



COUTINHO CONFIRMS BID TO RUN FOR LISBON PARLIAMENT
Pereira Coutinho confirmed he's running in the October Portuguese legislative elections, heading the platform "We, Citizens"

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CLOSER COOPERATION NEEDED BETWEEN GOV'T AND INDUSTRY
Gov't and industry leaders should work closer for the city and citizens to thrive on change, says leadership expert Robert Kirby

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XI STAYING THE COURSE DESPITE SLIDING ECONOMY


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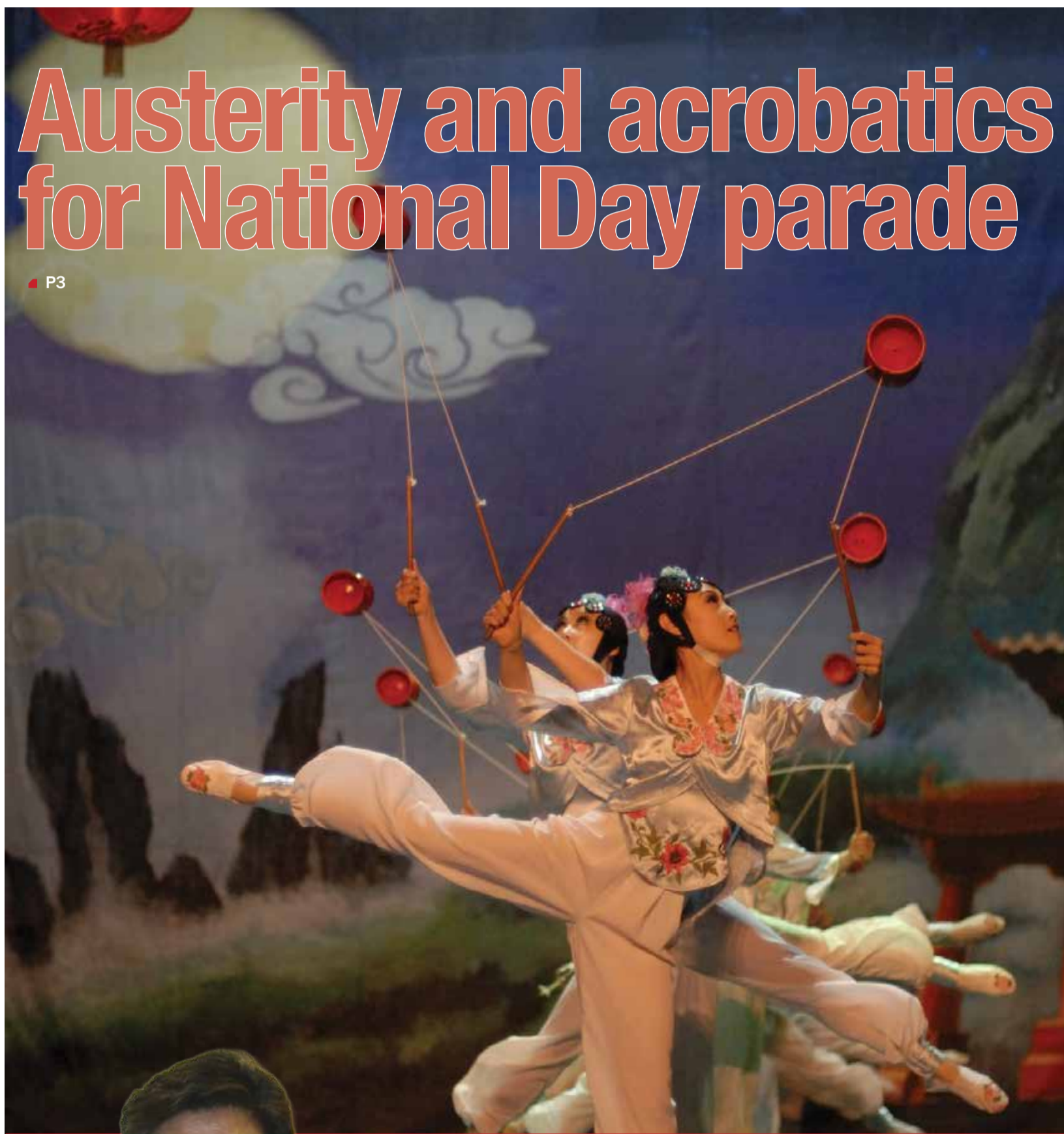
CHINA Smog levels in Beijing hit a record low after the government closed factories and limited traffic in advance of a parade marking the World War II victory over Japan. The average level of PM2.5 - the tiny particulates that pose the greatest threat to human health - fell to 19.5 micrograms from August 20-24, the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau said Tuesday. Pollution had never been that low over five days in the three years the bureau has been publicly announcing the records.

CHINA State media say China's top official on work safety has been fired and is a suspect in a corruption investigation. The fall of Yang Dongliang, 61, has coincided with the explosion at a hazardous material warehouse in Tianjin on Aug. 12 which killed 139 people and left 34 missing. The Xinhua News Agency said yesterday that Yang, formerly the director of the State Administration of Work Safety, is suspected of "severely violating" party discipline and state laws, which typically means corruption.

MYANMAR opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi warns armed ethnic minority groups not to rush into signing a nationwide cease-fire deal, a position that pits her against President Thein Sein, who has made reaching a deal before November's general election his top priority.

MALAYSIA The deep sea hunt for the missing Malaysia Airlines jetliner will likely include cutting-edge sonar equipment when it ramps up again in October after the stormy southern hemisphere winter has passed, the Australian search leader says.

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH CONSUL DEAPERERA

Filipino gov't trying to prevent job hunting on tourist visas ▲ P2

Q&A LILYBETH R. DEAPER
PHILIPPINES CONSUL GENERAL

'We're trying to dissuade Filipino nationals from looking for work while on tourist visas'

Catarina Pinto

THE Philippines Consul General Lilybeth R. Deapera is confident that Filipino employment agencies are providing appropriate information and training to migrant workers prior to their arrival in Macau. However, migrant domestic helpers have voiced their concerns over recruitment agencies charging exorbitant fees. In an interview with the Times, conducted on the sidelines of an opening ceremony for a photographic exhibition on Monday, Deapera said that the Filipino state is trying to dissuade Filipino nationals from job hunting in Macau while on tourist visas, as they could become more vulnerable to potential abuse, either from employers or agencies.



Lilybeth R. Deapera

MDT – A group of migrant workers is calling for further employment agency regulation. Did the consulate receive complaints over recruitment agencies charging unreasonable fees?

Lilybeth R. Deapera (LRD) – Unfortunately, we have heard of foreign recruitment agencies that charge steep prices, but we have not received a complaint from our nationals. They normally use agencies in the Philippines; we have the Overseas Philippines Employment Agency, which regulates the departure of Filipinos to other countries.

Aside from receiving [a job offer] from a prospective employer, they are required to undergo training in domestic work skills; they have to learn basic language skills and attend a departure orientation seminar: how to live in a foreign country; how to manage your income; and general information on foreign work. This is particularly important for those who will be working abroad for the first time.

Problems arise mainly regarding salary, housing and interpretation of the law in terms of holidays and rest

MDT – But how do you think this problem should be solved? Because migrant workers still claim that there are indeed agencies charging unreasonable fees.

LRD - The agencies that I think have been charging [higher fees] are those that are working on the tourist [visa holders]. We've heard of cases in which Filipinos come here as tourists and are able to get a

job. And we are trying as hard as possible to dissuade them from going through this channel: because first they don't have the training; and second, they are more likely to be abused, because they are desperate not to overstay their visas. So the first job that comes their way, they accept right away.

MDT - What do you think the Philippine government could do in that regard?

LRD - We are trying to trace the Filipino national who spoke in the news conference to see how we can work with her. Because she's supposed to be a representative of the Filipino domestic workers, and we would like to see how we can work together. When the Secretary of Labor visited Macau two weeks ago, that was one of the concerns that they raised. She met with recruitment agencies, and these agencies are accredited by the Filipino Overseas Employment Agency. But there are other agencies, which are not part of that network.

We've identified ways by which their rights are protected. They undergo training, and they have to have a medical certificate before they leave for their destination, because we want them to have a hassle-free stay in the country they're heading to.

We have also specially developed programs for those who are planning to go back to the Philippines.

MDT – In what way is the government here also tackling this matter?

LRD - On Sunday, we had a seminar where government representatives from DSAL, immigration and other agencies discussed labor, law, immigration, trafficking and exploitation.

We try as much as possible to ensure that migrant workers get all the information they should have.

There was a very robust discussion yesterday [Sunday] and [government representatives] became aware of the rights and obligations of non-resident

workers here, especially those of domestic helpers. Those [migrants] working for hotels usually undergo training and have access to further information there.

MDT – Most Filipino nationals are working here as domestic helpers or in the hospitality industry. What kinds of complaints or challenges have they shared with the Consulate lately?

LRD – Well, sometimes they are not aware, or they have to be told, of details regarding the minimum number of working hours.

For example, yesterday [Sunday] we learned that if you're a nanny and the child is sleeping... that's supposed to be a resting period for you.

They complain mainly about the housing allowance now set at MOP500. The cost of rent here is very high, so they're asking the government to increase the [allowance] at some point in time.

We were told that [the government is] still in the process of discussing this. Migrant workers will receive the minimum wage for jobs such as security guards and cleaners next year. But it will take some time before domestic workers will be able to also earn this kind of minimum wage.

Problems arise mainly regarding salary, housing and interpretation of the law in terms of holidays and rest. There were also problems reported regarding the language barrier. Sometimes employer and employee do not understand each other... and the employer decides that they want to fire their domestic helper because they're unable to communicate.

MDT – In June, when the Consulate commemorated the Philippines Independence Day here, you mentioned that more Filipino nationals are opening businesses in Macau. What advice would you give to your fellow citizens who are planning to open a business here?

LRD – They really have to learn about the market and study the market very well. One of the hindrances would be the high cost of rent. I was talking recently to a Filipino who owns several stores here, and he was saying that landlords are charging more rent for commercial establishments.

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NATIONAL DAY

Acrobatic 'Nutcracker' headlines reduced budget for October show

Brook Yang

THE Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) has made significant cuts to its budget for the annual performance celebrating Chinese National Day this year, reducing the costs from last year's MOP2.7 million to this year's MOP1.86 million.

To mark the 66th anniversary of the Chinese National Day, the IACM, the Cultural Institute, and the Chinese Liaison Office's Department of Culture and Education will again present a prestigious artistic group from the mainland. The show chosen for this year is a Chinese acrobatic version of "The Nutcracker," which will be performed by 60 acrobats from the Dalian Acrobatic Troupe of China.

Ma Kam Keong, a member



of the IACM's Administrative Council, said at a press conference that at previous festivals, large-scale acrobatic shows have received an enthusiastic response from local audiences. He explained that money was saved this year as the show not only contains fewer performers, but also because the MSAR government is now saving expenditure.

With a history spanning nearly 65 years, the Dalian Acrobatic Troupe was China's first acrobatic group to perform abroad for commercial performances. It has traveled to over 60 countries and regions, and is today considered an incomparable powerhouse in the Chinese acrobatic scene.

Combining classical ballet, dance, striking scenery and

magic tricks with daring acrobatics, the group's original choreography and Chinese-style aesthetics create a whole new interpretation of the long-lasting ballet classic "The Nutcracker." Having been showcased in some 500 performances in China and overseas, the first acrobatic adaptation of "The Nutcracker" has gained international prestige.

