



**MGM TO BRING COTAI 'MORE CHOICES'**  
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# Hospital mishandles sensitive patient data

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## WORLD BRIEFS

**CHINA** The port city of Tianjin in northern China is rocked by a warehouse blast two months after massive explosions in the city left 173 people dead or missing. More on p10

**NEPAL-CHINA** A Chinese official says a border point with Nepal damaged by April's devastating earthquake has reopened, though traffic hasn't resumed yet.

**AFGHANISTAN** The Taliban say they are withdrawing from Kunduz, a strategic northern city that briefly fell to the insurgents last month, as an Afghan official said life there is returning to normal.

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VENETIAN MACAO OPEN  
2015

1  
days to go

# Japan says may cut UNESCO funds over Nanjing massacre move

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## HEALTH

# Negligent staff allegedly behind patient data exposure

Aries Un

**A**N alleged refusal to dispose of confidential documents as instructed has resulted in a large amount of patients' papers being strewn across the avenue outside Santa Rosa de Lima English Secondary School, health authorities have explained.

Early yesterday at around noon, hundreds of documents from Hospital Conde S. Januário's laboratory center bearing patients' names, ages and medical card numbers were found lying scattered along the Av. do Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues, according to a Macau Concealers report.

During a press conference held yesterday afternoon at the Health Bureau's headquarters, it was revealed that the papers came from the trunk of a car that was en route to an incinerator, but this movement of files was against standard procedure.

The authorities' preliminary inquiry into the episode indicates that six full-time assistants working in that center had allegedly handled the waste contrary to regulations, which require general waste be stored in



Mario Évora and Pang Heong Keong, both members of the central hospital board of directors

a black plastic bag while classified papers are placed in green ones for future disposal, all of which is to be conducted while under staff surveillance.

"They have been exercising this [incorrect] practice for the last two months, in accordance with their own procedures," said physician Lei Wai Sang, referring to the to-be-processed papers being kept in black bags instead of green ones.

The hospital's management also claimed that the staff's supervisors have been unaware of

the methods employed by their subordinates in dealing with the documents, which are mainly related to laboratory analysis. Management stressed that a large portion of the papers, only around 60 of which have been recovered as of yesterday afternoon, did not "really belong to the confidential-level group of documents."

The exact quantity of files missing is yet to be identified, as another administrative official, Anabela Luiza do Rosario, told media that it was "hard to esti-

mate since the to-be-processed papers had been mingled with general trash over the previous two months."

It was also believed that the lost papers included a small portion of document copies to be sent to Hong Kong, which the authorities said might contain patients' contact details.

The Office for Personal Data Protection has also launched a probe into yesterday's episode. The staff member allegedly responsible for the information spill, alongside the other five

employees involved, will resume their duties until further evidence emerges that would allow suitable penalties to be applied, according to the health authorities. "We will also carry out an internal inquiry as soon as possible; we wouldn't let go of those involved if penalties are required," said Lei.

"The management will also reflect on this incident and the

## The Office for Personal Data Protection has also launched a probe into the episode

importance of our staff sticking to the guidelines in operation," he added. "It serves as a good lesson for us to see if there are shortcomings in supervision."

Mario Évora, acting hospital head, said that the delivery staff had returned to the scene immediately upon realizing that the documents had spilled onto the road, and had called upon citizens in possession of the missing documents to contact the authorities.

The officials also expressed their apologies to the individuals involved yesterday. However, they also admitted that much of their follow-up efforts are pending ongoing investigation, the outcome of which they pledged would be publicized.

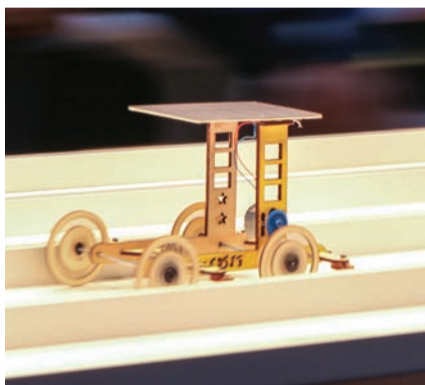
## Solar model car competition promotes renewable energies

**A**ROUND six hundred students have participated in the "Solar Car & Capacitance Model Car Races and Windmill Rotor Design Competition." The event is organized by the Companhia de Electricidade de Macau (CEM) in collaboration with several local associations, with the support of Hong Kong Technology & Renewable Energy Events (HK Tree), and was held at the Coloane Power Station. Its primary aim is to increase the students' awareness of renewable energies.

The students from For-

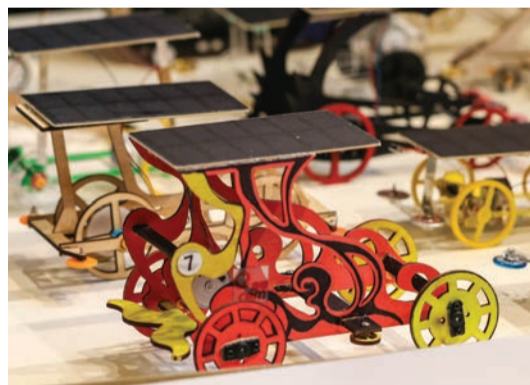
ms 1 to 6 and teachers lined up in 99 teams, representing 23 schools in the three competitions. As a novelty, this time the event added a new competition element, the "Windmill Rotor Design Competition."

Students participating in the "Solar & Capacitance Model Car Races" were requested to design and make their own model cars. Meanwhile in the new "Windmill Rotor Design Competition," they had to design and build windmill-style blades out of disposable plastic water bottles, which would



be installed in a wind generator in order to produce energy.

For this competition, set goals included "enhancing students' consciousness and recognition of the usage of renewable ener-



gy, as well as contributing to improve their scientific and technical knowledge," as explained in the award ceremony opening speech delivered by the CEM Principal Advisor to the Executive Committee,

Mr Benjamin Yue.

After multiple rounds of fierce competition, the final results were announced.

The prize for "The Best Model Car Design Award" was awarded to a team

from Colégio Diocesano de São José 5. "The Overall Fastest Lap Award" went to Colégio de Santa Rosa de Lima - Chinese Section. The "CEM Solar Model Car Race" was awarded to Sacred Heart Canossian College - Chinese.

The top three place winners in both the "Solar Model Car Race" and "Capacitance Model Car Race" will have the chance to represent Macau in the "Hong Kong Tree 2015" competition, to be held at the HK Science & Technology Parks on October 31. **RM**

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**M**GM China's second property in Macau, and the first one in Cotai, will be ready to open at the end of next year. The property is expected to complement the gaming operator's offer in the territory, according to the CEO and executive director of MGM China, Grant Bowie, who spoke to media yesterday on the sidelines of the announcement of MGM Cotai's first restaurant.

"We have not changed our strategy in any way for this new property. Our idea was, and is always, to present more choices and variety to Macau," Grant Bowie told the Times. "We are an entertainment company and entertainment for us is creating art from science."

