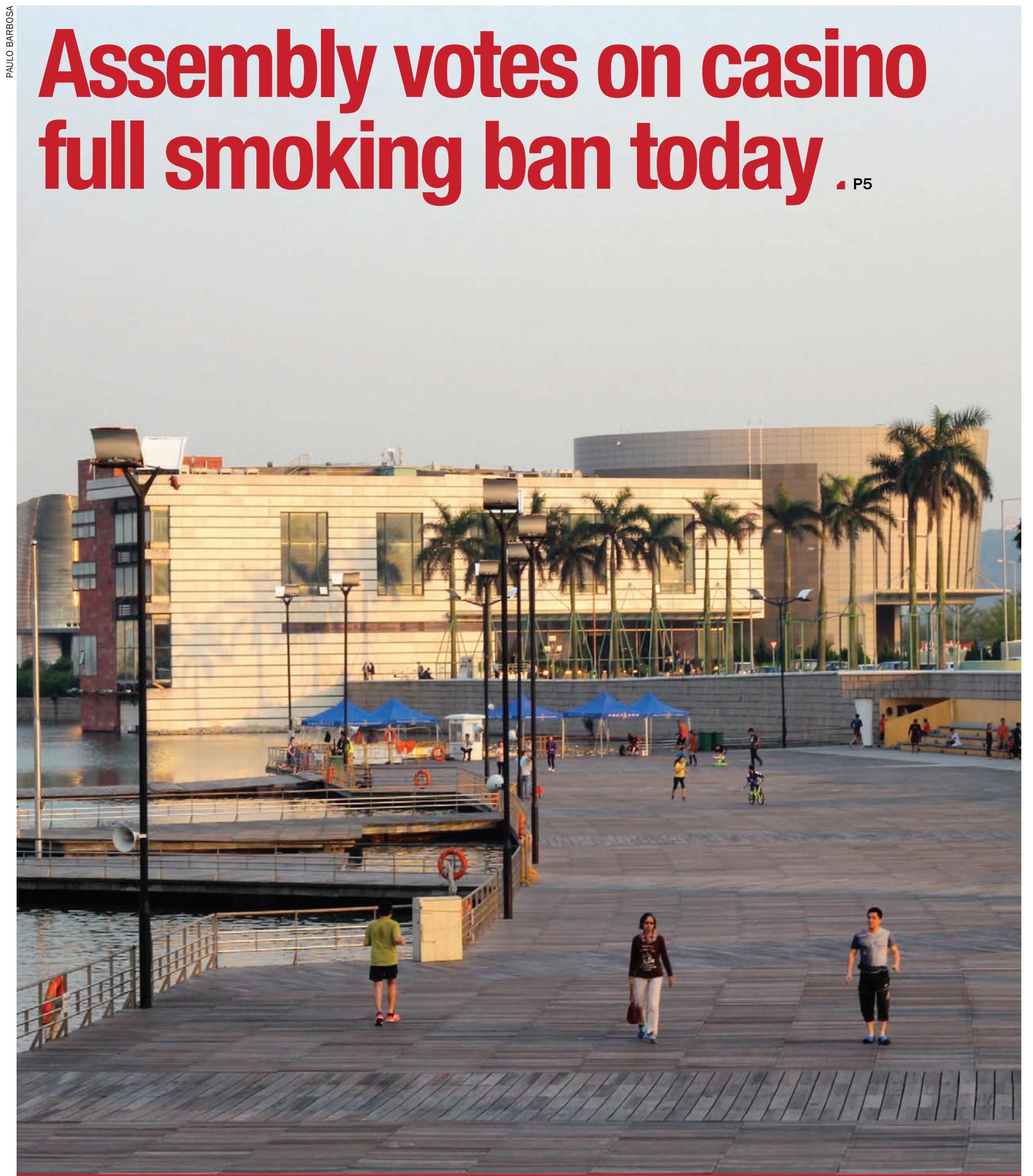
AFGHANISTAN The first-ever female nominee for the supreme court in Afghanistan fails to receive enough votes of approval from the parliament.



MALAYSIA Authorities raid the office of state investment fund 1MDB as part of an investigation into allegations that hundreds of millions of dollars were funneled from the fund to the personal accounts of Prime Minister Najib Razak.

THAILAND Ten months after two British tourists were killed on a resort island in Thailand, prosecutors call their first witnesses in a case marked by claims that the accused — two migrant workers from Myanmar — were tortured into confessing.
More on p14

More on backpage



MGM Lion Dance Championship to be held in Beijing for 1st time

P2 MDT IN BEIJING

Grace Yu, Beijing

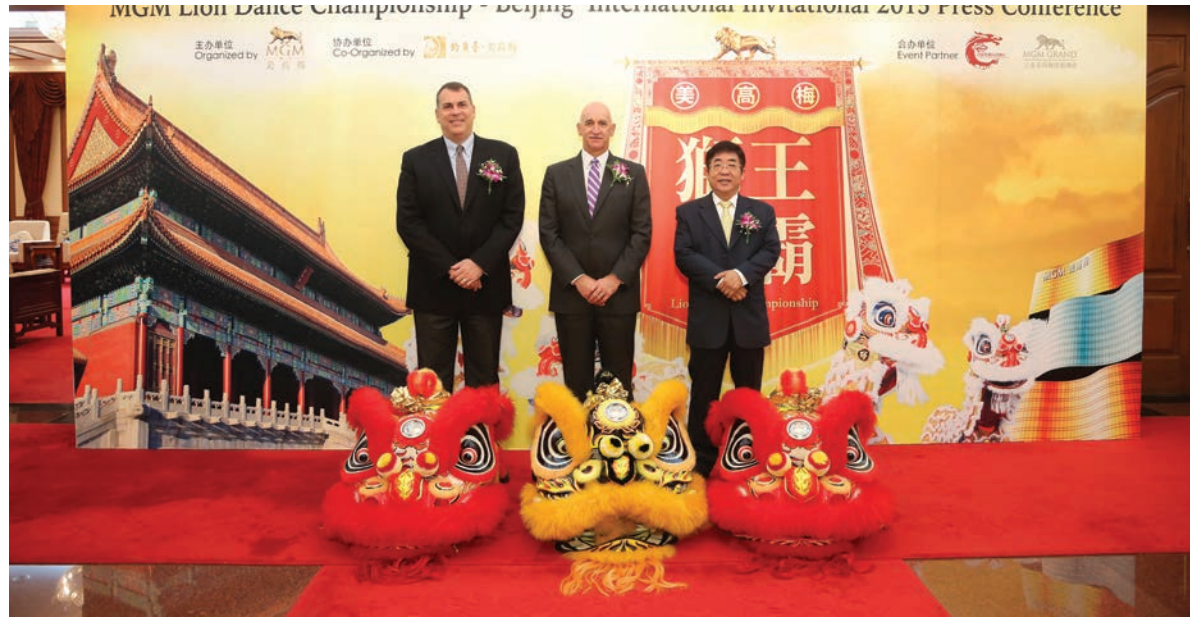
BEIJING will welcome a group of guests from Macau to bear witness to the MGM Lion Dance Championship being held in mainland China for the first time. Ten top lion dance troupes from different countries will compete in the capital city on August 30.

The event is scheduled to take place at Sanlitun (Three Miles Village), an area in the Chaoyang District of Beijing. To celebrate the Championship's fifth anniversary, MGM Macau will team up with its mainland affiliate, Diaoyutai MGM Hospitality, to host the "MGM Lion Dance Championship – Beijing International Invitational 2015," with the Chinese Long Shi Sports Association and MGM Grand Sanya (in Hainan province) as event partners. Through the Beijing Invitational, MGM Macau hopes to further raise the Chinese cultural sport's international profile.

A press conference was held yesterday at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing to announce the event. Mr Grant Bowie, chief executive officer and executive director of MGM China Holdings Limited, said: "We seek to celebrate Chinese culture as expressed by the traditional lion dance. In doing so, we want to take the lion dance to the world and in turn allow the world to share the history, excitement and athleticism of the Chinese lion dance."

Mr Bill Scott, executive director and general manager of Diaoyutai MGM Hospitality, expressed in the press conference that his company is committed to promoting economic and cultural exchanges among mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and the United States.

MGM Lion Dance Championship to be held in Beijing for the first time



Bill Scott, Grant Bowie (center) and Lau Kung Shing get together to officiate the "MGM Lion Dance Championship" in Beijing

"We are very excited to support this exciting traditional Chinese sport here, and hope to bring it to our hotels in Sanya, Hangzhou, Shanghai and elsewhere in China," said Scott.

Mr Lau Kung Shing, vice president of Chinese Long Shi Sports Association, said that the "lion dance is one of China's cultural 'pearls' and reflects the 5000-year history of China in a modern and relevant way. After many years of effort made by MGM Macau, the 'MGM Lion Dance Championship' has become a top event of the international sport of lion dance, highly recognized by lion dance lovers."

The Beijing event will welcome ten top lion dance troupes from different countries, in-

cluding mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, Chinese Taipei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Following the Beijing Invitational, the "MGM Lion Dance

“We want to take the lion dance to the world

GRANT BOWIE

Championship – Macau International Invitational 2015" will be held on November 14 and 15, during which time more than 14 international lion dance teams

will compete in a two-day event in Macau. Around MOP12 million has been earmarked for the 5th edition of the celebration, according to organizers.

Toby Leung, MGM Macau's vice president of Marketing and Communications, who is overseeing the event, revealed to the Times that it is highly likely that in 2016 the event will expand to two more mainland cities, namely Shanghai and Chengdu, as those cities have plans for two more hotels to be built under Diaoyutai MGM Hospitality. "We plan to extend the scale of the event year by year, reaching other mainland cities. (...) When we released information regarding the championship, we received many inquiries from mainland

teams asking if they could attend. I guess there's demand for a large-scale and high-end lion dance competition on the mainland. Therefore we have a chance to make one. For this edition, participating troupes are international. In the future, we hope to organize domestic competitions and select great teams to compete in the international one," said Mr. Leung.

According to Leung, in addition to the "MGM International Lion Dance Championship – Macau Invitational 2015" and the "MGM International Lion Dance Championship – Beijing Invitational 2015", MGM Macau is also partnering with the Hong Wai Sports and Recreations Association of Macau to kick-off the hotel's first-ever "Junior Lion Dance Training Program," running from July 6 to August 31. This program is a promotional activity to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the "MGM International Lion Dance Championship." Its aim is to promote the essence of Chinese culture and to spike interest in this traditional sport among local youths. Participants will learn about the history of lion dance, and the importance of practicing and acquiring basic skills in this traditional sport.

The MGM lion dance contest was established by MGM Macau in 2010, and participating troupes from around the world have been competing for the championship in Macau ever since.

528 fire incidents in first half of the year

THE latest statistics from the Fire Service indicate that the region has seen a decline in the number of blazes in the first half of this year, compared with the equivalent period last year. Lam Io Fan, the vice chief fire officer, told the media yesterday that local citizens have grown vigilant and highly responsive in

spotting fires early over the past year.

According to the bureau's data, a total of 528 fire cases were recorded in the first six months, a year-on-year drop of 8.17 percent in comparison to the 575 cases recorded in the same period of 2014. Among the accidents that took place in the first half of 2015, 344 cases involved blazes

that did not require extinguishing with water, while 128 cases were due to citizens' failure to keep an eye on stoves. Lam disclosed that in the past, locals usually managed to contain the fires by themselves before they spread to a larger area. In addition, most were already put out before the fire brigade's arrival at the accident scenes,

thanks to the resourcefulness of citizens.