Two performances will be staged at the Macao Forum on the evenings of September 30 and October 1. A total of 6,000 tickets will be available at the box office from this Saturday.

Like students, elderly citizens and citizens with disabilities, Macau ID holders are also eligible to buy tickets at a special price of MOP50 before September 10, with the ordinary price set at MOP200.

Visitor arrivals down by 3.8 pct

Visitor arrivals decreased by 3.8 percent year-on-year in July, as shown by data released by the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC). The number of tourist arrivals in July amounted to 2,648,894, up by 17.8 percent month-on-month. The number of same-day visitors decreased by 6.4 percent year-on-year, while the number of overnight visitors dropped by 0.9 percent. DSEC said that the average length of stay increased by 0.2 days year-on-year to 1.2 days. The number of tourists from mainland China decreased by 6.1 percent year-on-year to 1,757,167. The number of those traveling under the Individual Visit Scheme dropped by 5.3 percent to 824,536. Mainland visitors came mainly from Guangdong, Fujian and Hunan provinces. Visitors from the Republic of Korea decreased by 22.5 percent year-on-year, while those from Hong Kong (586,136) and Taiwan (93,443) increased by 5.7 percent and 0.1 percent respectively. Long-haul tourists from the United States, Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom recorded a year-on-year decline. In the first seven months of this year, visitor arrivals totaled 17,405,393.

Int'l Music Festival shows sold out

Tickets for the 29th International Music Festival (MIMF) organized by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) have been on sale since Sunday. Many people waited at different ticket offices to buy the tickets. According to an IC note to the press, "Ticket sales were ideal with about 7,000 sold by 7:00pm on 23 August." The 29th MIMF will take place from 4th October to 1st November, featuring some 23 extraordinary performances. Tickets for the performance "Over the Moon" by Chanticleer, known as an orchestra of voices, were sold out on the first day. The performance "Stradivari Quartett" and concert to be performed by Icelandic sensation Ólafur Arnalds were also very popular. The opening performance "Gustav Mahler - Symphony No. 3", BBC Philharmonic's two performances of Symphony No. 9 and the closing opera "Faust" were also hot-selling items.

Public service consultation on future e-gov ends

The month-long consultation within public services on the topic of the overall planning of electronic governance between 2015 and 2019 has concluded and it is expected that soon opinions from the public will be sought, Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau deputy head Kou Peng Kuan revealed in his reply to lawmaker Si Ka Lon's earlier interpellation. Si questioned the authorities about the timeframe in which relevant information for public consultation would be released. The authorities also said that more service applications would be rolled out by other government departments in response to the trend of mobile phone usage among citizens. The bureau also planned to improve the functionality and accessibility of the government website on various electronic devices.

Lawmaker slams gov't inaction in enhancing Putonghua education

LAWMAKER Ho Ion Sang recently suggested that local schools' Putonghua [Mandarin Chinese] education is seriously lagging behind Macau's social development needs.

In his latest written inquiry, Ho criticized the government for not properly carrying out its ten-year plan on non-tertiary education that was set out for this decade; several measures stipulated in the plan have been delayed in implementation or are likely to see delays.

Amongst those inadequacies, the lawmaker indicated that Putonghua standards to be established for teachers teaching Chinese language are still absent without a trace, yet they should've already materialized last year, as scheduled in the ten-year plan. The implementation of examining teachers' Putonghua levels is thus at a standstill.

Moreover, Ho added that the authority's work progress on enacting or amending several non-tertiary laws and regulations is behind schedule, such as the amendment to the Special Education System - a task that was supposed to be completed last year but only entered the public consultation stage this March.

As evidence, the legislator cited the government's previous Policy Addresses indicating that, "according to the Plan, the government needs to complete many law amendments, including school general rules, Vocational and Technical Education Regulation, school supervision system, as well as student assessment."

"However, except the Private School General Rules that finished public consultation last April, [amendments to] the other regulations and systems haven't shown substantial progress," he said, stressing that "the education sector worries that if those amendments [continue to suffer] repeated delays, the development of Macau's non-tertiary education will be further affected." **BY**

Coutinho confirms Portuguese parliamentary bid

LAWMAKER José Pereira Coutinho has confirmed that he will be running in the Portuguese parliamentary elections this coming October, heading the political party "Nós, Cidadãos! (We, Citizens!)." Coutinho is running under the electoral circuit outside Europe.

The Portuguese Parliament today comprises 230 lawmakers, four of which are elected under electoral circuits in European countries and outside Europe. Members are elected for a four-year term representing the country's 22 constituencies.

According to bid announcements released recently, Coutinho is seeking to win a seat in the Portuguese Parliament (AR) and is running to represent the "former overseas province of Macau." The contact details and address provided for the bid announcement are those of the Macau Civil Servants Association, where he serves as president.

Coutinho is also running in the Council of the Portuguese Communities (CCP) elections that are due to take place on September 6. The CCP, of which Coutinho is a member, is the Portuguese government's advisory body on emigration and all matters relating to the Portuguese communities abroad.

Gilberto Carlos Conceição Camacho is listed as his number two candidate in the bid for the Portuguese Parliament and for the CCP.

"We believe it's time for someo-



José Pereira Coutinho

ne to voice Portuguese communities' concerns in Lisbon. We want their hopes, wishes, and demands to have a voice. We are also looking to ensure that promoting the Portuguese language and culture abroad is seen as a priority by [the government] in Lisbon," Coutinho informed the Times earlier this month.

Running under the electoral circuit outside Europe, the lawmaker has explained that if he wins a seat in the Portuguese Parliament, he is not required to stay permanently in Lisbon. Instead, he could travel to different countries in which Portuguese communities are based to learn about their concerns.

The president of Macau's Legislative Assembly (AL), Ho Iat Seng, has previously commented on Coutinho's intent to run for the Portuguese Parliament, saying that this "is a diplomatic matter." He also stressed that lawmakers in the AL were required to swear an oath of loyalty to the People's Republic of China.

MDT/Lusa

Mortgage reversals for elderly citizens on the agenda

THE Director of the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS), Iong Kong Io, said that local elderly people are relatively active in the labor market, as currently over 8,400 out of Macau's 54,000 elderly citizens are employed.

Iong said on a TDM radio show broadcast yesterday that the bureau is investigating measures that will encourage enterprises to employ elderly people, such as providing subsidies. In establishing a ten-year action plan for elderly services, the authorities also intend to open social enterprises for elderly workers, based on their experience in operating social enterprises for people with disabilities.

Moreover, the government is studying the establishment of a part-time working system for the elderly under the protection



of new laws, so that they will have more opportunities to rejoin the workforce after retirement.

Regarding a listener's suggestion that the reversal of mortgages for elderly citizens be promoted as a means of financial support, the head of the

IAS's Department of Social Solidarity, Choi Sio Un, responded by saying that the bureau has discussed the idea with banking sector once before, but thinks it still needs to take local social cultural factors and risks into consideration. These

would include the desire of pensioners to leave property and inheritances to their children.

However, Choi said that the IAS will study the feasibility of the suggestion and will not rule out future talks with the Macao Monetary Authority. **BY**

IAS calls for early recognition of dementia

THE Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) hopes to increase awareness of dementia so that families with elderly members can recognize the illness as soon as possible and avoid missing chances for early treatment.

The bureau's Department of Social Solidarity head, Choi Sio Un, said on yesterday's TDM radio show that about five per cent of the local elderly population show symptoms of dementia, according to research conducted by the Kiang Wu Hospital. However, many patients and their families regard memory decline as a common sign of ageing, and thus ignore the early symptoms of the disease.

Choi said that the IAS has been actively encouraging society to identify the illness over recent years to ensure that patients seek early treatment in order to prevent deterioration. The government has also planned to establish specialized medical facilities to treat and prevent dementia, as proposed in its recent draft framework for elderly support.

According to the Health Bureau's medical director, Ng Hou, the proportion of those experiencing dementia is growing alongside the ageing population. He suggested that society should not expect a cure through medication, and that it is important to support and educate care-takers.

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Gaming staff groups press for promised promotion of senior dealers

THREE gaming employee unions yesterday joined forces to present a dilemma to the Labour Affairs Bureau officials that has long been facing some of their members working at the Melco Crown Entertainment Limited. This news comes despite attempts from the company to silence its employees.

The groups were intent on convincing authorities to intervene in order to help press the gaming operator to “deliver on its promise.” Consequently, they also hope for the promotion of over 1,000 senior croupiers to a higher supervisory position, particularly as they have been carrying out equivalent duties of that role.

According to Ronald Lou, who is in charge of Melco New Power, the company had pledged to secure those dealers a higher-level role within two years from the point at which



Representatives of three gaming trade unions met yesterday

they started working for the company. However, that promise is yet to be fulfilled, despite some of the staff members being five years into their tenures. “We aren’t greedy, we simply strive for our deserved welfare,” said Lo.

A senior dealer generally receives slightly under MOP20,000, while a supervisor might enjoy a salary of up to MOP23,000, said the union’s head. Many seasoned croupiers who were ordered by their employer to perform

duties equivalent to those assigned to supervisors on an internship basis during the course of a month grumbled about the company’s move, which they claimed to have treated them as “low-priced laborers.”

Those petitioners have braced themselves for a possible retaliation from the company. No discussion over their demands was allowed at their workplace as their managers would always disperse crowds formed by such dealers, said Chao Sao Fong, head of New Staff Union of Macau Gaming. “The superiors would directly talk to their employees: ‘If you go on camera or accept media interviews to leak such news, the company might impose a penalty on you,’” said Chao. Yet it is believed that, so far, no punishment has been implemented.

One of those croupiers present at the conference, who identified herself as Ms Wong,

said she deserved the promotion as she had been given “multiple commendations from her clients and superiors” and demanded a “transparent promotion mechanism” within the company. “I hope the company, no matter how the economy is doing, can give us a reply,” she said. Asked if she feared that her outspokenness would place her in trouble afterwards, she replied: “What we’re doing is appealing, not protesting, not subverting the company nor society.”

Aside from the fulfillment of the promised promotions, the employees also urged the company to revise its policy to allow a generous salary calculation to the provident fund, which at the moment excludes their fixed amount of gratuity.

The employees stressed that other gaming companies in the territory long ago eschewed the practice, as it was less favorable to their staff.

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Catarina Pinto

ROBERT KIRBY AT THE FMBA BREAKFAST MEETING

Closer cooperation needed between gov't and industry

LOCAL government and industry leaders need to forge a closer relationship to enable the city and citizens to thrive on change, says leadership expert Robert Kirby. Mr Kirby made the comments yesterday as he presented his book, titled "Dancing Dragon or Headless Chicken: Unleashing the Leader in You," at a France-Macau Business Association (FMBA) breakfast meeting.

Speaking to the Times on the sidelines of yesterday's event, Mr Kirby suggested that closer cooperation between the gaming industry and government leaders would be of great benefit to everyone.

"Clearly there's sometimes a mismatch in terms of areas like infrastructure or education. The phasing of the casinos... seems very strange as we're suddenly having a lot of integrated resorts opening in a very short period of time," he noted.

Mr Kirby added that leaders in Macau should manage the city's carrying capacity more efficiently, and that developing and completing infrastructural initiatives is a crucial step toward success. He recalled that initiatives such as the LRT have been repeatedly delayed over the last five years, and remain uncompleted.