The MGM China CEO and executive director says that the critical point of achieving success is to study and analyze the market, and to "bring to consumers something that they want and like." That is MGM's aim of with its new property in Cotai, and also with some adjustments that are being made in the peninsula property.

The food and beverage (F&B) sector is the starting point of this idea, and Mr Bowie justifies this focus with the interest from customers in F&B: "We want to bring new cuisines but not one-off cuisines – not something you try once or for just special occasions, but something to create stories about."

"We learned from the Macau property that there are a few things where we clearly stand out, and we will transport that to the new property. We don't want to stand out because we are louder; we want to stand-out because we are more distinctive."

According to Mr Bowie, the layout of the new F&B area aims to create different stories and different environments in a resemblance to what already happens in MGM Macau. "Some people like to dine in, and others prefer to dine out," he said. "We want to have some consistency between the two properties and that happens through the levels of

## MGM to bring Cotai 'more choices and variety'



Chef Mitsuharu Tsumura (3rd from left) and Grant Bowie (3rd from right) pose for a picture with other participants of yesterday's event

quality, intensity, and opportunity for social interaction, not by repeating the same experiences," the CEO said.

With all this in mind, MGM has unveiled the first of the pack, bringing "AJI" to Macau – a Peruvian Nikkei cuisine restaurant headlined by renowned chef Mitsuharu Tsumura.

Mr Bowie explained that the opening has been in the planning for over two and a half years, bearing in mind that Peruvian and Chinese people have some similarities such as the fact that both come from ancient civilizations.

"I think Chinese people will

like it a lot. It has a similar appearance and some ingredients from Japanese food, but with different flavors and many of them resembling Chinese cuisine, such as the use of chili as in Sichuan cuisines, citrus, starches and beans," Grant Bowie commented.

Peruvian cuisine, and especially Nikkei, is an emerging culinary trend around the globe. Chinese tourists know that already because they are also traveling the world and telling those stories when they get back home.

Hans Hordijk, MGM China's vice president of F&B, re-

**“We don't want to stand out because we are louder; we want to stand out because we are more distinctive.”**

GRANT BOWIE

minds the public that Peru has a huge Chinese community of about 2.5 million people. Ac-

ording to him, "These people tried this food already and the feedback from them is great, so we can see it being a very controlled risk to bring this experience to Macau."

Regarding what else people can expect from MGM Cotai, Mr Bowie was tight-lipped for the moment, but added that there will certainly be an "all-day dining environment that can provide a buffet for breakfast and a little bit of something for everybody."

"Since we are in Macau and in 'Canton' province, there will be a Cantonese cuisine restaurant too," which will provide what people from this area are used to calling "comfort food" but with some modifications. "Among other features, we have one restaurant that we deliberately said we did not want to classify as relating to any one cuisine. We see it instead as a venue that keeps changing and that restaurant is designed as a series of dining rooms for that purpose, because it is about the social interaction and different emotional experiences." What is certain is that all the culinary experiences will have a different "twist" in order for people to be able to remember "how you made them feel." **RM**

## Asia's first Nikkei cuisine restaurant in town

**M**GM China announced yesterday that it would bring to Macau the first Nikkei cuisine restaurant (Peruvian-Japanese fusion) in Asia. The collaboration with Chef Mitsuharu Tsumura for this project was revealed in a ceremony held at the MGM Macau's Aux Beaux Arts restaurant.

At a time when the trend of Nikkei cuisine is emerging worldwide, this unusual way of preparing Peruvian traditional ingredients with the use of Japanese cooking techniques – whi-

ch chef "Micha" helped to bring to the spotlight – will be the highlight of the new restaurant. The venue will go by the name AJI, which literally means "chili" in Spanish and "flavor" in Japanese, which is also, as chef "Micha" explains, an essential ingredient for 99 percent of all Peruvian dishes.

Featuring a ceviche bar, hibachi grill and a Pisco bar, while also offering a selection of the best sake, shochu and fine wine, AJI Restaurant promises to be a new addition to Macau's culinary scene.



Talking to the journalists, chef "Micha" believes this will be a very successful project. He also said that he will not be "shy" in presenting other exotic delicacies from Peru to Macau guests – like, for example, the traditional roasted Guinea Pig.

## opinion

David Fickling

## INVESTORS CAN AVOID THE GAMBLER'S FALLACY

Gamblers and investors share a tendency to overrate the past as a guide to the future. The so-called "gambler's fallacy" is why roulette players believe they can hit winning streaks, and why mutual funds warn that past performance is no guarantee of future results.

It might also be why Macau's casino stocks have been so battered this year. On the face of it, the territory's gaming industry seems to be in a horrible place.

But investors should only worry about a drop in revenue if it means a company's debts are unsustainable, or its equity overvalued. Neither looks to be the case in Macau.

The enterprise value of the big six Macau casinos comes in at an average 12.5 times forecast Ebitda - ahead of the 11.5 for the four publicly traded players on the Las Vegas strip, though not by much. The Macau companies also don't need to worry so much about their lenders breathing down their necks: all have net debt of less than four times Ebitda, a metric achieved only by Las Vegas Sands in the U.S.

The territory is in the process of transforming itself from the high-rolling, Bugsy Siegel days -- when the growth industry was VIP gamblers betting USD10,000 a hand on baccarat -- to the more profitable mass market business.

While revenue from high rollers continues to decline, the take from ordinary gamblers was flat in the September quarter, suggesting that part of the industry may have bottomed out. The casino operators are certainly betting on growth: Melco Crown will open its mass-market Hollywood-themed Studio City development later this month, and new MGM, Wynn, Sands and SJM hotels will add nearly 10,000 rooms to the city by 2017, increasing capacity by about a third.

Macau's lackluster occupancy rate this year raises legitimate questions about demand for all those new rooms. But with Chinese house prices rebounding from lows earlier this year and outbound tourist numbers hitting a record in the June quarter, there may yet be room for growth.

SJM Holdings currently has Macau's biggest overall market share and the second-highest exposure to the mass market, after Sands China. After subtracting net cash of about \$2.7 billion, the casino business is worth \$2.13 billion, less than the U.S. racecourse owner Penn National. With analysts forecasting that SJM will post almost five times as much net income in 2016 as Penn, that looks worth a punt. **Bloomberg**

# Casino shares surge on stronger-than-expected revenue

Stephanie Wong

MACAU casino shares rose in Hong Kong trading after a brokerage said gaming revenue was stronger than expected this month.

MGM China Holdings Ltd. surged 6.9 percent to close at HKD11.42, the most intraday gain since July 9. Galaxy Entertainment Group Ltd. jumped 6.1 percent with Sands China Ltd., SJM Holdings Ltd. and Wynn Macau Ltd. rising more than 2 percent. The benchmark Hang Seng Index lost 0.6 percent.