"This also shows that currently most citizens, in cases of fire, could notify us swiftly, and as a result the fire wouldn't become very big," said Lam.

At the moment, there are 1,091 firemen in total serving the region, a number far less than the maximum volume of 1,589

vacancies allowed at the bureau. However, the fire brigade is always looking for more recruits. "Currently the numbers of personnel are sufficient to deal with the workload. However, to correspond with the city's future development, we are always actively recruiting firefighters to meet the requirements in five years,"

said the fire officer.

Besides, Lam Io Fan also added that the bureau would brief function organizers on anti-fire measures for their activities through advance conferences, in order to prevent accidents.

Despite the drop in fire-related accidents, the number of ambulances deployed in the first half of the year saw a 17.97-percent rise, bringing the number from 590 to 696 year-on-year. **Staff reporter**

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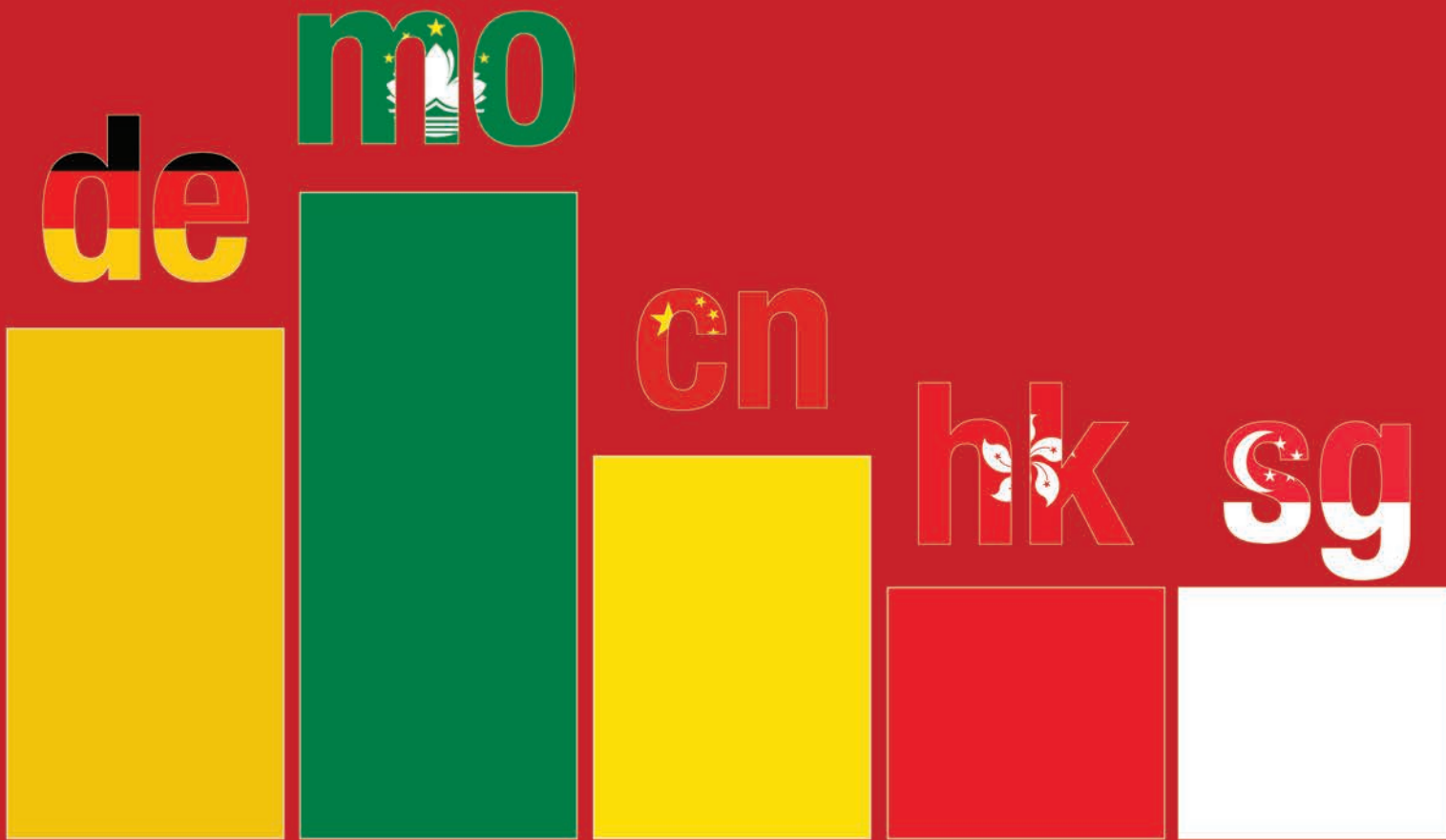
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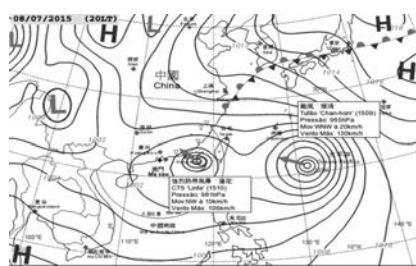
COUNTRY RANKINGS

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

Merrill Lynch cuts 2015 revenue forecast to 32pct drop year-on-year

Noting that the performance of Macau gaming stocks was disappointing in the first half of 2015, the Bank of America Merrill Lynch has reduced its forecast for Macau's GGR from -26% to -32%. Revenue contraction was a major concern, but Merrill Lynch believes that the second half of the year should stabilize; easing transit visas, economic upturn in the summer months, and new supply are factors that should drive mass market growth. However, the predicted GGR growth for 2016 was revised down from 10.5 percent to 5.3 percent, and the EBITDA forecast was cut by 10 percent due to the impending smoking ban. Merrill Lynch also mentioned that there could be further downsides if smoking lounges are rendered illegal.

T1 signal hoisted as Linfa edges closer



The Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau hoisted typhoon signal no.1 last night as the tropical cyclone Linfa continues to move northwest, edging closer to Macau. The observatory said that the chance of issuing a signal of higher order in the next few days was slim. The typhoon is expected to make landfall in eastern Guangdong province, hundreds of miles away from the MSAR. In other words, it is likely to have only minimal effect on the city. The bureau expects that typhoons with greater local impact will only appear after July.

New Irish Macau Chamber of Commerce mentorship program

The Irish Chamber of Commerce of Hong Kong, together with its partner organization, the Irish Macau Chamber of Commerce, is collaborating with Macau's Consulate General on a mentorship program. "The aim of the program is to facilitate and support engagement between the more experienced contacts drawn from the Irish community and 'Friends of Ireland' in Hong Kong and Macau," the chamber said in a statement, cited by the Irish Times. The program will run for six months from September to February, using the Irish Executive Mentorship Program platform supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The mentors are typically executives and entrepreneurs in the middle to late stages of their career who are willing to share their experience and guide their younger counterparts towards accomplishing key professional goals. They are expected to volunteer one to two hours per month, for six months.

Faulty regulations fail to penalize tardy public housing occupants

THE president of the Follow-up Committee for Public Finance Affairs has acknowledged that flawed regulation is hampering the government's efforts to penalize public housing unit grantees who delay moving into their assigned affordable housing units. Chan Meng Kam spoke yesterday after a conference in which lawmakers reached no consensus with the government over whether a full or partial amendment was needed for the regulation.

The existing affordable housing law, the amendment to which is believed to have reached the Legislative Assembly for a vote before the summer recess, still lacks specific articles and terms that target offenders who fail to occupy their housing units before a designated date. As Chan revealed, the occupancy rate at the affordable housing complex stands at around 80 percent, while its other two housing counterparts have so far almost reached full occupancy.

The committee members acknowledged in the two-hour, closed-door meeting that the authorities currently have no statutory power to bring those offenders to justice. Such power can only become a reality if the government conducts a full re-



Chan Meng Kam

view of the law. The committee has agreed that such a review should always be preceded by a public consultation period.

"After the government's consultation with the Legal Affairs Bureau and the Commission Against Corruption, the two departments said that, at the moment, there is no condition to support the punishment of the offenders," stated the lawmaker.

Nonetheless, Chan Meng Kam told the media that several committee members have pointed out that the agreements signed by the occupants empower the government to penalize them if they are caught breaching the rules and regulations.

"Some lawmakers stressed that, regarding the principles of self-use of the flats, the government still has the right to inspect the cases [of non-occupation] and hold those offenders responsible for the unoccupied flats, despite there being no punitive terms laid down in the law," said Chan.

Most proprietors who are yet to reside in their new units in Seac Pai Van have repeatedly complained about the shortfall of facilities in the housing's surrounding neighborhood. During a forum held by the New Macau Association late last month in the Seac Pai Van quarter, residents accused authorities of reckless planning.

In regard to the accusations, Chan said that the government has pledged to report to the legislature on the progress of infrastructure construction in that district prior to the parliamentary recess this upcoming August.

However, the government also wishes to clarify the definition of "non-occupation" in the legal amendment – a definition it believes would support the authorities' enforcement powers when handling violators.

"What's 'unoccupied'? How do we define it? There are various opinions about it among society," Chan said, citing a number of regulations. He subsequently added that the city's legal departments hold the opinion that the authorities' enforcement could only be achieved under the "principle of legality."

When it comes to social housing units on the other hand, Chan said that the non-occupation cases were "inconspicuous." However, the opinions received from the public suggest that applicants have suffered from bureaucratic procedures in the public departments, which most of the time have required them to make a number of journeys to finish the entire application. **Staff reporter**

SURVEY

Local consumers' economic confidence continues to drop

Brook Yang

MACAU consumers' overall confidence in spending money grew slightly during the second quarter of this year, as they saw better prospects in commodity prices, living standards, property purchasing and stock investment. However, their overall confidence is still below the general standard, and confidence in the local economy and employment has continued to decline.

According to the latest quarterly survey conducted by the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) between June 16 and 25, locals' overall consumer confidence stood at 85.94 points out of a scale of 200 in Q2, 0.62 percent higher than the previous quarter and 0.73 percent up compared to Q2 of 2014.

Looking at only the first quarter of 2015, the survey recorded a drop in consumer confidence in the local economy and employment for the first time since the 2008 financial crisis. The two indicators continued to drop in Q2, with confidence in local economy and employment down by 3.2 percent and 5.8 percent respectively, to stand at 96.18 and 110.13 points. Compared with one year ago, the confidence

sub-index in employment has plunged by 12.86 percent.

Director of MUST's Institute for Sustainable Development, Chan Lai Kow, explained in a press conference that the declines show that residents have become "relatively pessimistic [compared with] their previous cautiously-optimistic feeling about the city's economic performance," and that the downturn has "further weakened their optimistic attitude toward the labor market."

The professor further explained: "The economic situation in the mainland has changed dramatically in recent days as stocks have slumped. It is difficult to tell how local consumers' current perceptions and expectations will change."

Meanwhile, consumer confidence in commodity prices rose by 1.6 percent to 67.6 points, representing a nearly 15-percent surge when compared with the previous year. The sub-index of living standards also achieved a slight rise of 0.7 percent by quarter, continuing to approach the benchmark of 100 points.

"It shows consumers' pressure caused by inflation has continued to alleviate, and their worries about future inflation have greatly reduced. But on the other hand, it



also suggests an approaching risk of deflation," said the professor.