"We don't know when the LRT is going to open; there's the Hong Kong-Macau-Zhuhai bridge, or the Taipa ferry terminal. These are very important infrastructure projects that need to be opened in a timely manner (...) Once we get a little bit more infrastructure in place, that's going to help [Macau] moving forward," he stressed.

Furthermore, he recalled that the city will never become a world-class tourism destination unless these infrastructural initiatives are fully completed.

Mr Kirby, who founded the Kirby Leadership Academy



Robert Kirby

and organizes the annual Sands China Macau Eco Trail-Hiker charity race, acknowledged that we need to develop a smarter approach to dealing with our tourism carrying capacity.

As competition increases across Asia, with countries like the Philippines opening gaming resorts, or Japan considering the legalization of gaming, Macau needs to look at every aspect of the tourism industry, including arrivals, immigration, transportation and taxes.

"If locals are feeling threatened by the amount of tourists and they're not happy

with what's going on, then we have a real issue. So that also needs to be addressed," he remarked.

Local gaming revenue has continued to fall over the past 14 months, recording a 34.5-percent decrease over the year leading up to July.

Looking forward, Mr Kirby assured those present that leaders in Macau also need to improve their ability to predict future developments.

"This downturn that we're having in gaming revenues should really be no surprise, because you can't sustain 35 or 40 percent growth month-on-month. At some point it's

going to slow down."

Mr Kirby added, "I'm sure that there are company leaders who saw this coming, and who prepared for it accordingly. But a lot of people got too comfortable, and now unfortunately they're hurting, particularly SMEs that rely on larger organizations to provide them with business."

During his talk yesterday, the leadership expert pointed out that people are now looking to work for leaders rather than for managers. Therefore, SME leaders in Macau should remain current and adapt to ever-changing times.

"If you're an SME leader and

“Once we get more infrastructure in place, that's going to help [Macau] moving forward

you're of the old style, you need to change, you need to update your software, go on a course, read leadership books, and better understand what it's going to take to attract and retain talent," he explained, adding that "if you can't attract and retain talent, your business is doomed."

Acknowledging that this is a critical time for Macau commerce, Mr Kirby said he remains optimistic. "We've got some great products coming up but we need to manage infrastructure and tourist experience, and ultimately this requires leadership at every level, and open communication," he confirmed.

Mr Kirby yesterday presented his book on leadership, which reflects upon a range of issues: bolstering leadership competencies; learning from mistakes; thriving on change; setting worthy goals; and creating positive-thinking habits.

The book was written in collaboration with his wife Charlotte Tsang, the co-founder of the Kirby Group of Companies.

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A man walks past a Samsung Electronics Co. shop in Beijing

Samsung responds to 'PenGate' Galaxy Note 5 flaw

Jungah Lee

APPLE Inc. had AntennaGate and BendGate, and now Samsung Electronics Co. is facing PenGate.

The South Korean company responded to criticism on social media yesterday about its new Galaxy Note 5, acknowledging that the device can break if the stylus is inserted backward into the storage slot. Its advice to customers: Read the manual.

The S Pen has a uniform width, making it fit in the slot upside down, and that can cause problems with the smart-phone, Samsung said in a statement. The large-screen Note series comes with a stylus that helps users take notes or draw pictures more precisely than with

their fingertips. Previous pens wouldn't fit when inserted incorrectly.

"If you insert the pen in the opposite direction into the Note 5 slot and put force to get it out, it could damage the S pen and the device resulting in malfunctioning," Samsung said in an e-mail. "That doesn't mean that it's a defective product."

Some users complained about the issue on Twitter under the hashtag #PenGate. Samsung said the Note 5 manual already warns of potential misuse of the stylus, and users can get their devices repaired at a local service center.

The issue is reminiscent of some of Apple's previous missteps with the iPhones. In 2010, Steve Jobs said some people were holding the iPhone 4

wrong, and that was impeding reception. Apple subsequently gave away plastic cases to fix what Jobs called "AntennaGate."

Last year, some users complained that their iPhone 6 Plus bent when they sat on it. Apple responded by saying the bending was "extremely rare."

Samsung is counting on the Note 5 and the curved-screen Galaxy S6 Edge Plus to help its products stand out from Apple and hundreds of vendors selling smartphones using Google Inc.'s Android software.

The Suwon, South Korea-based company released the devices this month to get ahead of the next iteration of iPhones. They debuted after lackluster sales of the premium Galaxy S6 prompted the company to cut prices. **Bloomberg**

Toyota poised to restart production at China plant shut in blast

Subramaniam Sharma

TOYOTA Motor Corp. said it would restart work today at China plants that were shut after explosions in the city of Tianjin.

Workers at two lines in the Tianjin Economic Technological Development Area will come back today and start preparation to begin production Friday, Toyota said in an e-mailed statement yesterday. Employees at the Xiqing line will begin operations today, it said.

Production has been shut at Tianjin FAW Toyota Motor Co., the Japanese carmaker's local affiliate, since the Aug. 12 blasts at a chemical storage site in the northern Chinese port city. The explosions killed at least 123 people and injured 67 Toyota workers who live in the area. About 4,700 Toyota and Lexus vehicles were also damaged.

The automaker said decisions about working overtime or extra shifts to recover lost production will be made as it continues to assess the state of its facilities. Toyota said it can't estimate lost output at this stage.

Toyota said it doesn't expect sales to be "significantly affected" as they have "certain amount of inventory."

Shares of Toyota rose 2.9 percent to 6,920 yen at the 3 p.m. close in Tokyo trading, the biggest gain since Dec. 19. Japan's benchmark Topix index climbed 3.2 percent.

The Tianjin disaster took a broader toll on the auto industry, damaging 2,700 Volkswagen AG vehicles, shutting a nearby Hyundai Motor Co. logistics center and forcing Fuji Heavy Industries Ltd. to divert car shipments to Shanghai. The warehouse that exploded stored about 1,300 metric tons of oxide compounds, the official Xinhua News Agency reported, citing Tianjin Vice Mayor He Shushan. **Bloomberg**



AP PHOTO

corporate bits

SANDS RESORTS COTAI STRIP AND VENETIAN MACAO ANNIVERSARY SALE



To celebrate the eighth anniversary of Sands Resorts Cotai Strip Macao and The Venetian Macao travellers can enjoy savings of up to 40 percent for a limited time during the eight-day sale. Starting Friday guests will be able to make savings at five hotels thanks to the 8-day sale.

From Aug. 28 to Sept. 4, guests will be able to book rooms for stays between Aug. 28, 2015 to Feb. 7, 2016 at The Venetian Macao; Four Seasons Hotel Macao; Conrad Macao, Cotai Central; Sheraton Macao Hotel, Cotai Central and Holiday Inn Macao Cotai Central.

In addition to discounts, guests who book a room will automatically be entered into a lucky draw for the chance to win one of eight prizes. One winner will be drawn every day during the sale. Prizes include a "four day and three night" stay at one of the hotels at the integrated resort.

NEW SHANGRI-LA HOTEL, TANGSHAN TO OPEN



The city of Tangshan – just two hours by car from Beijing – will be the newest location for the 301-room Shangri-La Hotel, Tangshan, opening this Friday.

Shangri-La Hotel, Tangshan is located in the Phoenix New Town, a new eco-oriented ur-

ban area adjacent to the new financial and commercial hub. Located within the Tangshan Kerry Property complex, the city's first integrated development, the hotel adjoins a shopping mall and landscaped park.

Outside of the hotel, vi-

sitors can see Tangshan's UNESCO-listed Eastern Qing Tombs – the largest Chinese imperial monument of its kind, relics of the Great Wall or appreciate the city's porcelain. The destination is equally renowned for Chinese Ping Opera, shadow play and Laoting drums – collectively known as the "Three Flowers of Eastern Hebei."

Each of the hotel's guestrooms and suites, ranging from 45 to 135 square meters, is decorated in natural tones, green carpets, Chinese-style paintings and local ceramic ware; while free high-speed Wi-Fi, a large workspace and marble bathrooms come as standard.

To commemorate the hotel's launch, special rates are available until year-end.

PORTUGAL should remain in a situation of excessive budget deficit until at least 2016, although the economic recovery is consolidating, indicate the spring economic forecasts released this week by the European Commission.

The Commission indicates that the budget deficit should fall to 3.1 percent of gross domestic product this year, down a tenth from what was forecast in February, albeit still 0.4 percentage points above the government's forecast.

The upward revision compared to the last forecast is solely due to improved economic conditions and not to any additional effort, as the budget consolidation plan does not account for more than 0.5 percent of GDP, the Commission justifies.

The government affirms that the budget deficit will be 1.8 percent in 2016, while the Commission forecasts 2.8 percent. However, the European Commission's figures are based on a scenario in which measures not yet unapproved or with a high likelihood of being implemented are not considered.

The spring forecasts indicate that Portugal's economy is ac-

Portugal maintains excessive deficit in 2015

WIKIMEDIA.ORG



celerating and consolidating and should grow 1.6 percent this year and accelerate to 1.8 percent in 2016, again driven mainly by internal demand.

The Portuguese government forecasts economic growth of 1.6 percent this year and 2 percent in 2016.

Imports grew at a higher pace than exports, meaning that exports weighed negatively for the first time since 2010, though this should disappear with the European economy's upswing and devaluation of the euro, the Commission adds.

The indicators are generally positive. Corporate income tax reform has helped improve the business environment and should help boost private investment, while depreciation of the euro and the European Central Bank's flexible monetary policy help balance risks to these projections. **Macauhub**

ANGOLA

Japan willing to finance 2nd modernisation phase of Namibe port

JAPAN aims to finance the second phase of the project to modernise the port of Namibe with a view to increasing cargo handling capacity, Japan's ambassador in Angola, Kuniaki Ito, said on Tuesday in Namibe.

Ito, who was on a two-day visit to Na-

mibe province, said he would ask the city's port administration for details about costs associated to the modernisation plan's second phase in order to determine the real cost, reports Angop news agency.

The first phase of restoration and moderni-

sation of Namibe port, financed by the Japanese government, cost USD24 million and consisted of enlarging the quay from 240 meters to 875 meters.

Under that plan, the port gained a 25,000 square meter parking area and modernised port access roads and

the water supply system for ships, among other projects.

The second phase will consist of increasing depth to allow larger vessels to berth, enabling the port to assert its position as the largest such infrastructure in the southern region of Angola. **MDT/Macauhub**

CAPE VERDE

Company sells coffee to Starbucks

THE Cape Verde (Cabo Verde) company Fogo Coffee Spirit has sold 6,960 kg of coffee to the American company Starbucks, the first time the company has placed its products in the US market, reports Inforpress agency.

The export of coffee from Fogo was one of the goals behind the creation of Fogo Coffee Spirit, a partnership between the Dutch company Trabocca, Cabo Verde's Capital Consulting and the Associação dos Produtores do Café dos Mosteiros (Pro Café).

Fogo Coffee Spirit coffee has previously been sold to countries such as Japan, Russia, the Netherlands, Germany and Italy.

The product exported to the United States complied with all parameters required by the importing country per the plant health certificate issued by the Rural Development Ministry's office on Fogo Island, reports Inforpress, citing officials from Fogo Coffee Spirit.

For the last two years the company has been working to develop a project meant to internationally promote the country and its coffee. Plans call for coffee production to increase from the current 30 tons (average annual production) to 300 tons on a ten-year horizon.

Fogo (biological) coffee is cultivated in a fertile mountainous area with several microclimates in Mosteiros municipality, mainly at Morgadio de Monte Queimado, the island's largest unified property dedicated to coffee production. It was awarded the gold medal at the 1934 Portuguese Colonial Exhibition in Porto and in 1949 in Lisbon, distinguished as the "empire's best coffee".