The region's gross gaming revenue was MOP9.1 billion (USD1.1 billion) during the first 11 days of October, a period that included China's week-long National Day holiday, according to data from Credit Suisse Group AG. That works out to an average daily revenue of 827 million patacas in the month to date, higher than the brokerage's estimate of 750 million to 800 million patacas, analysts led by Kenneth Fong wrote in a note Monday.

The local gaming operators are going through the worst downturn in their history as China's anti-graft crackdown and slowing economic growth have kept high rollers at bay. The city's gaming revenue has fallen for 16th straight months with September figures dropping to the lowest level since late 2010. Still, casino receipts so far in October may lead to a drop of 25 percent to 28 percent, Fong wrote, the smallest decline in nine months.

Melco Crown may have clinched



Traffic drives past a half-sized replica of the Eiffel Tower stands at the construction site of Parisian Macao, operated by Sands China

the approval of 210 new gaming tables for its Studio City casino-resort, which is scheduled to open on Oct. 27, and another 40 by the end of the year, Fong wrote, citing Asia Gaming Brief. Galaxy could also get 50 new tables in the coming weeks and another 50 after that, according to the report.

"If correct, this would be a potential positive for Melco and Galaxy given the under-allocation of new tables is one of the biggest market concerns for new projects," Fong said.

Casino revenue from mass-market gamblers, referring to lower-end players, has recovered 3 percent in the third quarter, compared with the previous three-month period, according to Karen Tang, an analyst at Deutsche Bank AG.

"Consensus seems too excited on quarter-on-quarter mass gross gaming revenue stabilization, and fails

## Melco Crown may have clinched the approval of 210 new gaming tables for its Studio City casino-resort

to consider longer-term mass margin impact from increasing competition" after the opening of Studio City, she wrote in a note Monday.

She expects Galaxy and Melco to report the strongest earnings growth in the upcoming third-quarter earnings season which will be kicked off by Galaxy this week. **Bloomberg**

DURING this month's "golden week" approximately 400,000 tourists from mainland China visited Japan and spent nearly 100 billion yen, or around USD830 million on shopping during the period from Oct 1-7.

According to China Daily, these figures represent a growth of double year-to-year. The number of mainland tourists going to Japan during the period doubled, according to Nationwide Tourist Group Services Management System.

Chinese customers were seen queuing up at Japanese malls to buy goods. Facial masks, toilet seats, thermoses and other household items, shavers and luxury goods topped the "most wanted" list for tourists. On the rise were also medical services and drugs, making Japan a top medical tourism destination. Reports indicate that many stores across the busiest tourist areas even had to put a limit on the quantity that each customer

## TOURISM

## Chinese tourists swap Macau and HK for Japan during 'golden week'



A group of Chinese tourists stand with shopping bags at the Canal City Hakata commercial complex in Fukuoka, Japan

could purchase amid fears of a sellout.

According to Global Blue, an international company that handles tax refunds for interna-

tional shoppers, the shopping spree by Chinese tourists has boosted the Japanese economy by around 0.1 percent to a 20-year high.

Data from the Nationwide Tourist Group Services Management System shows that outbound tourists (except those heading to Hong Kong) grew by 36.6 percent year-on-year in the first four days of the weeklong holiday. Figures backed by Chinese online travel platform CTrip showed Japan was the most popular overseas travel destination for Chinese mainland vacationers during the "golden week," followed by Thailand and South Korea. On this list, CTrip places Hong

Kong in fourth place, followed by Macau.

Japan's popularity among Chinese travelers started to surge within the first six months of this year when some 2.18 million Chinese tourists went to Japan, doubling from the year before.

The devaluation of the yen and the high quality reputation of Japanese goods are two of the main reasons listed as the top attractions for Chinese tourists this year.

The National Day holiday has become an annual tourism event for mainlanders and a boon for many of the host economies. Traditionally Macau and Hong Kong have been tar-

geted as the main destinations but, as the Times reported yesterday, the number of Chinese tourists flocking to both SARs during the holidays increased at a slower pace this year, when visitations gained 17 percent, according to Macau government data, and decelerated to 2.3 percent from 6.8 percent, according to Hong Kong government data.

This new influx of Chinese tourists has already led to some retailers in Japan, South Korea and France introducing Mandarin-speaking shop assistants and signage written in Chinese, in order to become more accommodating to mainland shoppers. **RM**



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## Jason Chao claims UM management interfering in student elections

**J**ASON Chao has accused the UM administration of displaying “unnatural behavior” towards the Student Union (SU) election. In his opinion, the university rector “is disrespecting the fact that the SU is an independent legal entity with its own charter and rules of operation” by “interfering beyond its own jurisdiction”.

Speaking yesterday as a “UMAC Watchdog” spokesperson in a press conference held at the New Macau Association office, Chao based his claims on reports from members of the SU, according to whom “UM unconventionally raised a series of unreasonable demands upon the election.”

The facts relate to UM’s alleged refusal to provide the list of students’ ID numbers, which is needed by the SU election committee to verify voters’ identities. Instead, UM opted to send university staff to the election



Jason Chao

site to perform that task. Another of the claims relates to UM’s insistence upon transporting and securing ballots at times when the election’s voting period was interrupted.

Chao accused the UM administration of dithering when it states that it was previously agreed upon by the SU that these tasks would be performed by university staff. He says that no agreement was ever reached and, even if that ever happened, such an agreement would require approval in a formal meeting of the SU, which never happened.

The “UMAC Watchdog” spokesperson points out that this attitude from UM seeks to influence the election results and to control the actions of the SU and the students. This comes after the dismissal last year of scholar Bill Chow, with the spokesperson urging the institution to stop all interference in SU activities. **RM**

## Airport records 6pct rise during ‘golden week’



**T**HE Macau International Airport Company (CAM) reported that during the period October 1-7, known as the “golden week,” over 120,000 passengers landed in the region, with aircraft movement reaching over 1,200.

CAM highlighted that these figures represent a 6-percent increase in passenger numbers and a 5-percent increase in aircraft movement when compared to the same period last year.

Despite the two typhoons “Dujan” and “Mujigae” bringing heavy rain and strong winds to Macau and other cities around the Taiwan Strait, the operations of the airport were not significantly affected and nor was the interest of travelers to and from Macau.

According to CAM, the airport operated smoothly and in an orderly fashion, with daily inbound and outbound flights recording over 155 takeoffs and landings.

The airport management company has also released total figures, dating from the start of the year, that show that MIA recorded a total movement of over 4.4 million passengers up to October 7.

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## CE meets with Cambodian Prime Minister



Hun Sen and Chui Sai On

**T**HE Chief Executive met with the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia on Monday at the Santa Sancha Palace. Chui Sai On and Hun Sen exchanged views on how to strengthen cooperation between Macau and Cambodia.

During the meeting, Chui noted that Macau and Cambodia have strong bilateral ties covering several areas, including tourism, business and trade. He said he hoped that Mr Hun Sen's visit to Macau could help extend

cooperation to other areas, such as culture, training of human resources and exchange of expertise.