The survey also revealed a surge in locals' confidence towards purchasing property – an increase of 16.8 percent over the previous quarter. Reaching a score of 53.7, the indicator remained the lowest of the six sub-indexes, but still represented a substantial increase. "Compared with the same period last year, there has been a 36.3-percent increase, suggesting substantial further relief from the negative sentiment among potential home buyers," added the professor.

In addition, the survey reflected a clear rise in local consumers' willingness to invest in the volatile stock market, as their confidence in stock investment rose by 4.2 percent to 91.1 points over the quarter – a significant rise year-on-year of 8.7 percent, according to the report.

LAWMAKERS will vote today on an amendment to Macau's Tobacco Prevention and Control Law that would completely ban smoking – including the VIP rooms and the recently created smoking lounges – universities and even bus stops. The fines and taxation on tobacco products would also be increased.

The amendment stipulates increases in fines from the current range of MOP400 to MOP100,000, to between MOP1,500 and MOP200,000.

Introduced in 2012, the existing law banned smoking in most indoor spaces, but casinos were initially exempted. Following some controversy over the reasoning behind the exemption of casinos, a partial smoking ban came into effect on mass gaming floors in 2013, which allowed operators to allocate no more than 50 percent of their gaming area to smokers. A full smoking ban on mass gaming floors was then implemented on October 6 last year, and operators were required to build smoking lounges. Given the law's temporary provisions, smoking in bars and saunas was banned in January 2015.

Particularly since the beginning of the year, the local government has made it clear that there's a "zero tolerance" atti-

Assembly votes on casino full smoking ban today

tude toward smoking in public spaces, in tandem with the anti-smoking campaign currently ongoing in mainland China.

The announcement that casinos will not be allowed to keep their smoking lounges has been contested. The six gaming operators are arguing that the measure will have a negative impact on revenues, which have been dropping for over a year. In June they commissioned a study on the full smoking ban from international audit firm KPMG. The survey indicated that 66 percent of surveyed casino employees are in favor of keeping the current smoking lounges.

The proposal to be analyzed today at the Legislative Assembly also stipulates that the taxes on tobacco products should be increased to more than 70 percent of the sale price (currently the taxes represent approximately 33 percent of the price). This means that a pack of 20 cigarettes would be taxed MOP30, instead of the current MOP10. **PB**

PAULO BARBOSA



The Legislative Assembly building

September 3 to become public holiday

LAWMAKERS will also vote today on the proposal to turn September 3 into a public holiday. This would be in order to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Chinese victory over Japan, following an eight-year struggle between 1937 and 1945. The date is also intended to mark the end of World War II, which is alluded to as a "victory in the world war against fascism."

World War II ended when Japan signed a document confirming its surrender on September 2, 1945, and China celebrated the next day. Last year, China's top legislature

declared September 3 "Victory Day".

In a statement of reasons for the proposal, the government asserts: "By celebrating the victory over Japan and paying tribute to the heroes, martyrs and patriots sacrificed during the war, it's intended to show the firmness of the Chinese people against the aggression and for the safeguarding of peace."

Hong Kong's Labor Department also announced that it will submit a bill to the Legislative Council to declare September 3 a one-off, non-working public holiday.

INDEPENDENT VENTILATION SYSTEM

THE TIMES recently visited the smoking lounges of three gaming operators (Sands China, Melco Crown Entertainment and MGM China) in order to understand how the lounges are run. They are equipped with an independent ventilation system and the kind of technology usually used in hospital operating theaters.

According to explanations provided by gaming operators, the smoking rooms do not contaminate the rest of the property, and the smoke-filled air is extracted and vented outside. Combined investment in smoking lounges made by all six gaming operators is said to have reached over MOP1 billion.

Health Bureau argues for tobacco tax rise

In response to the World Health Organization (WHO)'s 2015 report on the global tobacco epidemic, the Health Bureau has issued a statement stressing its belief in raising tobacco taxes as an effective means to curb smoking and related health issues.

The bureau cited the WHO report to support its statement that tobacco use is currently responsible for the death of six million people across the world each year, with a death occurring on average once every six seconds. It further stated that over 17 percent of the city's cancer-related deaths each year are caused by smoking and second-hand smoke; and the economic losses cau-



sed by active and passive smoking are estimated to be MOP4.71 billion.

"The WHO suggests that raising taxes on tobacco is an effective means

to reduce the number of smokers, which thereby reduces occurrences of

diseases caused by tobacco use and promotes health," noted the bureau. It added that heavier taxation on tobacco is also a "win-win measure that is not only cost-effective, but can also maintain a revenue stream to the government."

With the report published on Tuesday, the WHO has appealed to governments across the globe to intensify their actions to combat the tobacco industry and dramatically reduce consumption of tobacco products, in order to protect public health. The organization stressed that tobacco is the only legal drug that kills many of its users. The report predicts that without further controls on the industry, the num-

ber of tobacco-related deaths in a year will reach over 8 million by 2030. Drawing on a proven correlation between tobacco consumption and taxation, the organization suggested a significant raise in tobacco taxes from 70 percent to at least 75 percent of the retail price.

The Health Bureau stated that it agrees with the WHO's suggestion and believes it to be "a preferable policy for Macau, winning on both fiscal revenue and public health." "In fact, tobacco is not a necessity of life; as was indicated in the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, raising tobacco prices and taxes can reduce the reliance on tobacco of people from all walks of life. It is an effective and key means to curb adolescents' tobacco consumption," it explained. **BY**

Officials downplay concerns over reclaimed zone high-rises



Raimundo do Rosário

PUBLIC sentiment continues to escalate over the government's possible intention to allow 100-meter high-rises to be constructed on Reclamation Zone B. The Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, told media yesterday that authorities may not accept "amateur opinions" received through public consultations.

"The text is for consultation, not for decisions," said the Secretary after a committee meeting at the Legislative Assembly. "There could be another one after a consultation," he said. "I think consultation is

necessary in every single society, which is a good thing. But then sometimes due to other reasons, like technical ones, not everyone's opinions on the matter are appropriate," he added.

During the very first consultation that was open to local citizens on the subject of urban planning in the five reclamation zones last Saturday, some participants voiced their concerns over allowing the construction of buildings in Zone B with a possible height of 100 meters, as this may impede views of the Chapel of Our Lady of Penha, sitting on Penha Hill, from the waterfront.

This morning, Cheong Ion

Man, acting deputy director of the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau, attended TDM's call-in program on social affairs in order to discuss the ongoing public consultation, which will conclude on August 8th.

"The height limitation [for Zone B buildings] is 100 meters, while that of Penha Hill is a mere 60 meters; basically, they are incompatible with each other. It would also create a loophole for zones C, D and E. The blocks at the waterfront are this high, let alone those situated [closer to the hill]," remarked a caller surnamed Sou.

However, Cheong made assurances that the chapel would remain visible, with two "view corridors" to be erected in the area, the specifics of which will be based on the advice of commissioned experts. "The experts suggested that technically the buildings' height in Zone B, especially in the precincts close to the Macau Tower, could reach higher," said the bureau official, asserting that the project was technically sound. **Staff reporter**

IC suggests preserving Coloane archaeological site



THE Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) unveiled the latest findings from its archaeological excavation site in Coloane village to the Cultural Heritage Committee yesterday. Citing suggestions from experts, the bureau indicated that the high-value areas should be preserved in situ, while the rest needs further excavation based on the possible distribution of relics.

The IC has carried out two phases of archaeological excavation at the site located in Rua do Estaleiro over the past year. After digging into a parking lot, a football pitch and a recreation area, the bureau's joint archaeological team, with experts from Hong Kong and the mainland, discovered rich archaeological remains and

relics from four different ancient periods: the late Neolithic Age; the late Bronze Age; the Tang and Song dynasties; and the middle-to-late Qing dynasty.

The bureau has also reinforced protection of the unearthed ruins through back-filling work. According to the experts' reports into the excavation project, the entire section of the road has been divided into different areas that are categorized by their level of archaeological value. While preserving the areas with high-heritage value, experts suggested that the bureau not only learn about the distribution of relics in the entire road section transversely, but also choose potential areas for deeper digging, in order to learn about the site's layers of cultures.

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Greece races against clock to submit reform proposals

GREECE made a request for aid from Europe's bailout fund yesterday as it rushed to deliver details of its proposed economic reforms in time to secure the country's future in the euro and avoid a descent into financial chaos.

The government has asked for a three-year loan program and insisted the rescue will be accompanied by major economic reforms. No amount was mentioned.

According to the letter sent to the European Stability Mechanism, Athens said it would "immediately implement a set of measures as early as the beginning of next week."

Those include tax and pension reforms, details of which will be presented today at the latest. Those are two of the issues that divided the Greek government and creditors over the past few months of protracted discussions.

In the letter, the Greek government said it was asking for the loans "given the risk to the financial stability of Greece as a member state and of the euro area as a whole." Its aim, it went on, was to regain "full and affordable market financing to meet its future funding requirements as well as sustainable economic and financial situation" by the time the loan ends at the latest.

Greece has been told it has to deliver details of the reforms by tonight so a deal can be agreed at a summit of the European Union's 28 leaders Sunday.

Without a deal, the country faces an almost inevitable collapse of the banking system, and European leaders have warned Greece this is its last chance to remain in the euro.

Markets are holding up despite the apparent ultimatum, with many investors predicting a last-minute deal. The Stoxx



People are seen reflected at a glass of a bank as they line up to withdraw cash from an ATM in central Athens

50 index was up 0.3 percent.

"Guarded optimism is the theme today, as the eurozone gives Greece one final deadline," said Chris Beauchamp, senior market analyst at IG in London.

Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, addressing lawmakers at the European Parliament, said his country is seeking a deal that would bring a definitive end to his country's financial crisis. Greece has had two bailouts from its European partners and the International Monetary Fund since May, 2010, totaling 240 billion euros (USD260 billion).

"We need to ensure the medium-term funding of our country with a development

and growth program," Tsipras told lawmakers in Strasbourg, France.

The head of France's central bank said he feared the "collapse" of the Greek economy and "chaos" if Greece doesn't strike a deal by Sunday.

And in unusually strong language, Christian Noyer told Europe-1 radio he predicted "riots" in Greece if no deal is reached. He also indicated the European Central Bank would effectively pull the plug on its emergency liquidity measures for Greek banks if no deal is struck.

Tsipras insisted he has "no hidden agenda" to drive Greece out of the euro and that last Sunday's referendum result, in

which voters soundly rejected a previous creditors' reform proposal, does not mean a break with Europe.

Applause rose from left-wing quarters in the EU Parliament when Tsipras said aid to Greece only helped out banks, not ordinary Greeks. A few called for compromise.

The head of a conservative group in the Parliament, Belgium's Guy Verhofstadt, said he was "furious" at Tsipras' failure to spell out specifics of his reform plans.

In Greece, meanwhile, people were struggling with an eighth day of limits on money withdrawals and shuttered banks. They cannot take out more

than 60 euros (\$67) a day from ATMs, are unable to send money abroad, including to pay supplies or bills, without special permission.

Tsipras said Greece's troubles predated his arrival in of-

■ The gov't has asked for a three-year loan program and insisted it will be accompanied by major economic reforms

office in January and condemned the "austerity experiment" his country has endured over the past five years that he blames for spiraling unemployment and poverty.

"We demand an agreement with our neighbors, but one that gives us a sign that we are on a long-lasting basis exiting from the crisis — which will demonstrate to us that there is light at the end of the tunnel. An agreement which will bring about the credible and necessary reforms," he said.

Tsipras vowed to continue reforms but warned about the austerity-weariness of the public.