In the early 20th century Fogo coffee was presented at the Paris world's fair and at the time was recognised as the best coffee in the then Portuguese Empire, surpassing in quality coffees from Angola, São Tomé and Príncipe and Timor. **MDT/Macauhub**



MACAUHUB

Authorities probing brokers, regulators for possible stock crimes

Joe McDonald
Business Writer, Beijing

EMPLOYEES of one of China's biggest securities firms and one current and one former employee of its market regulator are under investigation on suspicion of illegal stock trading, state media reported yesterday, amid the collapse of a stock price boom.

Three other brokerages announced they are under investigation for possible violations of rules on confirming the identities of customers.

China's main stock market index has fallen more than 40 percent since early June. Yesterday, it fell another 1.2 percent, following declines of 8.5 percent on Monday and 7.6 percent on Tuesday.

Authorities have accused securities firms of manipulating prices, suggesting the ruling Communist Party might be trying to deflect blame for the collapse, which angered small investors.

Eight employees of state-owned Citic Securities Ltd., including one surnamed Xu, are suspected of "illegal securities trading," the Xinhua News Agency said. It gave no other details, but a leading Chinese business magazine, Caixin, reported on its website that Xu was the



A Chinese investor monitors stock prices at a brokerage in Beijing

firm's managing director, Xu Gang.

The police ministry announced July 12 investigators had found "evidence to suspect that individual trading companies are illegally manipulating securities and futures exchanges." It gave no details of which firms were targeted.

The market benchmark soared more than 150 percent

beginning late last year before hitting a June 12 peak and plunging. The downturn triggered complaints politically favored insiders profited at the expense of small investors. Beijing responded by barring large shareholders from selling and ordering executives to buy back any recently sold stock in their own companies.

In a statement through the

Hong Kong Stock Exchange, Citic Securities said it had received no notice of an investigation.

Phone calls to Citic Securities' headquarters in Beijing weren't answered.

The firm is part of Citic Group, the Cabinet's main holding company. It is best known abroad for its 2012 purchase of Hong Kong-based brokera-

ge CLSA Asia-Pacific Markets from France's Credit Agricole for USD1.25 billion in the first major foreign acquisition by a Chinese broker.

Meanwhile, a staff member from the China Securities Regulatory Commission surnamed Liu and a former staff member are suspected of "insider trading and forging official documents and seals," Xinhua said. It gave no other details.

A journalist surnamed Wang and several other people also are suspected of fabricating and spreading fake securities and futures trading information, the agency said.

It gave no indication whether the cases were connected.

Separately, three brokerages said they were under investigation for possible violation of "know your customer" rules. GF Securities, Haitong Securities and HTSC made their announcements through the Hong Kong Stock Exchange.

In July, the securities regulator accused brokerages of improperly allowing customers to trade without giving their real names or to subdivide accounts to allow others to use them to trade. It ordered brokers to end the practice and to sever ties with unlicensed companies that lend money to finance trading. **AP**

Tale of two pigs is one way to divine Beijing's economic future

CHINA wants an economy driven by consumption and not investment. That means putting more spare ribs on the table and forging fewer girders for skyscrapers.

As incomes rise, people are spending more on consumer products from luxury handbags to baby food. Already the meat of choice in many households, pork demand is growing.

The Chinese account for more than half the world's consumption and are importing more than ever. The nation purchased a record 319,891 metric tons of pork in the first half of the year. Smithfield Foods Inc., the world's largest producer, increased shipments to China by 45 percent.

Domestic demand increased almost 12 percent over the previous four years and will grow 0.4 percent in 2015, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. While a surge in domestic prices amid a widespread cull by farmers may temper demand in the near-term, consumption is forecast to increase in the long run. The Chinese will eat more than 33.4 kilograms per capita by 2024, up from 31.8 kilograms this year, according to estimates from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and Food and Agriculture Organization.

"Shoppers are consuming more meat-based proteins as their income levels rise and diets

converge with mature markets," said Thomas Jastrzab, a Hong Kong-based consumer analyst at Bloomberg Intelligence. "Policies to increase urbanization and lift minimum wages are playing an important role in stimulating domestic consumption."

Almost a third of urban households earn in excess of USD15,000 a year, double that of 2009, Jastrzab said, citing data from Euromonitor. More than half the country now lives in towns and cities, according to the World Bank.

While more money means more pork for dinner, it's consumption of another sort of pig that tells the flip side of China's economic story. Pig iron is used to make

steel, the backbone of construction, and demand is shrinking.

China is on track for the weakest growth since 1990 as the government steers the economy away from manufacturing. A sharp decline in building completions and falling land purchases show how construction is slowing.

Materials from copper to iron ore and steel have sunk to multi-year lows and pessimism is spreading across the metals market, according to Bloomberg Intelligence. As China's demand shrinks, its selling more steel and aluminum overseas and that's weighing on global prices, said Yi Zhu, a metals and mining analyst at Bloomberg Intelligence.



"China is no longer absorbing all of its iron and steel production," said Wang Jianhua at Mysteel Research, an industry consultant. "We have to cut the overcapacity in domestic mills."

The speed with which the nation can replace growth derived from investing in buildings and infrastructure with expansion led by shoppers holds the key to China's

economic future.

"China's economy is in the middle of the transition that most developed nations have already been through," said Zhao Yang, chief China economist at Nomura Holdings Inc. in Hong Kong. "Growth will be slower because the influence of retail consumption is much weaker than stimulus from investment." **Bloomberg**

Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

WHAT does China's leadership lose politically as a result of the country's precipitous stock market decline? A bit of international swagger, but probably not much else — for now.

Despite growing anger among retail investors and a strong sense of economic decline, a major shakeup is unlikely, given the rigidity of the political system, the leadership's need to exude calm and the idea that changes could be perceived as signs of weakness or error.

Having accumulated more power than any Chinese leader in 20 years, President Xi Jinping is expected to stay the course in hopes that the market will correct itself and the economy returns to an even keel. The longer that takes, the greater the risks for the Communist Party, which has managed to keep a tight grip on power in part because of its ability to deliver economic growth.

Xi's position on the global stage is suddenly a far cry from last year, when he appeared ascendant. His star seemed to hit its zenith as he hosted U.S. President Barack Obama and other world leaders at a global summit in Beijing and launched the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank as China's alternative to Western-dominated institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

Now, with the economy slowing and roughly 40 percent of the value of stocks erased since June 12, the leadership's preferred mix of market economics and strict one-party communist rule is under severe strain.

"The China miracle might just be coming to an end," said Willy Lam, an expert on elite politics at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. "The magic formula is running out."

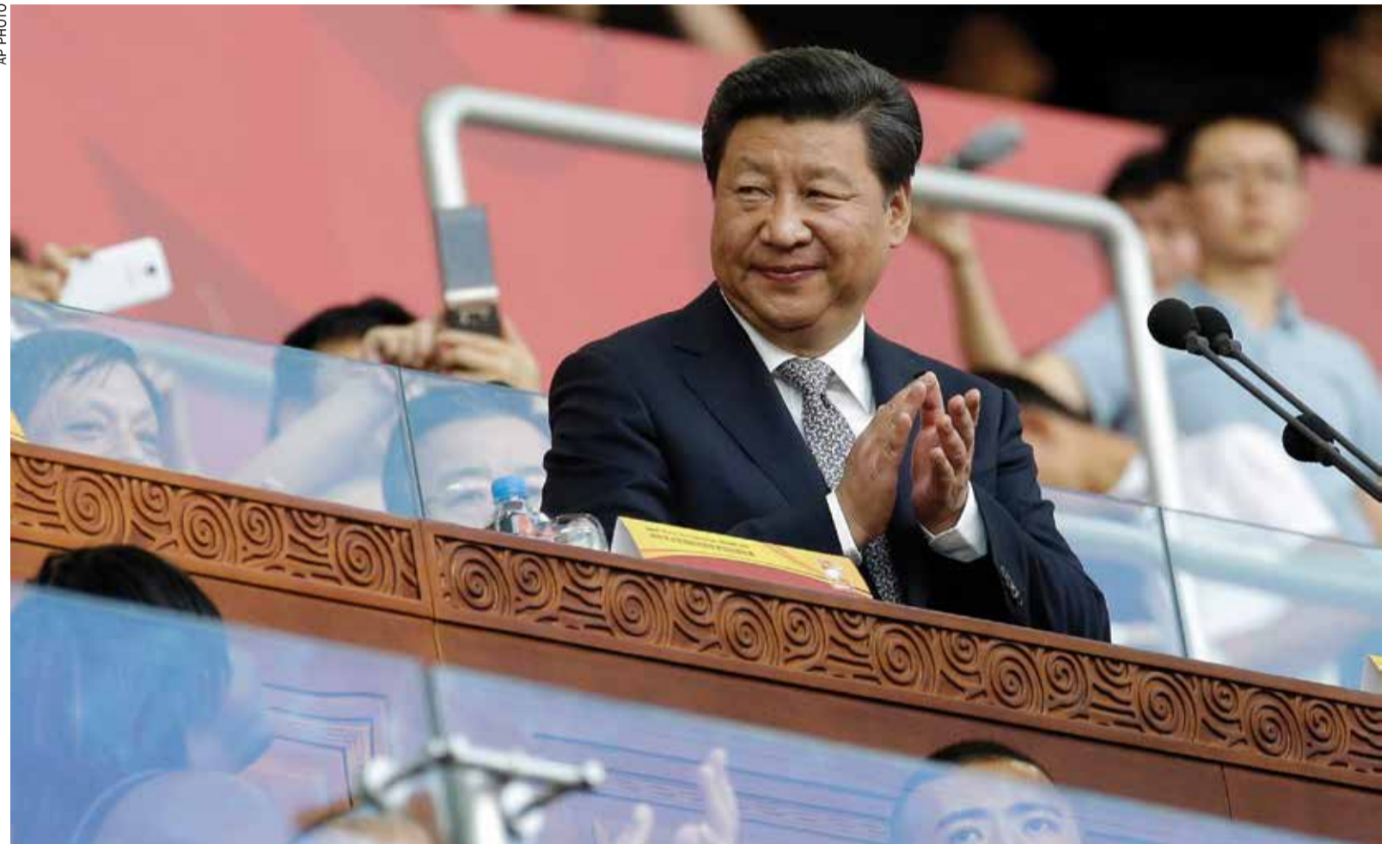
A raft of emergency measures seems to have done little to stem the current crisis. After giving brokerages money to buy stocks and forbidding share sales by major investors, the government suspended new listings, slashed interest rates to a record low and launched an assault on illegal short-selling.

Even so, the main Shanghai Composite Index slumped 7.6 percent on Tuesday and another 1.3 percent yesterday,

The China miracle might just be coming to an end

WILLY LAM
CHINESE UNIVERSITY
OF HONG KONG

Xi staying the course despite sliding economy



Chinese President Xi Jinping attends the opening ceremony of the World Athletics Championships at the Bird's Nest stadium in Beijing

on top of an 8.5 percent loss Monday. Losses on the smaller Shenzhen Composite have been even more dramatic.

With the emergency measures failing, the government appears reconciled to allowing the chips to fall where they may, despite bubbling public anger and eroding faith in the system, analysts say.

"The fact that the party-state has had great difficulty stabilizing the markets and propping them up has dented public trust in the central authorities," said Dali Yang, a Chinese politics expert at the University of Chicago.