Hun Sen, who is visiting Macau for the first time, said that cooperation between Cambodia and Macau could be intensified in three areas, namely trade, investment and tourism. He added that Cambodia already exports several agricultural goods to mainland China – chiefly rice – and could also increase exports to Macau.

According to a statement issued by the Government Information Bureau, the Cambodian Prime Minister said that launching direct flights between Cambodia and Macau would not only boost bilateral ties but also encourage exchanges between Cambodia and cities close to Macau.

Hun Sen attended the opening ceremony of the Global Tourism Economy Forum, that ended yesterday.

## GTEF

# Forum highlights need for multi-lateral approach to cultural tourism

**T**HE need for a multilateral approach to cultural tourism was highlighted by Pansy Ho and Alexis Tam at the Global Tourism Economic Forum (GTEF)'s closing ceremony, held yesterday evening at the Venetian Macao.

The vice chairman and secretary-general of the forum, Pansy Ho took to the stage first and emphasized in her speech that no country "is promoting their own tourist products alone."

The Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, concurred before adding that "regional collaboration is an essential path for all destinations to achieve sustainability." She said that the discussions and ideas shared throughout the forum ultimately "lead to how we work together."

Alexis Tam also quoted the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," which was adopted during the U.N. Sustainable Development Summit 2015, saying that "all cultures and civilizations can contribute to, and are crucial enablers of, sustainable development."



Pansy Ho takes the stage during the closing ceremony of the Global Tourism Economic Forum 2015

As for Macau, Pansy Ho reaffirmed that the region had "played a unique role in the Maritime Silk Road (MSR) throughout history," bringing people together to trade and to share ideas, and that this role was destined to continue in the 21st century. Alexis Tam praised Macau's success in harnessing the city's unique advantages in culture and tourism, adding that "Macau is willing to work together with our partners to undertake coordinated regional and international actions."

The ceremony highlighted the importance of 2015 for cultural tourism – a year that the China

National Tourism Administration has named the "Year of Silk Road Tourism". It is also the year that Macau celebrates the tenth anniversary of the listing of its historic center as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Pansy Ho and Alexis Tam both presented their speeches in English, with simultaneous translations into Portuguese, Cantonese and Mandarin. They both expressed their final gratitude to the speakers, delegates, partners, and the media before welcoming a number of special guests on stage to officially conclude the forum. **Staff Reporter**

AD



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John Pauline, Design Principal for HASSELL Hong Kong, will describe the vision for Hengqin, and talk about the process from an International Design Competition through to the current design development phase of this significant development.

The site signifies the expansion of Hengqin Island, and is positioned for high-end business services and international resort & tourism zones through ongoing collaboration between Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macau, and is a national model area of marine eco development.

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## corporate bits

## SANDS CHINA HONORS 2015 TEAM MEMBER AWARD WINNERS



Sands China Ltd. hosted its fifth Because We Care Team Member Awards Ceremony at The Venetian Macao's Venetian Theatre last week, honoring 192 nominees for their dedication to the company, with awards given to the top performers in seven categories.

As with prior years, winners are selected based on the company's Because We Care set of

cultural values – Friendliness, Professionalism, Active Listening and Teamwork – and are recognized with seven distinct awards: the Influential Service Award, the Exceptional Spirit Award, the Impressive Performance Award, the ECO360° Live. Green Award, the People's Choice Award, the Best Leadership Award, and the Outstanding Teamwork Award.

## MELCO INSPIRES HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH CREATIVE CAREER OPTIONS



Focusing heavily on developing local Macau talents, Melco and its business partner, Dragone, have recently showcased non-gaming career opportunities to local high school students, providing them inspirations to pursue education and future careers in creative and entertainment production.

A total of 40 students, along with their teachers from Luso-Chinese Technical and Vocational

Middle School joined a backstage tour jointly organized by Melco Crown Entertainment and Dragone. The wardrobe was the highlight of the tour, with over 400 costumes, 300 pairs of specialty shoes, and 80 individual wigs, all custom-made for this spectacle. The delegation also met two of their schoolmates at the wardrobe, who are currently interns for the show.

# VW to change diesel technology, cut investments

David McHugh,  
Business Writer, Frankfurt

**V**OLKSWAGEN'S flagship brand will switch to new diesel emissions control technology in Europe and North America as well as cut a billion euros (USD1.1 billion) in annual investment spending.

VW brand head Herbert Diess made the announcement yesterday as the company struggles to overcome a scandal over the fact that some of its cars are equipped with computer software that let them evade U.S. emissions tests.

Diess said the company would change its diesel technology in Europe and North America and install systems that use a mixture of the chemical substance urea and water to reduce diesel emissions. He said that change would come "as soon as possible."

He said the company would extend its low-cost manufacturing



Carbon dioxide emissions are written on a Volkswagen Passat Diesel at the Frankfurt Car Show in Frankfurt

techniques and reduce spending on investments.

The company also plans to turn the next version of its large Phaeton luxury sedan into an electric-only vehicle to demonstrate the company's technological competence.

Volkswagen AG, which has other brands including Audi and Skoda, is facing a crisis after U.S. authorities said it evaded emissions checks on 482,000 vehicles. The company has set aside 6.5 billion euros (\$7.3 billion) to

cover the costs of recalls and fines. But analysts say the costs in terms of fines and lost sales will likely be considerably higher.

Earlier, the governor of Germany's Lower Saxony state, which holds a minority stake in Volkswagen, said the automaker should have admitted earlier that it manipulated emissions data in diesel vehicles.

VW acknowledged the deception to U.S. regulators on Sept. 3, more than a year after researchers published a study showing the real-world emissions of two VW models were far higher than allowed.

Governor Stephan Weil told Lower Saxony's state legislature yesterday that "this confession should clearly have come a great deal earlier — another serious mistake," news agency dpa reported.

Lower Saxony holds a 20 percent stake and Weil sits on Volkswagen's board of directors. He has said that the state's representatives were "completely surprised" by the emissions scandal and vowed to work to protect jobs. AP

## GERMAN INVESTOR CONFIDENCE DOWN AS VW ADDS TO WORRIES

A SURVEY shows investor confidence in Germany, Europe's biggest economy, has fallen for the seventh consecutive month as concern about the fallout from the Volkswagen scandal adds to worries about weak growth in emerging economies. The Center for European Economic Research, known by its German acronym ZEW, said yesterday that its monthly index dropped to 1.9

points for October from 12.1 last month. That's below the long-term average of 24.8 points and off a peak in March of 54.8. ZEW chief Clemens Fuest said that, while the VW emissions-rigging scandal and emerging market weakness have dampened the economic outlook, "the performance of the domestic economy is still good and the euro area economy continues to recover," making a recession unlikely.