"This has exhausted the patience and resilience of the Greek people," he said. **AP**

corporate bits

MGM CHINA NAMED 'MOST HONORED COMPANY' BY INSTITUTIONAL INVESTOR



MGM China Holdings Limited has been recognized by financial publication Institutional

Investor in the "2015 All-Asian Executive Team Ranking". The company was ranked as the "Most Honored Company" within the Gaming and Lodging sector, and the third most respectable across all sectors in Asia.

MGM China and its executives were also recognized in four categories:

MGM China: Best Investor Relations Company – 1st Place Nominated by the Sell side, 3rd Place by the Buy side

Grant Bowie: Best CEO – 1st Place Nominated by Buy and Sell sides

Hubert Wang: Best CFO – 1st Place Nominated by the Sell side, 3rd Place by the Buy side

Sidney Luk: Best IR Professional – 1st Place Nominated by Buy and Sell sides

Grant Bowie, Chief Operating

Officer and Executive Director of MGM China Holdings Limited said, "We are honored being recognized by Institutional Investor and industry professionals. I would like to express my appreciation to our CFO in leading our IR team with dedicated efforts in the two-way communication between MGM China and the investor community. Our Macau-based team has been voted as the 'Best IR Company' for three consecutive years, demonstrating our strength and industry acknowledgement as one of the most leading professionals in the region. At MGM China, we look forward to assist investors to understand and invest in the intrinsic value of our company, our strategies in the fast-changing market, and the potential of our future."

L'ARC MACAU VOLUNTEERS PARTICIPATE IN SIGN LANGUAGE SONG WORKSHOP



20 L'Arc Macau Volunteer Team members joined the sign language song workshop organized by the Macau Association of the Hearing Impaired, to enhance interactions with the hearing impaired.

Most volunteer team members had previously joined the April visit to the association

and had a basic understanding of sign language. During the event, the instructor and members from the association demonstrated the basic gestures of signing technique, followed by a balloon twisting session given by the hearing impaired.

One of the volunteer team

members said, "We are happy to participate in this sign language songs workshop, it served as a platform of communicating with the hearing impaired and to express our care to them. There is no limitation in communication and we should take the initiative to approach them."



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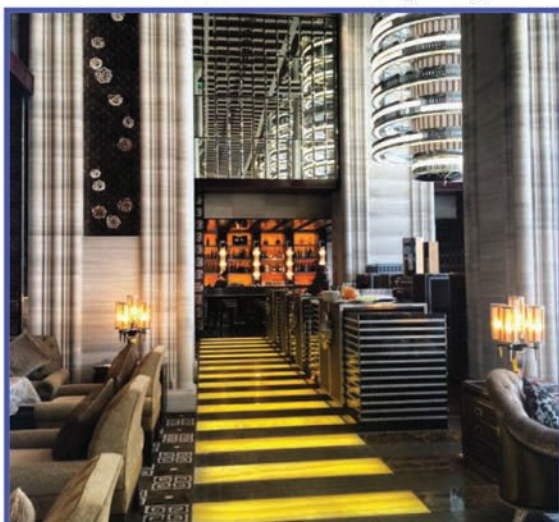


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Angola and Italy sign cooperation agreements



Italian Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni (r) with Georges Chikoti, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Angola, during their meeting at Farnesina Palace in Rome

THE governments of Angola and Italy signed three bilateral cooperation instruments, notably for the development of agriculture, during a visit that ended Tuesday by the Angolan President, José Eduardo dos Santos, to Rome.

The countries signed two Memoranda of Understanding on economic and financial cooperation and a third legal instrument on political consultations between the diplomats of both countries, directly involving the Italian Foreign Ministries and the Angolan Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Economic cooperation and support for Italian exports to Angola, in particular on the negotiation of insurance and sales risks as-

surance through the Italian Insurance Foreign Loan Insurance Company, include the two memoranda of economic and financial understanding, the Angolan government said.

"We will draw on the experience and scientific knowledge of Italy and the execution ability of its entrepreneurs to develop our agriculture, boost the food industry and diversify the economy," the minister of Agriculture, Afonso Pedro Canga told the Angolan press.

The official visit by José Eduardo dos Santos to Italy ended Tuesday, after meetings with Italian businessmen and on Monday meeting with the Italian President, Sergio Mattarella, and Prime Minister Matteo Renzi.

Figures from the Angolan National Statistics Institute of Angola Statistics showed Italy was the 11th destination for exports from Angola in 2014, totalling 131.736 billion kwanzas (USD1.066 billion), or 2.29 percent of total exports.

Italy was the 15th biggest source of Angola's imports, with a share of 1.74 percent of the total and an amount of 49.137 billion kwanzas (US\$397 million). MDT/Macauhub

Cape Verde compiles 40 years of statistical data

CAPE Verde's National Statistics Institute (INE) has compiled a publication that reveals the evolution of Cape Verdean society over its 40 years of independence, INE said.

Called "40 years of reporting for a prosperous Cape Verde - 5 July, 1975 - 5 July, 2015," the publication, available at <http://www.ine.cv/destaques/view.aspx?n=1075>, compiles data from areas including population, education, water, sanitation and energy, foreign trade, business statistics, national accounts, tourism and monetary statistics.

INE explained the publication, which will be reissued in October in a wider-ranging format, by saying that the history of any country is made of facts and that statistics are essential in this process as they are information that helps society to understand the path travelled by the country.

"It shows the presence of



A military parade to celebrate the country's 40 years of independence was held on July 5

statistics at various times in our history as an independent country and the multiple contributions it has given over the years to strengthening citizenship," the President wrote in the preface.

The number of women and men in the legislative and executive chambers between

1975-2011, the ministries, annual population growth, the number of households, life expectancy between 1970-2015, the average number of children per woman (1980-2015), the proportion of people living below the poverty line (1989 to 2007) are just some of the data in this publication. MDT/Macauhub

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NPC mulls privacy protection, further curbs on Internet

Didi Tang, Beijing

CHINESE authorities have proposed a sweeping but vaguely worded Internet security law that would strengthen protection of private information, ban hacking activities and also allow authorities to restrict Internet access to maintain public order.

The National People's Congress, the country's highest legislative body, released the text of the proposed law yesterday. It said a legislative panel gave the proposal its first reading in June and that it is seeking public comment until Aug. 5.

China's government considers cybersecurity to be crucial to national security, and espouses the concept of Internet sovereignty, treating its portion of cyberspace as its territory.

The proposed law says Internet operators must take necessary steps to close security loopholes to prevent possible cyberattacks. It also criminalizes any hacking activity.

The draft says Internet operators are obligated to protect



users' personal data. It also requires that users register their real names to receive Internet service.

"China is faced with severe challenges in terms of cybersecurity, such as cybercrimes and breach of personal infor-

mation," said Tang Lan of the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations. "So the paramount concern of this law is security."

"Any country has jurisdiction over its Internet infrastructure, data, and behaviors

by its people," Tang said. "The country has the mandate to make public policies over its Web — independently and in accordance with its own laws."

Yet, members of the Chinese public are worried that their right to speech may be further

curtailed in the name of national security.

China already has some of the most restrictive Internet controls. It blocks popular Web sites such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram and various Google services. Search results are severely filtered to scrub out information deemed offensive to the authorities, and online posts are routinely removed if they are considered to have potential to unsettle the public.

Recently, Pu Zhiqiang, a prominent rights lawyer, was indicted on criminal charges of fanning ethnic hatred and provoking trouble for online comments that questioned China's ethnic policies and mocked some public figures.

Communications have been cut off in China's restive Xinjiang region when authorities tried to suppress information on violent ethnic clashes there.

The draft law says access to the Internet can be restricted when there is a threat to public security, a clause that has raised concerns because it does not define what constitutes a threat.

"The worry is that it could be applied to normal environmental protests or incidents when the public is venting dissatisfaction," said Hu Xindou, a Beijing-based economist. "A bad law that restricts public rights could be disastrous." **AP**

TYPHOON SEASON

Tropical threats stretch from Shanghai to Hawaii as storms develop

Brian K. Sullivan

THE tropical Pacific has come alive, and the threats extend from China to Hawaii.

Typhoon Chan-hom is forecast to sweep China's coast south of Shanghai on Saturday as a Category 1 storm on the five-step Saffir-Simpson scale, according to the Joint Typhoon Warning Center, run by the U.S. Air Force and Navy in Hawaii. That would place its top sustained winds around 120 kilometers per hour.

The biggest danger from Chan-hom may be the water, or storm surge, that it pushes against land, said Jeff Masters, co-founder of Weather Underground in Ann Arbor, Michigan. While China's largest city is vulnerable, a direct strike wasn't likely as of

Tropical Storm Linfa may go ashore in China north and east of Hong Kong today

yesterday.

"More than half of Shanghai is less than six feet above sea level," Masters said. "Someday, their number is going to come up, and they are going to get a bad storm surge there."

Before Chan-hom reaches the coast, its winds may grow to almost 230kph as it threads its way north of Taiwan and

through Japan's Ryukyu Islands, the Joint Typhoon Warning Center said. That would make it a Category 4 system on the U.S. scale.

To the east, Typhoon Nangka also is forecast to become a major storm as it passes north of Guam. Its winds may peak at 260 mph, which would put it at the top of the Saffir-Simpson rankings as a Category 5 cyclone.

"Nangka is going to re-curve east of Japan," said Dan Kottowski, expert senior meteorologist at AccuWeather Inc. in State College, Pennsylvania.

The C-shaped track could be a threat to Iwo To, also known as Iwo Jima, where the World War II battle was fought.

Also churning in the western Pacific is Tropical Storm Linfa, which may go ashore in China north and



Dark clouds above the city of Sanya, south China's Hainan Province

east of Hong Kong today.

In the eastern Pacific, a tropical depression is about 1,650 miles east-southeast of Hilo, Hawaii, according to the National Hurricane Center. If the forecast holds and it grows into a tropical storm, it would be the fourth named system to menace the state since last August.

"Three storms passing within 200 miles (320 km) last year was unprecedented, and to get a fourth one, that just piles on," said Masters.

Tropical Storm Iselle caused about USD66 million in damage, mainly to the Hawaii's papaya crop, when it struck the Big Island in August. Hurricane Julio came close to the island chain, also in August, and Hurricane Ana threatened again in October.

The current track forecast calls for the new system to sweep north of the island chain through Sunday. If that holds, the size of the storm will determine its threat to Hawaii: The bigger it is, the more

likely the island chain will feel its impact, Kottowski said.

An El Nino is currently under way across the equatorial Pacific, which means water there is warmer than normal. The warm water and low wind shear are making conditions across the basin ripe for storm growth.

"Whenever an El Nino pattern sets up, the odds of Hawaii being impacted by tropical storms and hurricanes is much higher," Kottowski said. **Bloomberg**

Joe McDonald Business Writer, Beijing

Gov't unveils new measures to prop up stocks

IN a flurry of new moves to halt a stock market slide, China's government yesterday told state companies and corporate executives to buy shares, raised the amount of equities insurance companies can hold and promised more credit to finance trading.

Hundreds of companies have announced a halt to trading in their shares after emergency measures announced last weekend failed to stop a slide that has dragged down the benchmark Shanghai Composite Index by more than 30 percent since early June.

Despite the new measures, the Shanghai index lost another 5.9 percent yesterday.

The decline threatens to fuel political tensions and set back Communist Party plans to use financial markets to make China's state-dominated economy more productive. The party wants to encourage stock ownership but small investors whose holdings have plunged in value say they will no longer buy shares.