The damage could be even greater because those betting on stocks firmly believed the government would support the market and minimize their losses, Yang said, a throwback to the years of the command economy that has been largely abandoned. Along with the fall in markets, exports are shrinking and both economic growth and job creation look likely to miss their official targets for the year.

Factories are shedding millions of jobs, threatening to inflame social tensions as recent graduates see opportunities drying up. New industries including e-commerce are growing but still are too small to offset job losses in traditional businesses.

Adding to the economic fo-

malism, China's currency, the yuan or renminbi as it is also known, has lost 3 percent of its value against the U.S. dollar over recent weeks. That move came as a shock to most traders and reflects the sharp decline in trade as China seeks to make its exports more competitive.

Most visibly, the economic turmoil is altering the dynamics for Xi's state visit to the U.S. next month, a trip that will also see him deliver a major address at the United Nations. Whereas China's economic strength has lent it increasing diplomatic clout, its recent stumbles put Xi in a diminished position as he seeks to defend China's increasingly assertive foreign policies.

"The dramatic fall of the Chinese stock markets and the weakness in the Chinese economy are a humbling experience for China's leaders and that will shape the atmosphere for Xi's visit to the U.S.," Yang said.

The faltering economy threatens to upset the social and political fundamentals underpinning the communist state. Over three decades of economic reforms, China's leaders have counted on sustained growth and improving living standards to shore up their credibility, even as they suppress all attempts at political opening and independent social organizing.

A slowing economy may now compel them to seek non-eco-

nomical sources of party-state legitimacy, said Kellee Tsai, chair professor of political science at The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. While Tsai offered no alternatives, that potentially raises the possibility of even greater levels of nationalism and xenophobia, tendencies percolating in Chinese society that break out into periodic spasms of violence and rage, especially directed toward traditional antagonist Japan.

An extended crisis could prompt Xi to pin the responsibility on Premier Li Keqiang

"Xi may be expected to be defensive if things continue this way," Tsai said.

An extended crisis could prompt Xi to pin the responsibility on Premier Li Keqiang, who is formally in charge of the economy and originates from a rival political faction.

That's not a step Xi would take lightly, however, given that it would signal to the rest of the country and the world that the ruling party has "made

a mess in handling the financial and economic challenges," said Steve Tsang, senior fellow at the University of Nottingham's China Policy Institute.

While the crisis at home may generate some negative media attention, Xi is too confident and risk-averse to embark on major changes, Tsang said.

"My bet is that the (U.S.) visit will go ahead, with some embarrassing coverage outside of China but no diplomatic unpleasantness," Tsang said.

While Xi may bet on staying the course, many of the tens of millions of retail stock investors who lost money in the market drop are still expecting a bailout. They represent the growing middle class that Beijing is relying on to shift the economy into one based on consumption rather than government-led investment. Getting burned on stock investments is sure to dent their confidence in the government's ability to shepherd that transition.

Zheng Xuchu, 28, a high school teacher from Shanghai, and his mother lost 170,000 yuan (USD26,500) in just five days of trading in August and is hoping the government will compensate for their losses.

"The government should be clear about its functions and responsibilities, rescue investors and make this a fair marketplace," Zheng said. AP

JAPAN

After Clinton, US Ambassador Kennedy used private email

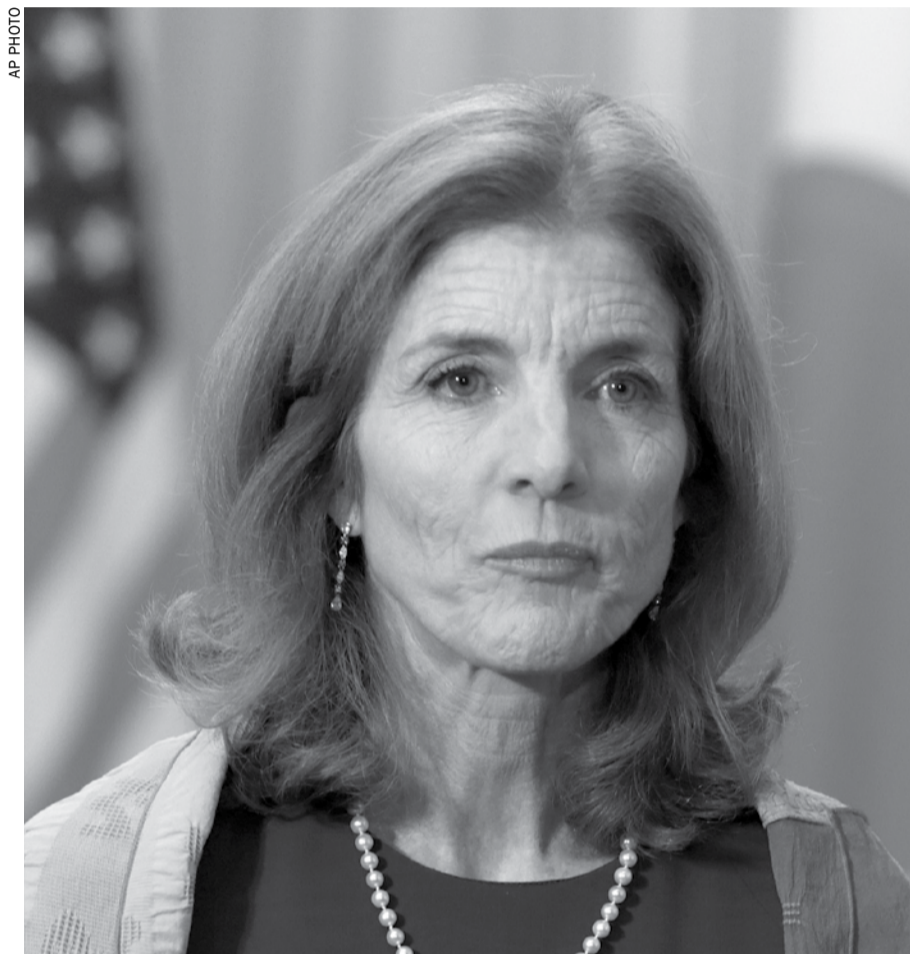
Matthew Pennington, Washington

SENIOR staff at the U.S. Embassy to Japan, including Ambassador Caroline Kennedy, have used personal email accounts for official business, an internal investigator said in a report Tuesday (yesterday, Macau time). Some emails contained sensitive information.

The State Department's Office of Inspector General said that it identified instances where emails labeled "sensitive but unclassified" were sent from or received by personal email accounts. Department policy is that employees ge-

OBAMA EXPRESSES REGRET TO ABE FOR SPYING CHARGES

PRESIDENT BARACK Obama has called Japan's leader to express regret over recent WikiLeaks allegations that the U.S. had spied on senior Japanese officials. Obama told Prime Minister Shinzo Abe that he thought the trouble the revelations caused Abe and his government was regrettable, a Japanese government spokesman told reporters. The 40-minute call took place yesterday morning Japan time. Japanese officials faced questioning from the media and in parliament after WikiLeaks posted online what appeared to be five U.S. National Security Agency reports on Japanese positions on international trade and climate change. They date from 2007 to 2009. WikiLeaks also posted what it says was an NSA list of 35 Japanese targets for telephone intercepts. Abe told Obama that the allegations could undermine trust between the countries, and reiterated his request for an investigation of the matter. The comments from both sides seemed to echo the exchange between Abe and U.S. Vice President Joe Biden in a similar call earlier this month. The two leaders also discussed the global economic turmoil, North Korea and climate change.



U.S. Ambassador to Japan Caroline Kennedy

nerally should not use such accounts for official business, the watchdog's office said.

"Employees are also expected to use approved, secure methods to transmit sensitive but unclassified information when available and practical," says the report.

State Department spokesman John Kirby said that although Kennedy did "infrequently" use private email, there was no indication she violated department policy, which allows its sparing and careful use if the information sent or received is then archived in a government system. He said classified information was not sent by private email, and that Kennedy did not use a personal email server.

The inspector general's finding comes in the midst of a department review of thousands of Hillary Rodham Clinton's emails that were sent and received from a private email account while she was secretary of state. Clinton also used her own email server.

The inspection of the embassy's operations was conducted between January and March. Kennedy, the daughter of the late President John F. Kennedy, has served as ambassador in Tokyo since November 2013.

The report does not appear to suggest a serious information breach. Sensitive but unclassified information can be shared outside of

the government, though officials are required to use discretion. However, it puts further spotlight on the department's struggle to keep its information secure.

"It is highly, highly discouraged to send (by private email) information that you think is sensitive but unclassified," Kirby told reporters. "You can do it if there's no other viable means of communicating the information and you take the proper steps to make sure that it's recorded back into the government system."

Kirby said that the embassy in Japan requires the use of official email accounts to conduct official business whenever possible. He said Kennedy and other staff were implementing in full the recommendations made in Tuesday's report.

The wide-ranging report also takes note of Kennedy's celebrity status and its impact on the embassy.

The report says the ambassador is very popular in Japan because of her family history and has an "innovative" approach to public diplomacy. But it notes that demands for her participation in events across Japan have put strains on the embassy's resources.

It says the protocol section has been augmented with additional staff hours, and the embassy "has now caught up on the backlog of gifts sent to the ambassador in her first six months in Japan." **AP**

THAILAND

Authorities destroy more than 2 tons of illegal ivory

Jerry Harmer, Bangkok

THAI authorities destroyed more than 2 tons of seized and smuggled ivory yesterday, in the latest move by the government to avoid possible economic sanctions over a perceived failure to tackle the illicit trade.

Tusks from more than 200 dead African elephants and other items made from ivory, such as jewelry and statues, were spread across viewing tables before being crushed by a machine into small pieces that were to be incinerated later in the day.

"This event shows the international community that Thailand intends to tackle the illegal ivory trade," said Nipol Chotiban, head of the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation.

To emphasize the point, Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha presided over the event, loading the first tusk into the crushing machine.

Thailand's record on ivory is poor. The United Nations body that tries to tackle the illegal ivory trade, known as CITES, lists Thailand as the world's second-biggest end-user market, behind China.

The Southeast Asian country is a major transit hub and destination for smuggled tusks, which are often carved into tourist trinkets and ornaments.

Part of the problem has been a Thai law that allows ivory from its own domesticated elephants to be worked into ornaments and sold. The law has created a loophole through which ivory from African animals can be laundered. In 2013 CITES put Thailand on notice to sort out the situation or face economic sanctions.

Since then Thailand has passed new laws and made major seizures at ports and airports. But the pressure remains.

In less than a week, Thailand must submit an update of its progress to CITES.

Several wildlife and conservation groups audited the stockpile before it was destroyed and welcomed the event while noting that there is still much to do, including continuous law enforcement and the tackling of the gangs behind the trade.

"This is not over yet," said Tom Milliken, one of the world experts on the illicit trade in ivory. "This is just one event that will definitely signal to the world that the Thai government is committed but the impact on the market is really the critical element."

More than 14 tons of ivory remains in Thai stockpiles, kept as part of court cases against smugglers. **AP**



Thai officials arrange seized elephant tusks to be displayed before destruction in Bangkok

R.K. Misra, Ahmadabad

INDIA

Fresh communal clashes erupt over caste protest

FRESH communal clashes erupted in western India yesterday as police and paramilitary forces tried to quell riots led by members of a farming caste demanding government benefits.