AD



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### Fish exports earn Mozambique USD80 million a year

**M**OZAMBIQUE gets estimated annual revenue of US\$80 million from exporting fish, which has remained at an annual average of 250,000 tons, the Minister for the Sea, Inland Waters and Fisheries said Monday in Maputo.

Minister Agostinho Mondlane, who was speaking during the opening of the 7th Session of the Southwest Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SWIOFC) in Maputo, said Mozambican fisheries production had remained stable and that the role played by the government had been to promote strengthening of domestic supply without losing sight of international markets.

Cited by Mozambican news agency AIM, Mondlane said that the fishing industry's contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) was currently around 1 percent but stressed that data was collected and processed by other institutions such as the Ministry of Economy and Finance, through the National Statistics Institute (INE).

At the five-day meeting, organised in partnership with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the member countries aim to address issues such as regional fish stocks, over-fishing and sustainable management.

Established in 2004, the Commission is composed of 12 member states – South Africa, Comoros, France, Yemen, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Kenya, Seychelles, Somalia and Tanzania. **MDT/Macauhub**

## Angola and China to accept national currencies in bilateral trade

**T**HE central banks of Angola and China are due to settle the details of an agreement that will allow the use of national currencies of both countries in bilateral trade, said the governor of the National Bank of Angola.

José Pedro de Morais told Radio Nacional de Angola that the agreement, whose signing date he did not mention, would bring many advantages when it comes into force.

The agreement, which was announced last August by the Minister of Commerce of Angola, Rosa Pacavira, but later denied, will enable economic agents of both countries to use the Chinese currency in Angola and the Angolan currency in China, thus facilitating trade.

"These days the international financial institutions support this type of agreement, because it allows foreign trade to continue without using



Chinese one-hundred yuan banknotes

a third currency, which in this case would be the dollar," stressed José Pedro de Morais.

The governor said, however, that in the long term the costs of Angola importing consumer goods are unsustainable, given the lack of foreign currency in

the market at the moment.

Morais said the cycle marked by "ever higher incomes, both for families and for businesses" had come to an end and noted that the price of oil of over US\$100 per barrel had ended, "and it's no longer possible to think in these terms."

The governor of the BNA said the time had come to "think about how to create and identify new sources of growth, particularly in agriculture and the transfer of resources used in the import of consumer goods to sectors that allow more sustained growth." **MDT/Macauhub**

Macau Daily Times contest



### Oktoberfest 2015

MGM MACAU is hosting Oktoberfest from October 15 to 25. We are giving away a total of 10 sets of entry tickets and F&B coupons. Readers will have to correctly answer today's question to be in with a chance of winning. Each prize set includes:

Oktoberfest entry tickets x 2	\$260
F&B coupons	\$100
Beer spectacles x 2	\$60
Oktoberfest lion plush x 1	\$160
<b>Total value</b>	<b>\$580</b>

#### Question for readers:

What's the name of the band that will perform at the MGM Macau Oktoberfest?

Please email the answer to: [oktoberfest2015@macaudailytimes.com](mailto:oktoberfest2015@macaudailytimes.com) along with your name and contact details.



**Gathering of the Year**  
Willkommen to MGM MACAU Oktoberfest 2015, the biggest and wildest autumnal revelry in town! Gather with your friends for Munich's famed food, froth and fun festival at VISTA II. Sample authentic German beer and food amidst an ambience of great music and dance. Come and enjoy all of the Deutschland delights! The seventh MGM MACAU Oktoberfest is hosted by MGM MACAU in cooperation with the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Hong Kong and the German Macau Business Association, with the Macau Government Tourist Office as the supporting unit.

**Quality Beer and authentic German delicacies**  
At MGM Oktoberfest, guests can drink up the world's first Oktoberfest brew - Spaten. For hundreds of years, the Spaten-Franziskaner brewery has served as one of the most important

exporters of German beer. Nowadays, Spaten is a brand name synonymous with pleasure and a refined way of living. There are also a wide range of tasty authentic German delicacies on offer, adding to all the Oktoberfest excitements.

**The Festive Bavarian Vibe**  
A party of this size and prestige can't be without great music and dancing. Get set to sing along with Munich's super band - Högl Fun and enjoy traditional 'oom pah pah' music and rousing German entertainment at its finest! Drink in the sights, sounds and smells of this once-a-year bodacious Bavarian bash!

**Ticket and Reservation**  
MGM Oktoberfest admission tickets and food and beverage coupons are available for sale from September 14, 2015. Entrance fee is MOP130 per person, inclusive of one drink.



## Party jails former oil executive for 20 years for corruption

A Chinese court has sentenced a former senior executive of a state oil company to 20 years in prison after finding him guilty of corruption. The sentencing of Wang Yongchun, former deputy general manager of China National Petroleum Corp., came a day after the company's former chairman, Jiang Jiemin, was given 16 years' imprisonment for corruption. The Xiangyang Intermediate People's Court in central China said Wang had received 49 million yuan (USD7.9 million) in bribes between 2000 and 2013 and failed to explain the source of another 42 million yuan. It said Wang — at Jiang's direction — provided assistance to others, causing huge losses to the state. China's oil industry has been targeted in a sweeping anti-graft campaign that has toppled many high-ranking officials of state companies.

## Mainland tourist dies while zip-lining in Thailand

A Chinese tourist broke her neck and died while sliding on a zip-line in the northern Thai city of Chiang Mai, police said yesterday. The 32-year-old woman was sliding down a 600-meter zip-line on Sunday when a worker failed to grab her during a maneuver to stop her from traveling further, police Col. Adun Somnuk said. She then hit another person in front, he said. The staff rushed her to a hospital where they told doctors only that she had passed out while zip-lining, Adun told The Associated Press. But an autopsy later showed the woman, who was a doctor, had suffered a broken neck, he said. Officers sent to inspect the zip-line operation are questioning the staff and witnesses, he said, adding that the staff could be charged with causing death by negligence if there is enough evidence. Two other zip-line accidents have occurred in Chiang Mai this year. In July, an American tourist broke several ribs after colliding with a Chinese tourist on a zip line. In June, a Chinese tourist fell to his death while sliding through a zip line due to a safety lock malfunction.

# FT: Asset management executive stabbed by disgruntled investor

A disgruntled Chinese investor stabbed the chief executive of an asset management company, the latest sign of escalating tension in the country's financial system amid rising defaults, the Financial Times revealed yesterday.

According to the FT, Wang Jie, chief executive officer of Global Wealth Investment (Beijing), was rushed to hospital after an investor stabbed him during a meeting on Sunday, opening a wound of about 15cm in his shoulder, Caixin, a respected financial news website first reported. The alleged assailant had invested Rmb300,000 (USD47,300) in a wealth management product that failed to pay out as promised.

The newspaper revealed that the incident stems from the collapse of Hebei Financing Investment Guarantee Group, one of China's largest state-backed guarantors. Global Wealth and other financial institutions sold investment products backed by loans guaranteed by Hebei Financing.