"The central government made considerable reputational investment in the rally over the last year, particularly via ample cheerleading from state media," said IHS Global Insight economist Brian Jackson in a report. "As a result, support is likely to remain extraordinary, although that will find difficulty reversing the rapid shift in attitudes by retail investors."

Yesterday, the Cabinet agency that oversees China's biggest state-owned companies said it had told them not to sell shares and to buy more "in order to safeguard market stability."

In a separate order, the securities regulator told directors, executives and senior managers of publicly traded companies who have sold shares in those companies within the past six months to buy them back and said they are barred from selling. It said

指数	股名	昨收	今开	最高	最低	最新	涨跌	成交
3567.18	上证指数	103	093	093	093	093	-0.10	
	锦港B股	0.51	0.46	0.48	0.46	0.47	-0.04	27
	斯开	0.79	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	-0.08	2
	九龙山B	100	000	000	000	000	-100	
	凌云B股	1.42	1.18	1.28	1.28	1.28	-0.14	
	四通股份	32.68	29.41	29.41	29.41	29.41	-3.27	
	老百姓	16.29	16.50	16.50	14.66	15.90	-0.39	140
	晨光文具	16.13	14.52	14.52	14.52	14.52	-1.61	2
	金桥信息	50.44	45.40	45.40	45.40	45.40	-5.04	1
	醋化股份	68.96	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-68.96	
	艾华集团	288.1	25.93	25.93	25.93	25.93	-2.88	
	艾华集团	137.49	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	---	
	艾华集团	33.84	30.46	32.50	30.46	32.31	-1.53	64
	艾华集团	40.26	36.23	36.23	36.23	36.23	-4.03	4
	艾华集团	40.47	36.42	36.42	36.42	36.42	-4.05	2
	艾华集团	99.88	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-99.88	
	艾华集团	44.42	39.98	39.98	39.98	39.98	-4.44	
	艾华集团	13.62	12.26	12.26	12.26	12.26	-1.36	
	艾华集团	27.00	24.30	24.30	24.30	24.30	-2.70	
	艾华集团	5.45	4.90	4.90	4.90	4.90	-5.44	
	艾华集团	38.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-38.00	
	艾华集团	11.34	10.21	10.21	10.21	10.21	-1.13	1000
	艾华集团	19.14	15.33	15.33	15.33	15.33	-3.81	

they are required to buy more if the price falls by more than 30 percent in the next 10 days.

The insurance regulator said the proportion of their assets Chinese insurers are allowed to invest in stocks will be increased to 40 percent from 30 percent. The agency said the amount of a single blue-chip company's shares that an insurance company can buy will be increased to 10 percent from 5 percent.

The central bank said it will

provide "ample liquidity to support stock market stability" through a state-owned company that lends to brokerages to finance share purchases, a practice known as margin lending. The People's Bank of China gave no indication how much money it might inject into the system.

The central bank statement was read on state TV's national midday news.

Chinese authorities have tried to reassure investors the price decline is normal following a boom that saw the Shanghai index soar by more than 150 percent since late 2014. On Monday, the flagship ruling party newspaper, People's Daily, said the economy can maintain steady growth and provide "solid fundamentals" for "healthy development of capital markets."

The market boom began after state media said last year stocks were cheap, which led investors to believe Beijing would prevent prices from falling. It has made profits for some traders but many novice investors who piled in just before the peak hold shares that are worth less than they paid.

Jackson, of IHS Global Insight, noted a survey by the

Southwestern University of Finance found 8.8 percent of households participated in stock market in the second quarter of this year, up from 6.1 percent in the first quarter. "That confirms that a substantial number of households rushed in just as valuations

China's government told state companies and corporate executives to buy shares

were peaking, but also that the total exposure of private households in China is relatively low compared to Western countries, where often a third or more participate in equity markets," he said.

The emergency measures announced so far are aimed at shoring up share prices of major state-owned companies, while smaller and private

companies have received little support.

A weekend pledge by state-owned brokerages to buy blue-chip stocks helped to boost prices of government companies such as PetroChina Ltd., Asia's biggest oil and gas producer. But shares in smaller companies have fallen.

That has prompted hundreds of companies to ask the mainland's two exchanges to suspend trading in their shares after prices of some fell by more than 50 percent. Dozens with shares traded in Hong Kong also have requested suspensions.

Some 787 companies had suspended trade on the exchanges in Shanghai and the southern city of Shenzhen by the end of trading Tuesday, according to the newspaper China Business News. It said more asked to be suspended later Tuesday, raising the total to more than 1,000.

That would be almost 36 percent of the total of 2,802 companies traded in Shanghai and Shenzhen.

In Hong Kong, shares in which trading was suspended included Sinopec, the country's No. 2 state-owned oil company. AP

HK STOCK INDEX DOWN 8.5 PCT AMID CHINA SELL-OFF



HONG KONG'S main stock index plummeted as much as 8.5 percent yesterday as a sell-off in mainland Chinese shares accelerated despite new measures to support the market. The China rout also battered investor sentiment elsewhere in Asia, with

other major markets finishing sharply lower. Hong Kong's Hang Seng tumbled in the last hour of trading, a victim of the turmoil in mainland Chinese markets, where stocks have been sliding for three weeks despite increasingly desperate measures by authorities to stem the decline. The Hong Kong index trimmed its losses in the final minutes of trading to close 5.9 percent lower at 23,516.56. "Everyone has come back to reality. The so-called bull market is over for now," said Jackson Wong, an associate director at United Simsen Securities Ltd.

NORTH KOREA

German attempts to break down barriers for deaf

Eric Talmadge, Pyongyang

IN a country with zero kindergartens specifically for the deaf, Robert Grund wants to help establish the first — just a small suite of rooms for perhaps a couple dozen kids, in North Korea's capital, Pyongyang, a city of roughly 2.5 million.

It's a small step, but Grund, the Pyongyang representative of the World Federation of the Deaf and the city's only full-time deaf foreign resident, sees it as part of a larger push to end isolation for the deaf here by helping them be heard, involved and empowered in projects about them.

He appears to be making progress.

Over the past few years, North Korean officials have grown more receptive to helping the disabled. Events have become more frequent and get a higher profile in the state-run media, while more cultural exchanges are being allowed abroad. Recent media stories played up a new all-deaf soccer team. The North last month held high-profile events to mark Disabled Persons Day.

The kindergarten project is also coming together.

Grund says officials have approved a location for the facility, several rooms in a now under-used nursery building, and appear keen on opening it in time for the 70th anniversary of the founding of the country's ruling party on Oct. 10.

The kindergarten itself will be wholly paid for and funded by TOGETHER-Hamhung, a German non-profit Disabled Persons Organization.

"Nobody knows how many kids will come," Grund said in a recent interview with The Associated Press. "If necessary, we can assign more rooms for children."

The plan is to accept children from infancy on up until they are old enough to attend regular deaf schools. Grund hopes access will be based solely on need, but he is not sure whether the government will instead decide who gets to go.

"From our point of view, every deaf child has access," he said. "Since this country strongly advertises the right of children to be in nurseries and kindergartens, it is probably not so much a matter of choosing, but a matter of information and spreading the word so that the families get



Robert Grund, Pyongyang representative of the World Federation of the Deaf and the city's only full-time deaf foreign resident, communicates through the use of sign language during an interview in Pyongyang

to know the new option and dare to bring their deaf child, overcoming the traditional hiding in the family."

To be deaf in North Korea is to endure a level of isolation that is hard to imagine.

For most of his childhood, Ri Jong Hyok was a shut in.

■ To be deaf in North Korea is to endure a level of isolation that is hard to imagine

While his father went out to do construction work, he stayed at home in Pyongyang helping his mother make tofu. He didn't go to school. He had no friends and, with no one to teach him sign language, essentially no way to communicate with them even if he did.

"I had never seen sign language before I came here," Ri told the AP through a sign language interpreter during a

visit to the country's largest school for the deaf, in Songchon, outside of Pyongyang, last year.

Ri is lucky to have found the school.

He wants to be a barber, and the school has a classroom where the students practice cutting each other's hair, with barber's chairs and pictures of various hairstyles on the walls. With few other trades open to the deaf, the most common jobs are barber or tailor for men, and hairstylist or seamstress for women.

Of the eight schools for older deaf children in North Korea, none are located in Pyongyang, though statistically the deaf population in a city the same size in a developing country would likely be in the tens of thousands.

There are roughly 300,000 deaf people in all of North Korea, according to official estimates.

But while about 10-20 percent of deaf children in developing countries are able to study in deaf schools, according to the World Federation of the Deaf, that rate is just 2

percent in North Korea, said an aid worker who spoke on condition of anonymity because of worries that ongoing projects might be hurt.

North Korean officials dispute that estimate.

Ro Kyong Su, director of the Korean Economic and Cultural Center for the Deaf and Blind, said mainstream public schools or other special-needs facilities currently accommodate most deaf or hearing-impaired students. By his calculations, there are about 6,000 school-age deaf children who need to be in schools that are specifically for the deaf. He said about half already are, and the number is rising.

"The other half will soon be able to go to school. We aren't looking at a five-year or 10-year plan. It will be much sooner than that," he said.

Officials involved in projects for the deaf acknowledge an outdated grasp of the size of the deaf community.

A major problem continues to be getting access to and diagnosing pre-school children, many of whom are shut in at home with families who

have little awareness of hearing disabilities or the resources that might be available to them.

The government's figures are also based on an old, somewhat ambiguous survey. Underreporting of disabilities is common, both because of a sense of shame and a fear among parents that, if reported, their children might be sent off to distant institutions, pigeonholed and channeled into an educational or career path with few opportunities. Nevertheless, a new survey is underway, which Ro believes will provide a more reliable picture.

Grund, possibly more than anyone else, has helped influence the change in attitudes toward the deaf here.

As a teenager, he watched a TV report in his native Germany suggesting there were "practically no" deaf people in North Korea. A fourth-generation deaf child in his own family, an incredulous Grund decided to go see for himself. Grund, now 30, has since devoted himself to improving life for deaf North Koreans. He works with the bureaucracy and with the deaf to train them to plan and lead their own projects.

Though funding is always a struggle, he has received support from Catholic and Protestant groups and private donors, mainly in Germany. The biggest individual contribution came from Michael Spavor, of Paektu Cultural Exchange and the organizer of former NBA star Dennis Rodman's visit last year, who donated USD20,000 to the deaf kindergarten project.

Grund's mantra for empowering the deaf, "nothing about us without us," often rankles with even the most sympathetic North Korean officials. In the country's top-down system, hearing bureaucrats who often don't understand the deaf experience are used to making decisions on their behalf.

Grund says he will continue to cooperate with deaf North Koreans — he currently works closely with about 20, up from just two in 2013 — to help them join mainstream society.

One priority is more schools for occupational training and educational opportunities for the deaf. Another is teaching more deaf children — and interpreters — how to sign. He also wants sign language interpretation made available at workplaces and meetings. But most of all, he wants to see signing on national television broadcasts, if just to raise awareness in the hearing community that the deaf exist and need not be hidden away.

"That has been my oldest dream, from the time I first came here," he said. **AP**

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Thanyarat Doksone, Koh Samui

THAILAND

Trial opens for 2 accused of killing British tourists

TEN months after two British tourists were killed on a resort island in Thailand, prosecutors called their first witnesses yesterday in a case marked by claims that the accused — two migrant workers from Myanmar — were tortured into confessing.