Authorities imposed a curfew Tuesday night in at least five cities in Gujarat state, after mobs attacked police with stones and sticks and burned vehicles. Cellphone communications were blocked in the state's main city of Ahmadabad to stop both rumors from spreading and gangs from coordinating their movements.

No casualties have been reported as the leader of the Patidars, also known as the Patel community for the last name they share, called a general strike yesterday.

There were isolated clashes between protesters and police in several other cities in Gujarat, including the diamond cutting and polishing hub of Surat. TV stations reported that police fired tear gas to disperse the crowds in some parts of the state.

The Patels are demanding the special status given to many minorities in India, guaranteeing them a share of government jobs and school places.

They make up about 20 percent of Gujarat's 63 million people and say their livelihoods based on seasonal farming and small industry have become increasingly difficult amid India's agricultural malaise and rapid economic growth marked by high inflation.

India's constitution sets out affirmative action, called reservations, for India's lowest Dalit and untouchable castes to help them overcome centuries of discrimination. That has



Tens of thousands of protestors from Gujarat's Patel community participate in a rally in Ahmadabad

been expanded over the years to include several other relatively disadvantaged low caste groups.

Because reservations allow easier access to government jobs, schools and universities, they've become a huge political bargaining chip in this country of 1.2 billion, and over the last decade several groups have led violent protests to demand that

they be counted at the bottom of the country's complex caste system.

On Tuesday, Patel leaders led a rally attended by 500,000 community members from across Gujarat. Later, police detained the group's 22-year-old firebrand leader Hardik Patel, triggering riots.

Hardik Patel called for a strike yesterday across Gujarat, the

state that Prime Minister Narendra Modi administered as chief minister for 12 years.

The streets of Ahmadabad were deserted and schools, colleges and businesses were closed. The only crowds were large groups of people gathered in the city's Patel-dominated neighborhoods.

Modi's successor as chief minister, Anandiben Patel, has ur-

ged members of her own community to maintain peace.

She has said that giving into the demands of the Patels was not possible because India's Supreme Court has mandated that state governments can set aside only 50 percent of jobs and school seats for economically backward groups and that existing low caste groups already fill those spots. **AP**

AFGHANISTAN

NATO: Men in Afghan uniforms kill 2 foreign troops at base

Rahim Faiez, Kabul

TWO men wearing Afghan security force uniforms opened fire yesterday inside a military base in southern Afghanistan, killing two NATO service members before being shot dead themselves, the international force said.

NATO offered few details about the shooting in Afghanistan's Helmand province, which appeared to be the latest so-called "insider attack" to target foreign troops or contractors in the country. Afghan officials said authorities believe an argument

sparked the shooting.

In a statement, NATO said the two men in Afghan uniforms opened fire on a vehicle with international troops inside it. Both shooters were killed when NATO forces returned fire, it said.

NATO did not identify the nationalities of the international troops killed, nor the base on which the attack took place. It said the attackers wore "Afghan National Defense and Security Forces uniforms," which include the country's police, military and border patrol.

Karim Atal, the head of Helmand's provincial

council, said the shooting happened on the Shorab military base, which was formerly the British military's Camp Bastion. Atal said the shooting happened after an argument between the Afghan and foreign troops.

"First, there was an argument between an army officer and the foreign soldiers, and it ended in shooting," Atal said.

A police official in Helmand, who spoke on condition of anonymity as he wasn't authorized to discuss the attack, also said an argument likely sparked the shooting.

No group claimed res-

ponsibility for the assault. In past attacks, Taliban insurgents have been known to wear Afghan police or military uniforms to stage attacks on the international troops. Others have opened fire apparently on their own accord, like an Afghan soldier who last year killed Maj. Gen. Harold J. Greene, the highest-ranked U.S. officer to be slain in combat since 1970 in the Vietnam War.

The shooting is the third "insider attack" on foreign forces this year. In January, three American civilian contractors were shot dead at Kabul airport



In this Tuesday, June 30 file photo, Afghan security personnel investigate site of a suicide attack on a NATO military convoy in Kabul

by an Afghan soldier who was also killed. In April, an American soldier was killed by an Afghan soldier inside the compound of the governor of eastern Nangarhar province's capital Jalalabad.

Meanwhile yesterday, Taliban insurgents overran the Musa Qala district in Helmand province, said Mohammad Sharif, the district's administrative chief. He said Afghan

security forces had been resisting the Taliban attack for more than a week.

"We tried hard in the past days to fight the Taliban, but we didn't get any support from the government and finally we lost control of the district," Sharif said.

He said there were casualties among the Afghan security forces, though he couldn't provide a death toll. **AP**

USA

Reporter, cameraman shot to death on air in Virginia

A television reporter and cameraman were shot to death on the air during a live broadcast yesterday morning (local time) from a shopping center in Virginia.

Jeffrey A. Marks, general manager of WDBJ-TV, identified the two killed as Alison Parker and Adam Ward.

Video shows Parker interviewing someone about tourism on Bridgewater Plaza in Franklin County. She was smiling when suddenly at least eight shots were heard. Parker screams, runs and can be heard saying, "Oh my God."

As the camera drops to the ground, it captures what



This screenshot from WDBJ-TV7, in Roanoke, Va., shows reporter Alison Parker and photographer Adam Ward

appears to be a fleeting image of the shooter. The person is wearing black pants and a blue top and appears to be holding a handgun. The station then switches

back to a shot of an anchor back at the station, who appears shocked and says, "OK, not sure what happened there. We will of course let you know as soon as we find out what those sounds were from."

In a tweet, the station said: "We love you, Alison and Adam."

Marks said police "are working very diligently to track down both the motive and the person responsible for this terrible crime against two fine journalists."

Parker just turned 24 and attended James Madison University, where she was the editor of the school's newspaper, *The Breeze*. She also had been

an intern at WDBJ-TV.

According to her Facebook page, Parker was an avid kayaker and theatergoer.

Her boyfriend, WDBJ anchor Chris Hurst, said they hadn't shared their relationship publicly but "were very much in love." He said they had just moved in together and wanted to get married.

"I am numb," he said.

The station's website says Ward was 27 and a graduate of Virginia Tech. He was engaged to a producer at the station, Melissa Ott, said WDBJ spokesman Mike Morgan.

"Adam was our go-to guy. He pretty much was available to do anything that we asked," Morgan said. "He did live shots during our morning show for several years."

The station is based in Roanoke, Virginia, and serves the southwest and central part of the state. The shopping mall where the incident happened is just off Smith Mountain Lake in Moneta, about 25 miles southeast of Roanoke. AP

PRESIDENTIAL RACE

Trump starts new media feud with Latino news anchor



Miami-based Univision anchor Jorge Ramos, left, asks Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump a question about his immigration proposal during a news conference in Iowa

Thomas Beaumont, Dubuque, Iowa

REPUBLICAN presidential candidate Donald Trump has taken on another popular TV news personality, this time a Spanish-language broadcaster who was eventually removed from a news conference.

The billionaire businessman engaged in a prolonged confrontation about his immigration policy Tuesday (early yesterday, Macau time) with Jorge Ramos, the Miami-based anchor for Univision, during a news conference in Iowa.

Trump, who has taken an early lead in the crowded Republican presidential race but remains a long shot for the White House, has already unnerved party leaders with his inflammatory comments about Hispanics. Republican leaders

see Latinos, who have voted overwhelmingly Democratic in recent presidential elections, as a rapidly growing demographic critical to their future. Trump launched his campaign by describing Mexican immigrants in the U.S. illegally as "criminals" and "rapists."

Earlier this month he sparked a feud with a popular female TV host, worrying some Republicans that he was damaging the party's image among women, another demographic the party has tried to court.

On Tuesday, Ramos began to ask Trump about his immigration proposal, which includes ending automatic citizenship for infants born in the United States to parents in the country illegally.

Trump interrupted him, saying he hadn't called on Ramos before repeatedly telling him to "sit down"

and then saying, "Go back to Univision."

As he was taken from the room, Ramos said, "You cannot build a 1,900-mile (3,000 kilometers) wall," another proposal in Trump's plan.

Moments later, Trump defended Ramos' removal, saying: "He just stands up and starts screaming. Maybe he's at fault also."

In an interview on ABC's "Good Morning America" yesterday morning, Ramos said he was not expecting to be tossed from the news conference.

"Never in my life — and I've been a journalist for more than 30 years — have I been thrown out of a press conference," he said.

Trump told NBC's "Today" show that Ramos "stood up and started ranting and raving like a madman. He was totally, absolutely out of line." AP

HUNGARY

Border fence proving futile in slowing migrant flow

Bela Szandelszky, Roszke

CLAMBERING over razor wire or scuttling under it, a growing tide of migrants surged across the Serbian border into Hungary yesterday, impatiently jostling to complete the formalities of entering the country.

In Roszke, a Hungarian border town where migrants requesting asylum were being processed by authorities, police used tear gas to break up a brief scuffle involving about 200 migrants.

Police said the scuffles broke out because migrants' impatience with delays in the registration process caused by the growing number of arrivals.

By 0730 GMT yesterday, already 1,302 migrants had been detained at the southern border with Serbia, Karoly Papp, Hungary's national police chief, said in Budapest, the Hungarian capital.

Police said that 2,533 migran-

ts were detained on Tuesday, up from 2,093 on Monday and by far the highest figure of the year. After requesting asylum and registering with authorities, migrants are sent to one of Hungary's refugee centers. Most, however, try to quickly leave for richer EU countries like Germany or Sweden.

Authorities promised further steps to try to secure the border, but not right away.

Papp said six police units of 2,106 "border hunters" would be deployed from Sept. 15, with helicopters, police dogs and patrols on horseback taking part in the security efforts along the border.

"The organization, equipment and great mobility of the border guard units ... will decrease the security risks caused by the massive illegal migration," Papp said, adding that water cannons would also be sent to Szeged, the largest city in the Hungarian-Serbian border zone. AP



Syrian refugees cross into Hungary underneath the border fence on the Hungarian-Serbian border near Roszke



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what's ON



THEATRESPORTS 2015

TIME: 7:45pm (August 27-30)
2:45pm (August 29)

VENUE: Macau Cultural Centre,
Avenida Xian Xing Hai, s/m, NAPE

ADMISSION: MOP60

ORGANIZER: Macau Cultural Centre

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2855 5555

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

FASHION POP-UP SHOP

TIME: 10am-8pm

(Closed on Mondays, open on public holiday)

UNTIL: August 30, 2015

ADMISSION: Free

ADDRESS: Macau Fashion Gallery / No. 47,

Rua de S. Roque, Macau

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 3341

THE CALLING OF SPIRITUALITY

- XIAO YAWEN ARTWORK EXHIBITION

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

UNTIL: August 31, 2015

VENUE: 10 Fantasia - A Creative Industries Incubator,
10, Calçada da Igreja de S.Lázaro, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 4582

PATH AND ADVENTURE

- WORKS BY MIO PANG FEI

TIME: 10am-7pm

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

UNTIL: November 22, 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

HABITUAL WORLD - KOREAN DRAWING EXHIBITION
OF CHA YOUNG SEOK

TIME: 10am-6pm

UNTIL: September 6, 2015

VENUE: Temporary Exhibitions Gallery, Taipa Houses
Museum, Avenida da Praia, Taipa

ADMISSION: MOP5 (Adult); MOP2 (Student or Group);
Free (Under 12 or above 65)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4100 / 2882 7103

Offbeat

UNDERWATER WEDDING HONORS
CHRIST OF THE DEEP ANNIVERSARY

Kimberly Triolet and Jorge Rodriguez exchanged their wedding vows underwater beside a 2.7-meter statue of Jesus Christ.