In August, a group of 11 non-bank lenders wrote to top Communist party officials in Hebei province warning of "unnecessary social influence" if the government failed to bail out Hebei Financing and thus enable the guarantor to honor its obligations and insulate investors from losses, the FT stated.

Mr Wang also wrote separately to Hebei officials that same month, noting that Hebei Financing had failed to honor guarantees on loan defaults by five companies worth Rmb227m and affecting 660 investors in Global Wealth products. Caixin said the amount owed to Global Wealth by the guarantor is now Rmb620m.

High-yielding wealth management products have surged in popularity since 2010 as investors sought alternatives to a frothy property sector, volatile stock market and bank deposits on which inte-



rest rates are subject to government caps. The proceeds of such products typically flow to higher-risk borrowers unable to obtain bank loans or issue bonds.

Intense demand for high-yield products, combined with loose regulation, has also created opportunities for outright hucksterism and fraud, sparking widespread protests.

The Financial Times notes that Global Wealth has not been accused of any wrongdoing. Phone calls and emails to the company went unanswered yesterday. The company's office in Beijing was locked. A note taped to the door said a "criminal incident" had occurred there on Sunday but did not elaborate.

Hebei Financing guaranteed loans by Global Wealth to steel, glass and paper manufacturers as well as to a commercial property development, the paper added.

China's property and basic manufactu-

ring sectors are grappling with oversupply and falling prices as the economy slows. Rust-belt regions like Hebei province, in north China near Beijing, have been especially hard hit.

In early September, Hebei officials published a "risk disposal" plan to deal with the fallout from the guarantor's collapse, but it was short on detail and so far creditors remain unpaid.

Hebei Finance owes around Rmb50bn to various institutions.

Mr Wang was meeting with investors on Sunday to update them on efforts to recoup lost funds when he was stabbed. The alleged assailant had been sitting next to him at the meeting and initially acted normally, Caixin reported a witness as saying.

Mr Wang's condition was initially life-threatening but had stabilized by midday on Monday, according to Caixin.

## Blast rocks Tianjin 2 months after fatal explosions

THE port city of Tianjin in northern China was rocked by a warehouse blast, police said yesterday, two months after massive explosions in the city left 173 people dead or missing.

The blast hit a warehouse for alcohol materials in the city Monday night and started a fire, but no casualties were reported, local police said.

Tianjin had been ordered after the August blasts to perform thorough checks to eliminate workplace hazards, with a special focus on warehouses storing chemicals. The new blast underlines the challenges that China faces in ensuring workplace safety.

Tianjin police said they de-



People run near a blast site at Xiditou Village in the Beichen District of Tianjin

tained the owner of a chemical company that illegally rented a private warehouse from an area resident to store chemicals. The resident, identified by his family name, Huo, was

also detained, police said.

Local authorities said 3,000 kilograms of alcohol were being stored in the 700-square meter warehouse, along with 1,000 kilograms of acetic acid, which can be used in the making of plastics and pharmaceuticals.

The local government said the explosion posed no risk to people or the environment.

In August, a warehouse complex storing large amounts of hazardous chemicals caught fire and exploded in Tianjin, killing 165 and leaving eight missing.

The disaster raised questions about corruption and government efficiency. Investigations into the Aug. 12 blasts at the Ruihai International Logistics warehouses showed they were located closer to homes than permitted, and stored much more hazardous material than authorized, including 700 tons of highly toxic sodium cyanide. AP

# Beijing says Russia, US must avoid fighting proxy war in Syria

**T**HE U.S. and Russia must not allow the conflict in Syria to develop into a full-blown proxy war, China's ruling Communist Party said yesterday, chiding both Moscow and Washington for having an outdated Cold War mindset.

In an editorial in its flagship People's Daily newspaper, the party also reiterated China's view that a negotiated political solution is the only way to end the conflict, setting Beijing apart from the U.S., which is backing the opposition, and Russia, whose forces are aiding Syrian President Bashar Assad.

"Syria has already seen the suffering of too many innocents. Resolving the matter through politics is the only so-

AP PHOTO



Television screens at an electronics shop show Russian President Vladimir Putin as he addresses the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly

## People shouldn't allow the Syrian conflict to escalate into a full-scale proxy war

PEOPLE'S DAILY EDITORIAL

lution that most suits the interests of the Syrian people," the editorial said.

While the U.S. and the former Soviet Union frequently used diplomatic, economic and military means to extend their influence in other nations, that thinking belonged to the last century, the paper said.

"However, the world has

entered the 21st century and people's thinking should enter the 21st century as well," it said. "People shouldn't allow the Syrian conflict to escalate into a full-scale proxy war, or lightly give up on efforts to find a political solution to the Syrian crisis and cannot permit the Syrian humanitarian disaster to continue."

Early in the 4-year-old con-

flict, China was criticized by the U.S. for joining with Russia in blocking outside intervention at the United Nations. Since then, China has largely remained aloof on the issue, although it has warned of Chinese Muslims joining in the fighting and urged the international community to do more to aid refugees.

Russia began its air cam-

paign in Syria on Sept. 30, helping support Assad and his embattled troops at a critical point in the fighting.

Russia insists it is targeting the Islamic State group and other "terrorists." But Syrian rebels and opposition activists say Moscow's warplanes in recent days have focused on U.S.-backed rebels in areas with no IS militants. **AP**

# September imports plunge in new sign of weakness

Joe McDonald  
Business Writer, Beijing

**C**HINA'S imports fell by an unexpectedly wide margin in September in a new sign of weakness in the world's second-largest economy.

Imports plunged 20.4 percent from a year earlier to USD145.2 billion, customs data showed yesterday, worse than August's 5.5 percent decline and analysts' expectations of about 15 percent. Exports shrank 3.7 percent, though that was an improvement from the previous month's 13.8 percent decline.

Weakness in trade has fueled doubts Beijing can hit its economic growth target this year of about 7 percent.

Much of China's slowdown over the past five



Factory production of wind towers in east China's Shandong province

years was self-imposed as the ruling Communist Party tries to steer the economy to more self-sustaining growth based on domestic consumption instead of exports and investment. But the past year's unexpectedly deep decline has raised fears of politically dangerous job losses.

Beijing has cut interest rate five times since November and boosted spending on public works construction. Economic growth held steady in the quarter ending in July at 7 percent. But that was the lowest rate since the 2008 global crisis and analysts said a Chinese stock market boom that

pushed up activity in financial industries concealed weakness in other sectors.

"Import growth appears to have come in weaker than expected," Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics said in a report.

"This suggests that domestic demand may have softened," though the decline partly reflects lower prices for imports, he said. "Import volumes are holding up much better."

IHS Global Insight economist Yating Xu noted that iron ore imports, a key input for manufacturing and construction, rose 1.7 percent, compared with a 1 percent contraction the previous month. Crude oil imports rose 1.4 percent, compared with August's 5.6 percent decline.

China's global trade surplus nearly doubled from a year earlier to a record-high \$60.3 billion.