Following widespread attention, the case has been called a test for Thailand's justice system and its treatment of migrant laborers.

The battered bodies of David Miller, 24, and Hannah Witheridge, 23, were found Sept. 15 on the rocky shores of Koh Tao, a scenic island in the Gulf of Thailand known for its scuba diving. Autopsies showed that the young backpackers, who had met on the island while staying at the same hotel, had both suffered severe head wounds and that Witheridge had been raped.

The first policeman on the scene, Lt. Jakrapan Kaewkao, told the court that he got a call at 6:30 a.m. that morning about two tourists' bodies found on the beach. He said he arrived to find a gruesome sight.

"I found a man's body lying



Myanmar migrant workers Zaw Lin, center, and Win Zaw Htun, rear, arrive at a provincial court in Surat Thani province

on the beach with seawater lapping his body," said Jakrapan, the prosecution's first witness. "Then I found the woman's body behind the rocks." The rocks were spotted with blood, he said. The two bodies were several meters (yards) apart and both were mostly unclothed, with Witheridge's body bearing signs of physical assault, he said.

Inside the small courtroom on Koh Samui, an island near Koh Tao, the accused sat in orange prison uniforms with their legs shackled.

The two men — Win Zaw Htun and Zaw Lin, both 22 — were arrested in early October and initially confessed to the killings but then retracted their statements, saying they were extracted through beatings and threats, which police deny. Human rights groups repeatedly called for an independent investigation and raised concerns that the men might be scapegoats.

The accused were indicted on several charges related to the murders and to illegally working in Thailand. Prosecutors say they have a solid case against them that includes DNA evidence linking them to the crime. AP

MYANMAR

Rights group condemns bill on interfaith marriage

MYANMAR'S parliament is "playing with fire" by passing a bill regulating the right of women from the country's Buddhist majority to marry men from outside their religion, an international human rights group said yesterday.

Phil Robertson of New York-based Human Rights Watch linked the bill to a campaign by extremist Buddhist groups that have incited anti-Muslim hatred. Religious tensions have led to deadly violence since 2012, especially against Rohingya Muslims in western Myanmar, who have felt compelled to flee abroad, leading to a regional refugee crisis.

The Buddhist Women's Special Marriage Bill passed Tuesday is one of four known as the Protection of Race and Religion Laws, which have been criticized as discriminatory by rights groups. It mandates that Buddhist women register their intent to marry outside their faith, and allows them to be stopped if there are objections.

President Thein Sein has 14 days from when the bill was passed to sign it or



A Buddhist monk walks on a sidewalk to collect alms in Yangon

return it with suggested changes.

"It's shocking that Burma's parliament has passed yet another incredibly dangerous law, this time legislating clearly discriminatory provisions targeting the rights of religious minority men and Buddhist women to marry who they wish without interference," said Robertson, deputy director of Human Rights Watch's Asia division. Burma is the old name for Myanmar, sometimes used by critics of its military-backed government.

He suggested that the leaders of the Buddhist nationalist groups that pushed for the laws "be investigated and prosecuted for hate speech rather than feted in the halls of

parliament."

Robertson said in an email that by initiating and passing such laws, "the government and ruling party lawmakers are playing with fire." He said that if sectarian violence flares again like it did in 2012, "then these legislators will have blood on their hands."

Also among the laws is the Population Control Health Care Bill, which became law in May and calls for a 36-month interval for women between child births, ostensibly to keep poor families from becoming overstretched financially. It is vague about penalties, raising fears that they could include coerced contraception, forced sterilization or abortion. AP

AFGHANISTAN

Peace talks between Kabul, Taliban end, plan to meet again

Munir Ahmed, Islamabad

ONE-DAY peace talks between Afghan officials and Taliban representatives ended with both sides agreeing to meet again after the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan, Pakistan's Foreign Ministry said yesterday.

The ministry said in a statement the talks were held Tuesday at Murree, a hilly resort near the Pakistani capital, Islamabad. Representatives of China and the United States were also present during the meeting, it said.

Participants exchanged views on ways to bring peace and reconciliation to Afghanistan, where fighting has continued since the Taliban was removed from power by U.S.-led forces in 2001. Since taking office in September, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has made it a priority to find a peace settlement.

Both sides "expressed their collective desire to bring peace to Afghanistan and the region," the ministry statement said. "Participants recognized the need to develop confidence-building measures to engender trust among all stakeholders."

The next meeting would be held at a mutually convenient date after Ramadan ends later this month, it said.

In Kabul, Afghanistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs welcomed the peace talks and praised Pakistan for hosting and thanked Washington and China for taking part.

"We believe that if there is a good and strong intention in the peace process, there will be good results," the state-



Pakistani Muslims wait to break their fast during Ramadan in Islamabad

ment said.

Tuesday's talks came after repeated informal meetings between Taliban and government representatives, most recently hosted by Qatar and Norway. The talks were the first formally acknowledged by the Afghan government; that and the semi-public nature of the talks suggested possible progress after years of frustration in trying to bring the two sides together.

Previous efforts to start a dialogue stalled, however, largely due the lack of trust and confidence between the two sides.

Pakistan's prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, Tuesday night called the holding of the talks "a major breakthrough" in comments recorded for Pakistani TV from the Norwegian capital Oslo, where he is on a three-day visit.

He said the overtness of the meeting was a positive development. "I hope there will be a positive outcome which will certainly be very helpful for peace and stability in Afghanistan," he said. AP



An Islamic State militant fires artillery against Syrian government forces in Hama city, Syria



Islamic State militants patrol Khazer, Iraq

Hamza Hendawi, Qassim Abdul-Zahra and Bassem Mroue, Baghdad

ISLAMIC STATE

Secret to success: Shock troops who fight to the death

THEY are the Islamic State group's elite shock troops. Fanatical and disciplined, they infiltrate cities of Iraq and Syria, unleash mayhem and fight to the death, wearing explosives belts to blow themselves up among their opponents if they face defeat.

IS calls them "Inghemasiyoun," Arabic for "those who immerse themselves," a sort of special forces unit parallel to its regular forces that is credited with many of the group's stunning battlefield successes. A recent online video from the group showed a unit preparing to launch an eventually successful attack on the central Syrian town of al-Sukhna. "Victory or martyrdom," the fighters, wearing blue bandanas, scream in a circle around their commander, pledging their allegiance to God and vowing never to retreat.

"They cause chaos and then their main ground offensive begins," said Redur Khalil, spokesman for the U.S.-backed Kurdish People's Protection Units, which have led a string of military successes against the IS in Syria.

Though best known for its horrific brutalities, the Islamic State group has proved to be a highly organized and flexible fighting force, according to senior Iraqi military and intelligence officials and Syrian Kurdish commanders on the front lines.

Its tactics are often creative, whether it's using a sandstorm as cover for an assault or a lone sniper tying himself to the top of a palm tree to pick off troops below. Its forces switch between con-

ventional and guerrilla warfare, using the latter to wear down their opponents before massed fighters backed by armored vehicles, Humvees and sometimes even artillery move to take over territory. The fighters incorporate suicide bombings as a battlefield tactic to break through lines and demoralize enemies, and they hone them to make them more effective. Recently, they beefed up armor of the vehicles used in those attacks to prevent gunfire from killing

given freedom to operate as they see fit to achieve them. That's a sharp contrast to the rigid hierarchies of the Iraqi and Syrian militaries, where officers often fear acting without direct approval.

IS fighters are highly disciplined – swift execution is the punishment for deserting battle or falling asleep on guard duty, Iraqi officers said. The group also is flush with weaponry looted from Iraqi forces.

IS stands out in its ability to conduct multiple battles si-

■ **Special troops called 'Inghemasiyoun,' Arabic for 'those who immerse themselves,' are possibly the deadliest weapon in the extremist group's arsenal**

multaneously, Iraqi army Lt. Gen. Abdul-Wahab al-Saadi said.

"In the Iraqi army, we can only run one big battle at a time," said al-Saadi, who was wounded twice in the past year as he led forces that retook the key cities of Beiji and Tikrit.

Even the group's atrocities are in part a tactic to terrorize its enemies. It beheads captured soldiers, releasing videos of the killings online.

Stepping up the shock value, recent videos showed caged captives being lowered into a pool to drown and the heads blown off other captives with explosive wire around their necks.

The number of IS fighters in Iraq and Syria is estimated between 30,000 to 60,000, according to the Iraqi officers. Former officers from the military of ousted Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein have helped the group organize its fighters. Veteran jihadis with combat experience in Afghanistan, Chechnya or Somalia have brought valuable experience.

Foreigners who join IS often end up as suicide bombers. "People go to the Islamic State looking to die, and the Islamic State is happy to help them," said Patrick Skinner, a former CIA officer now with The Soufan Group, a private geopolitical risk assessment company.

The group's tactics carried it to a sweep of northern and western Iraq a year ago, capturing Mosul, Iraq's second-biggest city. Shortly thereafter, IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi declared a "caliphate" spanning its territory in Iraq and Syria.

In May, it captured Ramadi, capital of Iraq's vast western Anbar province. In Syria, it seized the central city of Palmyra.

The elite shock troops were

crucial in capturing Ramadi. First came a wave of more than a dozen suicide bombings that hammered the military's positions, then the fighters moved in during a sandstorm. Iraqi troops crumbled and fled as a larger IS force marched in.

Since US-led airstrikes in Iraq and Syria have hampered the group's movements, IS has lost ground. Iraqi troops and Shiite militiamen retook some cities, like Saddam's hometown of Tikrit. In Syria, Kurdish fighters backed by heavy U.S. airstrikes recaptured the border town of Kobani after weeks of devastating battles. More recently, IS lost Tal Abyad, another Syrian border town.

Despite that loss, IS shock troops attacked Kobani again last month. Around 70 fighters battled a much larger Kurdish force for two days. They were all slain, but not before killing more than 230 civilians, including roughly 100 children, and more than 30 Kurdish fighters. Around the same time, they also attacked Tal Abyad, where they battled for days until they were killed, and the northeast Syrian city of Hassakeh, where they continue to hold out.

"They weren't planning to leave alive," Kurdish commander Ghalia Nehme said of the IS fighters in Kobani. "It seems they were longing for heaven." AP

what's ON



DISNEY'S BEAUTY AND THE BEAST
TIME: 8pm (Tuesdays to Fridays)
 2pm & 8pm (Saturdays & Sundays)
UNTIL: July 26, 2015
VENUE: The Venetian Theatre
LANGUAGE: English with Chinese subtitles
ADMISSION: MOP280, MOP480, MOP680
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2882 8888

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

PANTONE 0022 M – PAINTING EXHIBITION
BY JOÃO JORGE MAGALHÃES
TIME: 2pm-7pm
 (Closed on Sundays and public holidays)
UNTIL: July 18, 2015
ADMISSION: Free
VENUE: Creative Macau, G/F Macau Cultural Centre
 Building, Xian Xing Hai Avenue
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2875 3282

Offbeat

POLICE: MAN BREAKS INTO BERLIN RESTAURANT, DRINKS TABASCO

A man is in hot water after allegedly stealing a bicycle, pitching it through a Berlin restaurant window, then entering and quaffing half a bottle of Tabasco sauce — telling authorities he was thirsty. Police spokesman Jens Berger said this week the 34-year-old was intoxicated, but it wasn't clear why he went for the bottle of Tabasco to quench his thirst. He says the man may have mistaken it for a tiny bottle of liqueur, popular in Germany. Neighbors alerted police overnight after hearing the window smash. The man was arrested inside the restaurant. Berger says after telling police he had broken in because he was thirsty, he said all he wanted to do was sleep — and was given the opportunity in an overnight holding cell.