The Miami couple were wed beneath the waves Tuesday to help mark the 50th anniversary of the installation of the Christ of the Deep statue. The bronze sculpture is a subsea icon in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

For the traditional wedding kiss, the bride and groom removed their SCUBA breathing mouthpieces.

The 9-foot-tall statue was submerged about 7.5 meters deep off of Key Largo on Aug. 25, 1965. It became a symbol for Key Largo's John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, created in 1960 as America's first underwater preserve. It is now part of the sanctuary.

The statue is a replica of the Italian "Christ of the Abyss" that was placed in a shallow bay near Portofino, Italy, in 1954.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
18:50	The Presence of Anita (Repeated)
19:40	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:30	Miscellaneous
22:10	The Presence of Anita
23:00	TDM News
23:30	UEFA Champions League Highlights
23:45	Television Film
00:40	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

cinema

CINETEATRO

27 AUG - 2 SEPT



HITMAN: AGENT 47

ROOM 1

4.05, 9.45 pm

Director: Aleksander Bach

Starring: Rupert Friend, Hannah Ware, Zachary Quinto

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 96min

WILD CITY

ROOM 1

2.15, 5.55, 7.45 pm

Director: Ringo Lam

Starring: Louis Koo, Shawn Yue, Tong Liya

Language: Cantonese/Mandarin (Chinese/English)

Duration: 105min



PIXELS

ROOM 2

(2D) 2.30, 4.30, 9.30 pm

(3D) 7.30 pm

Director: Chris Columbus

Starring: Adam Sandler, Kevin James,

Michelle Monaghan

Language: English (Chinese)

Duration: 106min

HERO 2015

ROOM 3

2.30, 4.45, 9.30 pm

Director: Nikhil Advani

Starring: Haruma Miura, Kiko Mizuhara

Language: Japanese (English and Chinese)

Duration: 90min

ATTACK ON TITAN

ROOM 3

7.30 pm

Director: Shinji Higuchi

Starring: Takuya Kimura, Keiko Kitagawa,

Takako Matsu

Language: Japanese (English and Chinese)

Duration: 119min

MACAU TOWER

20 AUG - 9 SEPT

PIXELS

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: Chris Columbus

Starring: Adam Sandler, Kevin James,

Michelle Monaghan

Language: English (Chinese)

this day in history

1979 IRA BOMB KILLS LORD
MOUNTBATTEN

The Queen's cousin, Lord Louis Mountbatten, has been killed by a bomb blast on his boat in Ireland.

One of the earl's twin grandsons, Nicholas, 14, and Paul Maxwell, 15, a local employed as a boat boy, also died in the explosion.

The attack was followed only hours later by the massacre of 18 soldiers, killed in two booby-trap bomb explosions near Warrenpoint close to the border with the Irish Republic.

The IRA has already admitted carrying out the attack on Lord Mountbatten.

A statement from the organization said: "This operation is one of the discriminate ways we can bring to the attention of the English people the continuing occupation of our country."

Lord Mountbatten, aged 79, and his family had traditionally spent their summer holiday at their castle in County Sligo, north west of Ireland.

They were aboard his boat, Shadow V, which had just set off from the fishing village of Mullaghmore, when the bomb detonated around 1130 BST.

A witness said the blast blew the boat "to smithereens" and hurled all seven occupants into the water.

Nearby fishermen raced to the rescue and pulled Lord Mountbatten out of the water.

But his legs had been almost severed by the explosion and he died shortly afterwards.

Other survivors were pulled out of the water and rushed to hospital.

At least one person is believed to be in a critical condition.

The attack has called into question the security arrangements surrounding the Mountbatten party. Lord Mountbatten never had a bodyguard.

The local police kept watch on Classiebawn castle for the one month a year Lord Mountbatten spent there.

But his boat was left unguarded in the public dock in Mullaghmore where it was moored.

The village is only 12 miles from the Northern Ireland border and near an area known to be used by IRA members as a refuge.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Another passenger on the boat, the Dowager Lady Brabourne, 82, died the day after the attack.

Lord Mountbatten was given a state funeral. Six of the soldiers who died at Warrenpoint were buried the same day in local churches.

Thomas McMahon, 31, was convicted of the three murders. He had been detained in the area by police on suspicion of driving a stolen car two hours before the bomb went off.

McMahon was set free in 1998 under the Good Friday Agreement.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 It's time to debrief. Being frank and open would be, well, a bit insensitive.

Taurus April 20-May 20 You know not about the financials and you know how to be thankful, but your subconscious is rumbling.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 If you didn't learn it yesterday, you'll understand today that preaching won't get you anywhere.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Of course, it's always all about money. While you were totally emotional, others remained aloof.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 You both had plenty of fun and did your duty. Now it's time to go out for some excitement.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Family obligations have you glued to home for yet another day.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Yesterday was about feelings. Today you have more pressing matters on your mind.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Sales are just squiggly worms on sharp hooks. Don't bite.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Did the unexpected happen yesterday? If not, look for it today.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You had your day of excess. Now it's time to get back to discipline and structure.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 People get what they deserve. Or do they? It's a day to exchange goods, so do it wisely.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 You may be tempted to pass something along, but don't. It seems like a great way to save some money.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

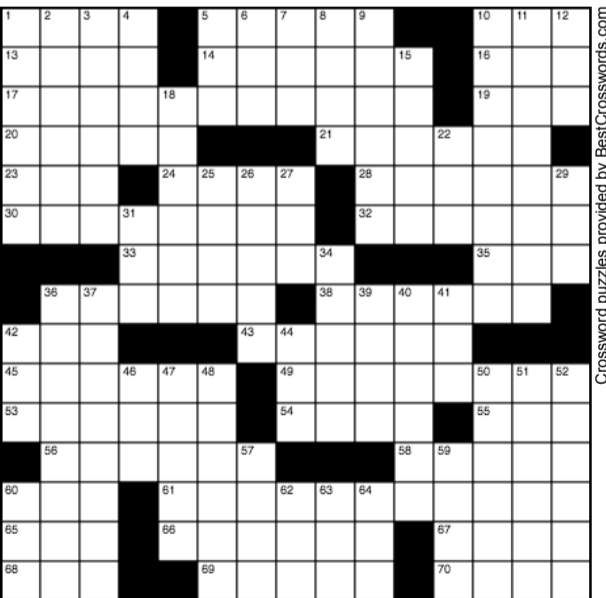
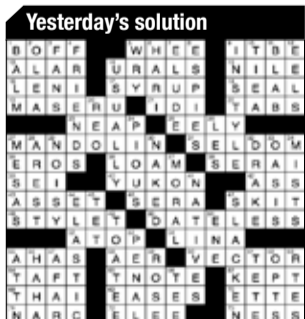
WEATHER

Table with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION. Lists weather forecasts for various cities in China and the World.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Skeptic's scoff; 5- Impressionist Edgar; 10- Hosp. section; 13- Emperor of Rome 54-68; 14- Gum arabic source; 16- Convent dweller; 17- Mum's mum; 19- Stomach, Asian, or Hong Kong; 20- Snap course; 21- Apprehensive; 23- Chowded down; 24- 1963 role for Liz; 28- Showered; 30- Hold back; 32- Birthplace of St. Francis; 33- Saturated; 35- Author Amy; 36- Hans Christian Andersen's birthplace; 38- Momentarily; 42- Able was I...

DOWN: 1- Ready to roll; 2- Rebuke; 3- Rubs out; 4- Swank; 5- Block up; 6- Green prefix; 7- Gangster's gun; 8- Zwei cubed; 9- Mountain range; 10- Boundless; 11- Blind alley; 12- Burma's first prime minister; 15- Specific geographical places; 18- Brand of polyester fiber; 22- Greek letters; 25- Scottish boys; 26- Breed of duck revered for its feathers; 27- Small bill; 29- Racket; 31- Mao ___-tung; 34- Gunpowder ingredient; 36- Eastern; 37- Numbed; 39- E or G, e.g.; 40- Main arteries; 41- ___Cat; 42- Shade tree; 44- Pound sound; 46- Diner order; 47- Lewd one; 48- Grommet; 50- Go to bed; 51- Perceived to be; 52- Exit; 57- Mustachioed artist; 59- Fr. holy women; 60- B'way hit sign; 62- "Car Talk" ailer; 63- Gadget portrayer Sandra; 64- Trauma ctrs.



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PJ (Open line) 993
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Tou Un, Tower 2 Taipa 2 Bedroom Apartment Walking distance to Cotai Strip HKD 11,800 / 690 sq ft Ref: 15080521

Old Taipa Village Taipa Taipa 1,000 sq ft / HKD 6.5M
Near Lady of Carmel Church Ref: 15035434
Fountainside Studio Apartment Macau 1 Bedroom Apartment New development HKD 12,800 / 567 sq ft Ref: 15070517

Jou Fai Kuok Macau 627sq ft / HKD 4.9M
Near Ruins of St Pauls Ref: 15075447
Chun Fok Garden Apartment Taipa 3 Bedrooms Apartment A Lovely Community HKD 15,800 / 1,300 sq ft Ref: 15070520

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RENAULT
Passion for life

Graham Dunbar
Sports Writer

TODAY IN MONACO

Barcelona heads 32-team draw for Champions League groups

THE Champions League season takes shape today (11:45pm, Macau time) when UEFA draws 32 elite teams into groups in Monaco.

The most coveted prize in club football promises the world's best players performing at arguably their highest level.

Barcelona and Lionel Messi start as favorites to become the first team to retain the title since the old European Cup was rebranded as the Champions League in 1992.

Real Madrid hope Cristiano Ronaldo can help the club to a record-extending 11th title.

Manchester United can end its one-year absence by advancing past Bruges in the playoff round later Wednesday.

With the final five places yet to be decided, here are some things to know about the 2015-16 Champions League group-stage draw:

NEW SEEDS

Bayern Munich vs. Real Madrid to kick it off on Sept. 15? Or Barcelona vs. Arsenal?

It could happen because UEFA scrapped the seeding system which meant the top eight teams ranked by past Champions League performance avoided each other.

Top-seeded status now goes to the title holder and national champions of top-ranked leagues.

That has dropped Madrid and Arsenal — and Man United, if it advances — into Pot 2. Madrid cannot be in Barcelona's group because teams from the same country are kept apart until the quarterfinals.

The new elite includes Paris Saint-Germain, Zenit St. Petersburg and PSV Eindhoven, which would have been in Pot 3 under the old system.

Seedings:

Pot 1: Barcelona, Bayern Munich, Chelsea, Benfica, Juventus, Paris Saint-Germain, Zenit

AP PHOTO



Lionel Messi (center)

St. Petersburg, PSV Eindhoven.

Pot 2: Real Madrid, Atletico Madrid, Arsenal, Porto, Valencia, Manchester City, (plus 2 from Manchester United, Bayer Leverkusen, Shakhtar Donetsk, Sevilla).

Pot 3: Lyon, Dynamo Kiev, Olympiakos, Galatasaray, Roma (plus 3 from Shakhtar Donetsk, Sevilla, Sporting Lisbon, CSKA Moscow, Lazio, Bruges, APOEL, BATE).

Pot 4: Borussia Moenchengladbach, Wolfsburg, Dinamo Zagreb, Maccabi Tel Aviv, Gent, Malmo (plus 2 from APOEL, BATE, Partizan, Astana).