The country's trade surplus with the European Union was \$14 billion and that with the United States \$26.5 billion.

Communist leaders want to reduce reliance on exports, but their plans call for trade to hold steady to protect millions of manufacturing jobs.

For the first nine months of the year, exports were down 1.9 percent and imports by 15.3 percent. That makes it unlikely Beijing can meet its trade growth target of about 6 percent for the year.

The year-to-date decline in trade suggests "this sector is in recession," Citigroup economist Minggao Shen said in a re-

port. "However, there is a better chance that we're probably near the trough level of growth and may expect better readings" in the current quarter.

Some analysts had suggested September trade would improve over August because that month's activity was disrupted by an explosion in Tianjin, one of China's busiest ports, and government-ordered factory shutdowns for a military parade in Beijing. **AP**

20.4%

The fall in imports from a year earlier

JAPAN

# Okinawa gov revokes approval for relocation of US air base

Elaine Kurtenbach, Tokyo

OKINAWA'S governor yesterday revoked approval for work needed to relocate a U.S. air base from one area of the southern Japanese island to another, but the Tokyo government said it would still proceed with the plan.

Local residents object to living with U.S. Marine Air Station Futenma and want the base moved off Okinawa. Current plans call for moving it to a less developed area on the island called Henoko.

Gov. Takeshi Onaga was elected last year on promises to fight the move, revoked the local approval given in 2013 by his predecessor on the grounds of "legal defects."

"I will work to keep my promise not to allow ano-



Locals protest outside the fence of Camp Schwab, an American base near a planned relocation site of a U.S. air base, in Nago, Okinawa, southern Japan

ther base in Henoko," Onaga said yesterday.

Government spokesman Yoshihide Suga rejected Onaga's stance, saying the base must be moved for safety reasons.

"There is no change in our plan to proceed with the work," Suga told reporters in Tokyo. He called Onaga's decision "very regrettable."

The central government suspended the

land reclamation work on Aug. 10 to allow for a month of talks to reach a compromise with the Okinawan government, but that proved to be too short of a period to resolve two decades of political fighting, and the reclamation work resumed last month despite strong protests by local residents and activists at the site.

The defense minis-

ter, Gen Nakatani, said work on the site would be suspended, but that it would restart as soon as possible. He planned to request an investigation and seek a court injunction to overturn Onaga's revocation.

Okinawa houses more than half of the 50,000 U.S. troops stationed in Japan and U.S. bases occupy nearly a fifth of the land on its main island. But the local government says the bases are a drain on the economy, providing less than 5 percent of its business activity and employing only 1.4 percent of its workers.

A leaflet issued by the Okinawa government shows significant gains in the local economy from areas already redeveloped once land was returned by the U.S. military. AP

MYANMAR

# Junta proposes delaying Nov. 8 elections due to flooding

Aung Shine Oo, Naypyitaw

MYANMAR'S election commission yesterday proposed delaying the Nov. 8 general election either nationwide or in some areas hit by landslides and flooding.

Union Election Commission Chairman Tin Aye told reporters that the election to choose a new parliament "might be delayed."

He made the comment after meeting with different political parties to propose the postponement. The opposition National League for Democracy party led by Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi said it is against a delay.

Tin Aye said the commission would release a statement in about two days with a possible new election date.

He didn't say whether the polls might be delayed nationwide or only in areas affected by landslides and flooding in western and northwestern Myanmar.

"Why don't you ... just wait until the statement is released, it could be nationwide too," Tin Aye said.

The general election is supposed to be followed by a presidential election early next year when the army and the elected members of parliament nominate a total of three candidates, and then all lawmakers vote for the president.

If the elections are credible, most observers believe Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy will win the most seats in parliament, and could even control a majority by forming a coalition with smaller parties. AP

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JAPAN

# Tokyo says may cut UNESCO funds over Nanjing massacre move

**J**APAN said yesterday that it may cut funding for UNESCO after the U.N. world heritage body included documents on a World War II-era massacre by Japanese troops on a Chinese city in its Memory of the World register, a move Tokyo criticized as biased.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga, the government's chief spokesman, told reporters that UNESCO's decision reflected only China's views on the 1937 assault on Nanjing, when Japanese troops killed tens of thousands of civilians in the city.

Chinese and Japanese estimates vary widely as to how many people died in the massacre, viewed as one of the worst atrocities of the World War II era. Estimates on the number of deaths range from 40,000 to 300,000.

"There is a big discrepancy of views between Japan and China, and the decision reflecting a unilateral view turns the issue into a political problem," Suga said. "We are considering all measures (of protest), including suspension of our funding



In this Dec. 13, 2014, file photo, Chinese honor guard members march past the words "Victims 30,000" during a ceremony to mark China's first National Memorial Day at the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall

contributions" to UNESCO.

According to the Japanese Foreign Ministry, Japan contributed 3.72 billion yen (about USD31 million) to UNESCO in

2014, or 10.8 percent of its budget assessed for the U.N.

UNESCO's budget for the two-year 2014-2015 period is \$653 million. Japan has also set up

various trust funds to support work on world and cultural heritage efforts.

Suga said Japan would also seek reform of UNESCO, which

was the first U.N. organization Japan joined after World War II, in its 1951 return to the international community.

"The decision making process lacked transparency," he said. "We were not even allowed access to the contents of the Chinese documents."

While Japan objected to the inclusion of the documents on the Nanjing Massacre, it succeeded in having some of its own candidates for the memory list included, including details on detainees held in Siberia after World War II.

Materials submitted by China for inclusion in the Memory of the World Register in 2014 included documents about the period of the massacre, about the postwar investigation and trials of war criminals documented by the Chinese National Government's Military Tribunal in 1945-47 and 1952-56 files from China's judiciary.

UNESCO did not agree to register documents submitted by China about women forced to provide sex to Japanese Imperial Army troops during the war. **AP**

# Philippines backs US plan to sail ship near Chinese island

**T**HE Philippines yesterday backed a reported U.S. plan to challenge China's territorial claims by deploying a Navy ship close to a Chinese-built island in the South China Sea, saying it was important for the international community to safeguard freedom of navigation in the disputed waters.

The Department of Foreign Affairs said the U.S. plan of sending a Navy ship within 22 kilometers of the artificial island in the Spratly Islands "would be consistent with international law and a rules-based order for the region."

The U.S. newspaper Navy Times reported last week that the



In this April 20 file photo, Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Gregorio Pio Catapang points to recent images of China's reclamation activities in the South China Sea

Navy may soon receive approval for the mission to sail close to the island.

Such a U.S. Navy move would bolster Washington's stance that the artificial islands being built by China do not constitute sovereign territory and build a

legal case under international law for the U.S. position, the newspaper said.

The Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs warned that "failure to challenge false claims of sovereignty would undermine this order and lead China to the fal-

se conclusion that its claims are accepted as a fait accompli."