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

09 Jul - 15 Jul



MINIONS
ROOM 1
 (2D) 2.15, 4.00, 9.30 pm
 (3D) 7.45 pm
Director: Pierre Coffin, Kyle Balda
Language: Cantonese (Chinese/English)
Duration: 91min

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

POLTERGEIST
ROOM 2
 (2D) 2.15, 6.00, 9.30 pm
 (3D) 7.45 pm
Director: Gil Kenan
Starring: Sam Rockwell, Rosemarie DeWitt,
 Kennedy Clements
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 93min

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

TERMINATOR: GENISYS
ROOM 3
 (2D) 2.30, 4.45, 9.30pm
 (3D) 7.15
Director: Alan Taylor
Starring: Arnold Schwarzenegger, Jason Clarke,
 Emilia Clarke
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 120min

MACAU TOWER

02 Jul - 15 Jul

TERMINATOR: GENISYS
 2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm
Director: Alan Taylor
Starring: Arnold Schwarzenegger, Jason Clarke,
 Emilia Clarke
Language: English (Chinese)
Duration: 125min

this day in history



1991 BANK COLLAPSE COSTS TAXPAYERS MILLIONS

The closure of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International has lost about 20 local councils up to £30m in investments.

BCCI was forced to shut its doors by the Bank of England last week amid fraud allegations.

Councillors from Scotland to the south-west of England fear that poll taxes will have to be raised to offset the losses.

BCCI remained on the most recent list of investment banks approved by the Bank of England and circulated by the Department of the Environment just over a fortnight ago.

Council losses range from £6.5m in Bury to £0.6m in Bristol.

In the borough of Bury, Greater Manchester, the sum accounts for all surplus money that the council has saved for investment over several years.

The leader of Bury Council Colin Jones said: "We don't know where we stand."

He continued that the authority would be "absolutely crippled" if they had to make up the deficit themselves.

None of the BCCI's former customers are aware of how much, if any, compensation will be paid to them, but current insurance schemes set a limit of £15,000.

In spite of criticism from both sides of the Commons, the Treasury has already confirmed that the councils will be treated in the same way as other unsecured creditors.

Councillors estimate that it could cost tax payers an extra £50 a year in poll tax to recoup the money.

The Association of District Councils is writing to all of its 300-plus members to confirm the full extent of the losses.

A wide variety of local authorities have already confirmed that they are affected, including 11 English district councils, three metropolitan districts and two Scottish districts.

Some, like York, have invested with BCCI for several years, but others, like Allerdale had only placed funds there in the last week.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

In the end 35 councils lost nearly £90m. Western Isles Council suffered the greatest loss of £23m which led to the resignation of the council leader, Donald Macauley.

Councils blamed the government and Bank of England for continuing to recommend BCCI, as evidence of its fraudulent activities mounted. A public inquiry was launched.

The Commons Treasury and Civil Service committee's investigation heard evidence from all sides and criticised councils for being careless with their funds.

In March 2001 BCCI liquidators, Deloitte and Touche, were finally granted the right to sue the Bank of England over its failure to properly regulate BCCI.

The lawsuit began in January 2004 and was the first the Bank had faced in its 300-year history.

Deloitte dropped the case in November 2005 after a reserve judgement from the High Court said the case was no longer in the best interest of creditors.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 When money is short, your first reaction is to try to suck more towards you. But what you should do is direct your energy outward. Thinking of others is more profitable than thinking of your wallet.

Taurus April 20-May 20 You can either be the one in distress or the one doing the consoling. Doing the consoling is a much better use of time and effort, even if you're both in the same financial boat.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Of course what you wear affects your reputation and how others see you. They don't call it dressing for success for nothing. That makes your wardrobe a legitimate investment, even in times like these.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Like it or not, you're on the same wavelength as others. You can't turn off your strong intuition and you can't make a buck from it, but you can learn a thing or two if you stay tuned.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Nervous energy is building. You can't channel it into a money maker, but you can channel it into something creative. Making art beats flying off the handle any day of the week, so give it a try.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Everyone moves at the pace they want, and yours is fast. Being broke might be less problematic for you than time on your hands. Figure out a good way to keep moving.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 The smaller things in life are more than just consolation prizes. They are still life's most valuable offerings, so keep your head down and focus on what you know you can count on.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 It takes a lot more creativity to make your dreams of riches come true, but you can still pull them out of a hat. Dig into the real world details if you want to make your fantasies manifest.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Stop letting gloomy forecasts get you so down. It may not seem like a good time to expand your horizons, but actually both you and your assets have nowhere to go but up.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 It was almost too easy, so be glad that making money has suddenly gotten a lot harder. Instead of imagining yourself snapping your fingers for a waiter, consider yourself a stealthy hunter, slowly advancing on your prey.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Daydreaming about the old days will make you want to take out your wallet. But the funds just aren't there. Don't overspend just for the sake of stoking nostalgia.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 You're either transforming yourself or life is doing it for you. The clay has not been fired yet. Discover who you are becoming while there's still time to change your eventual shape.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzles categorized as Easy, Easy+, Medium, and Hard.

WEATHER

Weather forecast table for China and World locations including Beijing, Harbin, Shanghai, etc.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Existed; 5- Cavern; 10- Film spool; 14- Earthenware pot; 15- Fauvist painter Dufy; 16- Robert ...; 17- Gull-like predatory bird; 18- Bandleader Skinnay ...; 19- Wall covering slab for a kitchen or bathroom; 20- Irish dish of potatoes and cabbage; 22- Squeeze; 23- Say grace; 24- Palm starch; 26- Pompous sort; 29- High-ranking NCO; 31- Puget Sound city; 35- Oodles; 37- Seine feeder; 39- Those, to Juan; 40- Gilbert of "Roseanne"; 41- Bald, golden, or harpy; 42- Pest control brand; 43- Norwegian king; 44- Will-...wisp; 45- Kid; 46- Gorge; 48- 9th letter of the Hebrew alphabet; 50- Remote button; 51- Bach's "... Joy of Man's Desiring"; 53- Career golfers; 55- University of Florida player; 58- Baking soda; 63- Neuron part; 64- Hood-shaped anatomical part; 65- Shoestring; 66- Brazilian soccer star; 67- Excrete; 68- TV handyman Bob; 69- Old cloth measures; 70- Unordered; 71- Pearl Buck heroine;

Down clues and a crossword grid with 'Yesterday's solution'.

A large crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-71.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



FOR SALE and FOR RENT advertisement for JML Property.

Real estate advertisement for Nova City - Central Taipa and Houston Court, Coloane Village.

Real estate advertisement for Vila Bela Macau and CHUN LEONG Taipa.

Real estate advertisement for Designer Apartment Macau and One Grantai, Unit Y Taipa.

Real estate advertisement for Hellene Gardens Coloane and Iau Lei Garden Taipa.

JML Property logo and contact information.



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Photo shown here may be different from Macau specifications.



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BASEBALL

Royals double up against Rays, Cubs do double on Cardinals

PAULO Orlando belted a game-ending grand slam for Kansas City to beat Tampa Bay 9-5 in the opener of a doubleheader, and Alcides Escobar's bases-clearing double helped them to a 7-1 win over the Rays in the nightcap yesterday.

Along the way, Alex Gordon was on base eight times with seven hits and six RBIs, Greg Holland (3-0) and Brandon Finnegan (2-0) each earned a win in relief, and the Royals added to their lead over Minnesota in the American League Central.

Meanwhile, St. Louis lost both games of its doubleheader at the Chicago Cubs, cutting the Cardinals' once-dominant lead in the National League Central to just 4 1/2 games ahead of Pittsburgh, which edged San Diego.

Cleveland pitcher Corey Kluber broke through for an overdue win as the Indians beat Houston 2-0, and the promising Miguel Sano contributed to Minnesota's 8-3 win against Baltimore.

The first game at Kansas City was tied at 5-5 when Orlando came to the plate. Tampa Bay's All-Star closer Brad Boxberger (4-5) threw him a changeup, and the Brazilian pounded it into the bullpen for his first career slam.

In the night game, Escobar hit a bases-loaded double on the 11th pitch of his at-bat in the sixth inning to turn a 1-1 game into a 4-1 lead for the Royals.

The Cubs won only two of their previous 10 games against St. Louis, but set about redressing that balance when Jake Arrieta pitched strongly to steer the hosts to a 7-4 win in the day game.

In the second game, Chicago trailed 2-1 until Addison Russell hit a tying single and scored during a three-run rally in the seventh, with Cardinals reliever Seth Maness (3-1) getting ejected after giving up the tying single, only for his replacement Kevin Siegrist to allow two more runs. The Cubs won 5-3.

Pittsburgh further eroded St. Louis' lead by winning 3-2 at home against San Diego.

Gregory Polanco hit a go-ahead triple in the eighth inning for the Pirates. Earlier, he and a



Kansas City Royals left fielder Paulo Orlando

couple of teammates came to the rescue of a ground crew member who was trapped under the tarpaulin while covering the infield during a rain delay.

Sean Rodriguez, who helped Polanco in that rescue, was hit by a pitch from Joaquin Benoit (5-4) leading off the eighth, and Polanco tripled with two outs to give the Pirates their fourth straight win.

Cleveland ace Corey Kluber took his first win in almost six weeks. Kluber (4-9) undeservedly went 0-4 with two no-decisions in his previous six starts. But he was on his game against the Astros, who managed to get only one run past second base into the seventh inning.

Michael Brantley homered in the sixth as the Indians snapped a three-game losing run.

Minnesota's top prospect, Miguel Sano, hit his first major league homer then showed some patience at the plate by drawing a bases-loaded walk as the Twins cruised past Baltimore.

Sano hit a towering two-run homer in the

first inning in front of the fans who have long been waiting for his heralded arrival. Known for a potent bat, Sano had two hits and has hit safely in each of his first six games since being promoted from the second tier of the minors.

San Francisco's Matt Cain pitched six scoreless innings for his first win in nearly a year as the Giants beat the New York Mets 3-0 to arrest a seven-game losing skid. It was two days short of one year since Cain (1-1) last pitched at home, before missing the final half of the season following elbow surgery.

Cincinnati's Johnny Cueto pitched a shutout with 11 strikeouts to guide the Reds over Washington 5-0.

The potential pitching duel between Cueto and Nationals ace Max Scherzer never materialized. Cueto kept up his end — retiring the final 15 batters in his first complete game of the year — but Scherzer (9-7) gave up five runs before being pulled after 4 2/3 innings; his shortest outing in more than a year.

Reds slugger Joey Votto doubled in a run in the first inning, hit a solo homer in the third, and added an RBI single in the fifth.

Oakland's Brett Lawrie hit a leadoff homer in the 10th inning to give the Athletics a 4-3 win at the New York Yankees. It was the first extra-inning victory of the season for the A's, at the seventh attempt. They were the last team in the majors to win in extra innings this season.

Philadelphia pitcher Chad Billingsley won for the first time in over two years following two elbow surgeries as he beat his old team, the Los Angeles Dodgers, 7-2.

Arizona rookie Robbie Ray held Texas scoreless over the first seven innings, outpitching Rangers ace Yovani Gallardo and guiding the Diamondbacks to a 4-2 victory.