NEW BOYS

Only one newcomer to the Champions League groups or European Cup is sure to be in the draw.

Belgian champion Gent won its first national title in May to earn a direct place in the groups.

The Buffalos will be the second-lowest ranked team by UEFA. Only Malmo has a lower UEFA ranking despite reaching the groups for a second straight season.

Astana can debut as the first team from Kazakhstan in the group stage if it gets past APOEL in the playoffs later Wednesday.

Though Borussia Moenchengladbach makes its first group-stage appearance, it was beaten finalist in the 1977 European Cup.

PRIZE MONEY RAISE

The Champions League is not as lucrative as the English Pre-

mier League, but is doing just fine.

Booming broadcast rights deals let UEFA increase prize money by 33 percent for each of the next three seasons.

The 32 clubs will share more than 1.2 billion euros (USD1.37 billion) in entry payments, results bonuses and shares of television money.

Each gets a basic 12 million euros (\$13.1 million), and can earn 1.5 million euros (\$1.71 million) for each win and 500,000 euros (\$570,000) for draws. Prize money escalates in the knockout rounds.

The biggest earner of UEFA prize money this season should get around 80 million euros (\$91.4 million), compared to 60 million euros (\$68.5 million) during the previous three-year commercial cycle.

RECORD CHASERS

Each goal scored by rivals Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo will fuel a particular duel.

Both have 77 Champions League goals, tied for the record in the 60-year history of the competition formerly known as the European Cup.

The Barcelona and Real Madrid stars also compete during Thursday's draw for the title of UEFA Best Player in Europe for last season. Messi's Barcelona teammate Luis Suarez completes the shortlist of candidates voted by journalists from each of UEFA's 54 member nations.

Jose Mourinho and Pep Guardiola resume their pursuit of a third European title, trying to equal the record of Bob Paisley (Liverpool, 1977, 1978, 1981) and Carlo Ancelotti (AC Milan

2003, 2007; Real Madrid 2014)

Chelsea's Mourinho would be the first to win with three different clubs. He coached Porto (2004) and Inter Milan (2010) to the title.

RUSSIA vs. UKRAINE

For a second season, UEFA keeps teams from Russia and Ukraine apart.

UEFA made the ruling in July 2014 to avoid fueling tension between the countries during conflict in eastern Ukraine between government forces and pro-Russian separatists.

Russian champion Zenit St. Petersburg is top-seeded and needs to be separated from Shakhtar Donetsk and Dynamo Kiev. Shakhtar has played home games in Lviv while its home city is a focus of fighting.

CSKA Moscow can advance from the playoff round on Wednesday against Sporting Lisbon.

MATCH-FIXING

Greek champion Olympiakos is in the draw despite its president, Vangelis Marinakis, being implicated in a criminal investigation of alleged match-fixing.

UEFA rules bar teams proven to have been involved in fixing a match since 2007.

However, the Court of Arbitration for Sport this week dismissed an appeal by Panathinaikos, after UEFA said it had no conclusive evidence from Greece to deny Olympiakos its place.

In 2011, Fenerbahce was withdrawn by Turkey's football federation ahead of the draw, and later served a two-year UEFA ban for match-fixing.

UEFA can also disqualify teams midseason if fixing allegations are proven.

FINAL DESTINATION

The six-round group stage program kicks off Sept 15 and ends Dec. 9. The top two in each group advance to the two-legged knockout rounds which start Feb. 16.

UEFA picked San Siro in Milan to host the May 28 final but there is no home advantage to play for the famed big-eared trophy.

Neither Milan club — AC or Inter, which have a combined 10 European Cup or Champions League titles — qualified for the second straight season.

San Siro will stage its fourth final, and first since Bayern beat Valencia in a penalty shootout after a 1-1 draw in 2001. AP

AP PHOTO



Cristiano Ronaldo (center)

opinion

Views on China

Editorial board, Bloomberg

WHERE CHINA GOES FROM HERE

For years, China's leaders have wanted the world to acknowledge their economy's leading role in the global system. This week they got their wish. Sadly, the circumstances weren't ideal.

The crash in global stock markets began with gloom about China's prospects and muddle over what the authorities in Beijing intend. Global markets may be calming down, but the confusion hasn't gone away. The Chinese government and its critics all need to think a bit more clearly about what is going on.

In the past few days, China has been a whipping boy for everyone from Japan's finance minister to U.S. Republican presidential hopefuls. Its central bank is accused of waging a currency war with its devaluation of the yuan two weeks ago. Before that, critics chided Chinese authorities for perpetuating a stock-market bubble by intervening extensively in equities; this week's sell-off accelerated when the government declined to prop them up.

The world doesn't seem quite sure what it wants from China's leaders. Critics scold Beijing for boosting stocks, then panic when they don't. They insist market forces be allowed to set the yuan, then howl when those forces push it down. They tell China to accept slower growth as the price of rebalancing its economy, then clamor for stimulus when the economy slows.

To be sure, there's confusion in Beijing as well. Leaders have promised to shift the economy onto a more sustainable growth path that's based less on exports and more on services and domestic demand. But they've held to an unreasonably high growth target, appeared to present confusing data to suggest all is going well, had difficulty tackling bad debts, and continued to juice the economy with misdirected public spending.

There's an underlying tension in that mix: The leadership is sincere about its desire for markets to allocate capital more efficiently, yet mostly in order to preserve the power and position of the Communist Party. When those two imperatives conflict - as when the stock market's initial slide threatened to erode faith in Beijing's economic stewardship - the party's needs often come first.

That dynamic undermines the progress achieved by genuine reforms, such as exposing the yuan to market pressure. China's long history of holding its currency down, combined with a recent plunge in exports, gave observers every reason to believe that a steeper devaluation was in store. The secrecy surrounding Chinese policy and data made the situation worse. Many analysts naturally assume the mainland's woes must be worse than the recent run of bad figures would indicate. The devaluation suggested panic - and encouraged panic in return.

Beijing's reluctance to surrender more fully to market discipline is understandable given the daunting list of challenges leaders face. But they're only storing up problems for the future.

The government is paying the price now for having artificially boosted stocks earlier. The central bank is thought to be spending an estimated USD40 billion a month to keep the yuan from falling further and prevent capital flight. Authorities are reportedly considering raising an additional \$161 billion in bonds to fund new infrastructure projects. Some of these may make good sense, but the fact that Beijing is directing the program raises doubts.

What's to be done? The government should continue to pull back gradually from its commanding position in the economy - and as it does so, it should be clearer and more convincing about its commitment to reform.

Chinese leaders, and their critics just as much, should be clear that the stunning growth rates of the past are gone for good (the "New Normal"), and focus instead on stability around more modest and realizable ambitions. Beijing should strive for honesty in data - the sine qua non of market confidence. And party leaders should accept sell-offs in stocks, defaults among weak companies and other ordinary events of market-based economies as signs of economic maturity.

More forthrightness now would buy China goodwill from markets when the government really does need to intervene - as the U.S., Japan and the European Union have all repeatedly judged to be necessary. Chinese leaders should remember that the currency that matters most is their credibility.

THE BUZZ MACAU GAMING CHIPS HIT 3 YEAR LOW

Macau gaming stocks hit a three-year low yesterday as reports emerge of an increasing crackdown on money laundering in China's gambling hub.

Shares of the six big Hong Kong-listed casino operators fell by 5 per cent at the close in Hong Kong, on track for an eighth straight decline,

according to an index compiled by Bloomberg.

With yesterday's decline, Macau gaming shares are down an average 65 per cent since a peak in early 2014. The market value of Sands China, the biggest of the six, has alone declined from a peak of USD67 billion to less than \$28 billion yesterday.



The Boudica statue stands in the foreground as fog shrouds the clock tower which houses the Big Ben bell at the Palace of Westminster, London

Clock shock: British admit Big Ben's bongos not quite on time

Jill Lawless, London

DON'T set your watch by Big Ben.

Officials say the famous clock at Britain's Parliament - used by Londoners for decades to check the time - has recently been slow by as much as six seconds.

The 156-year-old clock chimes every 15 minutes and emits deep bongos to mark the hour. Its inaccuracy was noticed by staff at BBC radio, which broadcasts the bongos live at 6 p.m.

Ian Westworth, one of Parliament's three clocks-

miths, told the BBC the clock had become "a little temperamental" with age.

"Imagine running your car for 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for the last 156 years," he said.

Parliamentary officials said earlier this week that mechanics had corrected the clock to within "normal parameters" - within 2 seconds of the right time. They will continue to adjust it by placing pennies on the pendulum - or removing them - to fine-tune its speed.

Parliament's neo-Gothic clock tower is one of Lon-

don's most recognizable landmarks, and its bell is one of London's characteristic sounds. The famous bongos echoed through the city without fail through World War II bombing raids, though they have been silenced a few times for repairs, and by accident or the weather.

Although the clock tower is popularly known as Big Ben, the name actually refers to the 13 1/2-ton Great Bell inside. The tower was renamed the Elizabeth Tower in 2012 to mark Queen Elizabeth II's 60 years on the throne. AP

Italian police keep peace at memorial for presumed Mafia boss

ITALIAN police have formed human chains to keep the peace outside a memorial service for a local clan leader after his ostentatious funeral prompted officials to complain that it glorified the mob.

Vittorio Casamonica's relatives have lashed out at the media for portraying their family as Mafiosi, and there were some scuffles with journalists outside the private family memorial yesterday. It was no way near as extravagant as last week's funeral, which included a horse-drawn carriage carrying Casamonica's casket, a helicopter dropping flower petals and a band playing "The Godfather" theme song.

In interviews with Italian gossip magazine Oggi published yesterday, several Casamonica family members acknow-



People gather to attend a memorial service for Vittorio Casamonica, a local clan leader identified by officials as one of the bosses of the Casamonica clan, in Rome

ledged some had criminal records but denied they were Mafiosi. Family photos showed the same carriage used for the funerals of Casamonica's parents. AP

Station	Air quality
Roadside	25-45 Good
High Density Residential Area	35-55 Moderate
Ambient	35-55 Moderate

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

PHILIPPINES The Philippines has asked the U.S. military to help protect the transport of Filipino troops and supplies in the disputed South China Sea by flying American patrol planes to discourage Chinese moves to stop the resupply missions.

SRI LANKA-USA The United States says it wants to sponsor a resolution at next month's U.N. human rights session that is supportive of Sri Lanka's government, which wants to conduct its own investigation into alleged war crimes.



GERMANY Angela Merkel (pictured) urged Germans to stand up against hatred and vowed zero tolerance for attacks against refugees, even as more than a hundred far-right protesters booed her visit to a shelter for asylum-seekers yesterday. Merkel had traveled to Heidenau, a small town near Germany's eastern border with the Czech Republic, to express support for refugees following neo-Nazi riots at the site over the weekend.



FRANCE The Moroccan suspect in a foiled attack on a high-speed train is facing terrorism charges over what authorities say was a plan to unleash carnage among hundreds of passengers. The Paris prosecutor's office confirmed yesterday that Ayoub El-Khazzani was charged overnight. El-Khazzani, 26, was overpowered by at least five passengers, including three Americans and a Briton.

ITALY About 50 bodies were found in the hull of a migrant boat that was rescued off Libya's northern coast yesterday, adding to the more than 2,400 people who have perished at sea this year making the dangerous Mediterranean crossing to Europe. Italy's coast guard says the Swedish ship Poseidon, which is taking part in the EU's Triton Mediterranean operation, rescued 439 people from the ship yesterday.