Seattle's Robinson Cano drove in the winning run with one out in the 11th inning, lifting the Mariners past Detroit 7-6, Toronto out-pitched the Chicago White Sox to win 2-1, Los Angeles cruised past Colorado 10-2, Atlanta edged Milwaukee 4-3, and Boston beat Miami 4-3. **AP**

OLYMPICS

Budapest announces intention to bid for 2024 games

The city of Budapest and the Hungarian Olympic Committee have officially announced their intention to bid for the 2024 Olympic Summer Games. Budapest Mayor Istvan Tarlos and Zsolt Borkai, head of Hungary's Olympic agency, made the declaration in a letter to Thomas Bach, president of the International Olympic Committee. "The City of Budapest and the Hungarian Olympic Committee wish to participate in the application and bidding process with the aim of selecting the host city" of the 2024 Olympics, said the letter published yesterday.

RUGBY

Springboks captain De Villiers on bench for World XV game

Jean de Villiers has made a quicker-than-expected recovery from a serious left knee injury to be picked on the bench for the Springboks' opening game of the season, giving the two-time champions a big boost two months out from the World Cup. The South Africa captain was a doubt to even make the World Cup in September after undergoing reconstructive surgery following his injury against Wales at the end of last year, when he dislocated his knee cap and badly damaged ligaments. With De Villiers playing off the bench, veteran lock Victor Matfield will captain the Springboks on Saturday, one of three players alongside De Villiers and wing Bryan Habana in the 23-man matchday squad to have played more than 100 tests.

FOOTBALL

Alderweireld joins Spurs from Atletico Madrid

Belgium defender Toby Alderweireld has joined Tottenham from Atletico Madrid, signing a contract with the English club until 2020 for an undisclosed fee. Alderweireld spent last season on loan at Southampton. The versatile Alderweireld joins fellow Belgians Nacer Chadli, Mousa Dembele and Jan Vertonghen at Spurs, and could partner Vertonghen at center back. He started his career at Ajax in the Netherlands, before moving to Atletico in 2013.

FOOTBALL

Dempsey scores twice, US beats Honduras 2-1 to open Gold Cup

TWO headed goals by Clint Dempsey gave the United States a 2-1 victory over Honduras yesterday (Macau time) and a successful start to its title defense in the CONCACAF Gold Cup.

Dempsey's goals in the 25th and 64th minutes were created from crosses from Michael Bradley, wearing the captain's armband in his 100th international appearance.

Dempsey's big night came in the same area where the East Texas native trained as a youth, and he boosted the Americans to 13-0 in Gold Cup openers.

Carlos Discua scored his first international goal in the 69th mi-



U.S. forward Clint Dempsey (8) stops the ball in front of Honduras' Henry Figueroa (5) during the first half of a CONCACAF Gold Cup soccer match in Frisco, Texas

nute for Honduras, a semifinalist in the past three Gold Cups.

"It wasn't our best performance, but we're happy to get three points from our first game," Dempsey said.

It was the first competitive match for the U.S. since losing to Belgium in overtime in the second round of last year's World Cup. The Americans meet Haiti on Friday and Panama on Monday. Haiti tied Panama 1-1 in the doubleheader opener.

The first goal developed when DeAndre Yedlin played a corner kick short to Bradley, who crossed to the far post. Henry Figueroa's clearance attempt was picked up at the side of the 6-yard

box by Jozy Altidore, who took a touch and shot. Goalkeeper Denis Escobar kicked the ball out with his right foot and it popped up to Dempsey, who nodded it in from 6 yards.

Bradley's free kick from the flank led to the second goal. Escobar stayed on his line and an unmarked Dempsey jumped 4 yards out and headed inside the far post.

After a sluggish start, the U.S. controlled the pace in the second half until Discua took a clever pass from Wilmer Crisanto and touched the ball past a standing Ventura Alvarado before beating goalkeeper Brad Guzan.

Honduras had a couple of good equalizing opportunities in the final 20 minutes, including when Guzan knocked a ball toward Eddie Hernandez, who had an open net but couldn't control the ball before it went out. **AP**

opinion

HK Observer
Robert Carroll



NONE OF THEIR BUSINESS?

With many students turning away from the city's two big annual marches this year — the June 4 vigil to mark the anniversary of Beijing's Tiananmen Square crackdown, and the July 1 pro-democracy march — a new page has been turned in local political history, marking a radical shift. The decision not to attend the gatherings was not from lack of motivation or interest. Instead, it was a realization that the aims of the marches were not necessarily the way forward and that, since Occupy Central, mobilizations have failed to soften Beijing's stance regarding political reform; and indeed may well have been counter-productive in that respect. Neither has the June 4 march had any success in altering the verdict on Tiananmen Square — a consistently declared aim of the organizers. However, many students, rather than backpedalling in the face of China's resistance to their demands, are becoming more radicalized.

A positive for Beijing/establishment forces is that many students believe that another aim of the marches, that of democratizing China, is none of their business. This opinion has become the official stance of one of the most prestigious unions, that of the University of Hong Kong. While that should be music to the ears of Chinese and Hong Kong government mandarins, its *raison d'être* will be far from welcome. It's not that these students don't want to rock the boat in China, but many must realize that fighting for democracy and regime change on the mainland is a lost cause, and so they instead want to concentrate on issues and political development inside Hong Kong. What will stick in the throats of Beijing officials and their representatives here is that concentrating on the territory goes hand in hand with insisting on a local identity that is separate from China. According to regular academic polls, fewer and fewer young locals are Chinese first and Hong Kongers second. Worse, many now reject having a Chinese identity altogether. Worse still is the appearance of the absolutely taboo word, as far as Beijing is concerned — "(sovereign) independence" — in student leaders' interviews and articles in student publications, while still espoused by a small minority. This does not bode well at all for relations with the stridently nationalistic central government, which places frequent emphasis on the need for citizens to be patriotic.

As the old guard of pan-democrat leaders have failed to get enough concessions from Beijing on democratic reform to satisfy many of the students, the leaders of these students feel obliged to step into the fold, and we should expect to see many younger faces in the upcoming legislative council election. The question is whether they, or younger politicians, can establish relations and a rapport with the central authorities and, more importantly, can manage to wrest concessions on political reform in the coming years when changes take place. Can they do any better than the current leaders of the democracy movement, many of whom have been at the forefront since the 1990s? What would the tactics and strategies be to move a stern and highly suspicious, not to mention ever more powerful at home and internationally? Should these younger leaders be more or less confrontational? Neither of these paths has had much success; although the latter has received fewer opportunities given the political climates and mutual distrust between Beijing and pan-democrats.

Veteran pan-democrats defend their failure to reach an agreement with the Chinese government by saying that they don't negotiate and instead are sticking to their original positions, only giving far too little and too few concessions. Their critics say that the pan democrats have not made full use of the exchange opportunities that were offered, and have often shut the door on meetings by demanding the end of one-party rule in China, and democracy for the mainland. If the new generation of politicians emerging from the Umbrella/Occupy movement wants to have a real impact, a thorough look back and a realistic appraisal of the history of political reform talks, as well as innovative means, will be needed to get results.

THE BUZZ USA: TEEN CATCHES MATH ERROR IN GOLDEN RATIO AT BOSTON MUSEUM

A 15-year-old student visiting Boston's Museum of Science has uncovered a math error in the golden ratio at a 34-year-old exhibit.

Virginia resident Joseph Rosenfeld was visiting the museum on a recent family trip when he saw something that appeared wrong with the equation. Joseph noticed minus signs in the equation where there should have been plus signs. He left a message at the desk and

later received a letter from the museum's exhibit content developer, Alana Parkes, informing him the equation would be corrected.

Parkes wrote that the mistake had been there for a "very long time" without being noticed.

Joseph tells Boston.com that catching the error was exciting. He hopes to return to the Boston area someday to attend the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

GOLF

McIlroy's absence dominates talk at Scottish Open

Steve Douglas, Gullane

ALL the talk at the Scottish Open is about a player who isn't even here this week.

Rory McIlroy was supposed to be the main attraction at the tune-up to next week's British Open at St. Andrews. But the golf-loving Scottish public has been denied the sight of the world's top-ranked golfer after he injured his left ankle in a soccer kick-about with friends at the weekend.

McIlroy pulled out of the tournament at Gullane on Monday and is a doubt for the defense of his Open title, as he is currently on crutches with a walking boot on his injured ankle. No wonder he's been the hot topic of conversation ahead of the first round today.

"Hindsight is a wonderful thing," said Justin Rose, the defending Scottish Open champion. "It's probably the last time he plays football in the middle of the season."

For Rose and the rest of a strong field, which includes Americans Phil Mickelson, Rickie Fowler and Matt Kuchar, the absence of the four-time major winner boos



Rory McIlroy

ts their title chances over the links on Scotland's east coast.

Kuchar, however, doesn't think his chances have been boosted much.

"We are not playing tennis ... it's not like (Novak) Djokovic is now out of the draw and now everybody can breathe easier," the 17th-ranked Kuchar said.

"You've got a golf course here that everybody plays against. If you are worried about one guy, you're probably not going to be around here very long."

Given that the Scottish

Open is clashing with the second week of Wimbledon, tennis is on players' minds. Rose was in the Royal Box on Centre Court at the All England Club on Saturday, marveling over the mental strength of Andy Murray and the calmness of Roger Federer, Rose's sporting idol.

Rose is fully focused on his day job now, though, and is bidding to become the first player to retain the Scottish Open title.

The 2013 U.S. Open champion's past two appearances in Scotland have been mightily successful — he won the Scottish Open by two shots at Royal Aberdeen last July after a final-round 65 and then was the European team's star player in a Ryder Cup win over the United States at Gleneagles in September.

Another win this week will be good going — by late Tuesday afternoon, he hadn't even played the course.

"I'll be relying a lot on my caddie," said the No. 7-ranked Rose.

Gullane is hosting the Scottish Open for the first time. The 133-year-old course is a short walk from British Open venue Muirfield, and this year's event is being played over a composite of the club's No.1 and No.2 courses, totaling 6,524 meters for a par 70.

The past four British Open champions prepared for the third major of the year by playing the Scottish Open the previous week, perhaps explaining the depth of the field. AP

Station	Air quality
Roadside	60-80 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	100-130 Bad
Ambient	90-120 Bad

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

NORTH KOREA
In a country with zero kindergartens specifically for the deaf, Robert Grund wants to help establish the first. It's a small step, but Grund, the Pyongyang representative of the World Federation of the Deaf and the city's only full-time deaf foreign resident, sees it as part of a larger push to end isolation for the deaf.
More on p12



USA The South Carolina Senate gave its final approval Tuesday to removing the Confederate flag from the Capitol grounds, but across the hall in the House, Republicans quietly sought a way to make a last stand to preserve some kind of symbol honoring their Southern ancestors at the Statehouse. The House was scheduled to begin debate yesterday on the bill to take down the flag and its pole and send the banner to the state's Confederate Relic Room. Republican Gov. Nikki Haley and business leaders support the proposal.



ECUADOR Pope Francis is wrapping up the Ecuador leg of his South American pilgrimage after issuing a call for a new economic and ecological world order where the goods of the Earth are shared by everyone.

RUSSIA vetoed a U.N. resolution yesterday that would have condemned the 1995 massacre of Muslim men at Srebrenica during the Bosnian war as a "crime of genocide," saying that singling out the Bosnian Serbs for a war crime would create greater division in the Balkans.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

AP Photo/Francisco Seco



Chinese tourists take a selfie at the Cais das Colunas dock by the Tagus riverbank, in Lisbon, yesterday. The dock, for centuries the port of entry to the city, is currently a popular spot for locals and tourists to pause and relax.