"It is important for the international community to safeguard freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea," it said. "This is of paramount concern to all countries.

Aside from China and the Philippines, four other governments lay claim to a part of or the entire South China Sea, a busy passageway for a bulk of the world's commerce and military vessels. Washington has a policy of not taking sides in the territorial disputes, but says it's in its national interest to ensure freedom of navigation and overflight and the peaceful resolution of the conflicts.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying expressed serious concern last week over the planned U.S. Navy deployment. **AP**

PRESS FREEDOM

# Thailand to try HK journalist for possessing flak jacket

**A** Thai court on Monday decided to put a Hong Kong photojournalist on trial for possession of a bulletproof vest and a helmet, which are considered weapons in Thailand.

Hok Chun Anthony Kwan, 30, was detained when he was about to board a plane on Aug. 23 after covering the aftermath of a deadly bomb explosion at a shrine in Bangkok. Kwan, a Hong Kong and Canadian citizen, works for the Hong Kong-based Inition media group. He earlier worked on the Minnesota Daily newspaper while attending the University of Minnesota.

His lawyer, Pawinee Chumsri, said he pleaded not guilty to the charge of weapons possession after being indicted by the court, which set a pre-trial hearing for Nov. 16. The trial will be held sometime in 2016, she said.

Pawinee said Kwan did not intend to violate Thai law. "Kwan believes he is not guilty. He only brought the jacket to protect himself," she said.

Under the Arms Control Act, a license is needed to possess body armor, which is considered a weapon. Violations are punishable by up to



Hong Kong photojournalist Hok Chun Anthony Kwan

five years in jail. The law has rarely if ever been enforced for journalists covering the country's sometimes-violent political turmoil over the past nine years. Many large news organizations require their staff to wear protective gear in dangerous situations.

The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand expressed disappointment over the filing of formal charges against Kwan.

"Instead of charging Mr. Kwan, the Thai authorities should consult with the media community in Thailand... to explore a way around the 1987 law, which was surely not intended to prosecute journalists carrying out their normal duties," it said in a statement.

Pawinee said Kwan is free on bail and was to travel back to Hong Kong yesterday. **AP**

**VENETIAN MACAO OPEN 2015**

## Venetian Macao Open

**15-18/10/2015**  
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- Little Kids Play House with slide
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- After completion of play on Saturday 17 Oct. Application required
- Open to individuals 18-and-over
- Limited places available, successful applicants notified early October

**The Venetian Macao Open Treasure Hunt**

- A fun and educational six-stop journey through the Venetian Macao Resort Hotel and Venetian Macao Open
- A chance to win a VIP trip for two to enjoy Venetian Macao Resort Hotel's 'Ultimate Spa Escape Package'
- Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 October only

**For the golf fans...**

- Ernie Els, Anirban Lahiri, Scott Hend, Zhang Lian-wei and Liang Wen-chong all confirmed to play
- Asian young guns Pan Cheng-Tsung (Chinese Taipei) and Guan Tian-lang (China) ready to show their promise
- There is a Golf introductory clinics where you will be taught basic skills (Saturday 17 Oct only)

For more details of the activities and how to register for a golf clinic and wine tasting, please visit [www.thevenetianmacaopen.com](http://www.thevenetianmacaopen.com) or [www.facebook.com/venetianmacaopen](http://www.facebook.com/venetianmacaopen)

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Mike Corder and  
Nataliya Vasilyeva, The Hague

FLIGHT MH17

# Russian missile-maker contradicts Dutch crash report

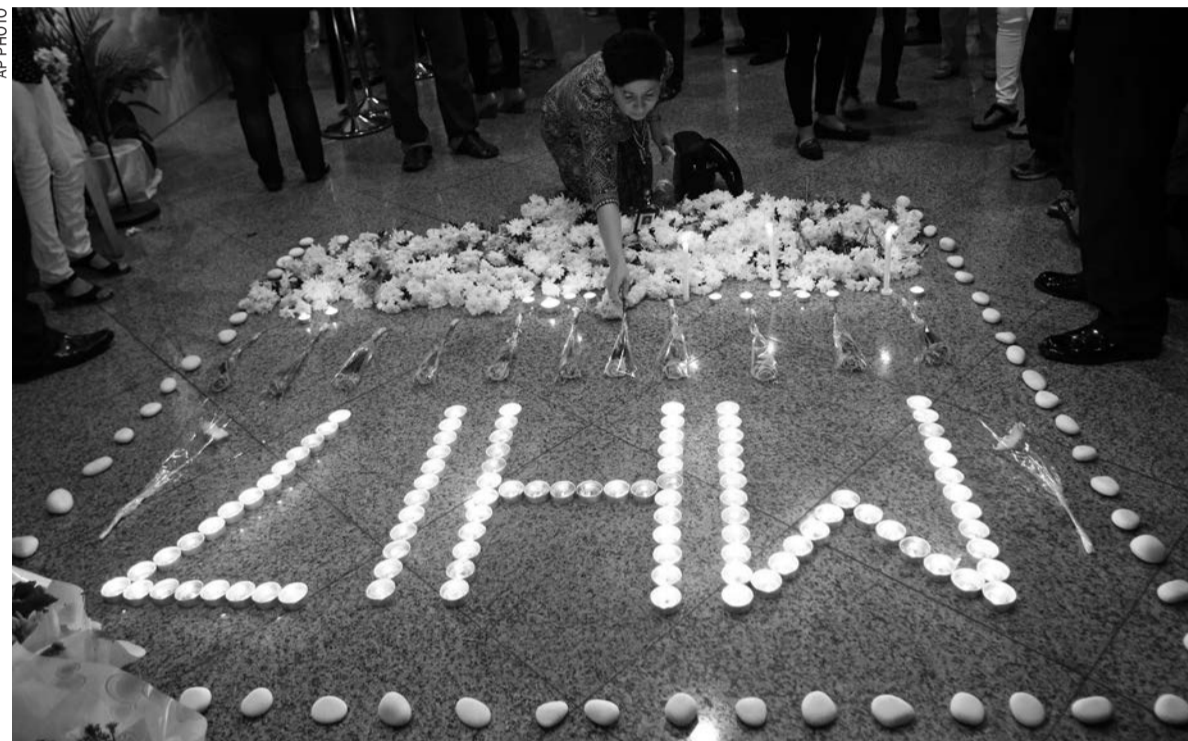
**R**ELATIVES of people killed on Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 said yesterday they have been told an official investigation has concluded the jet was destroyed by a Buk missile, but the Russian maker of the weapon says its own probe contradicts the Dutch findings.

Robby Oehlers, whose cousin Daisy was among the 298 people killed when the Boeing 777 was shot down over eastern Ukraine on July 17, 2014, said the conclusion from the Dutch investigation was shared with family members at a meeting in The Hague. "It was a Buk," he said.

The meeting with families of victims came ahead of the official presentation later yesterday of the investigation's final report.

Oehlers said the gathering was "as quiet as a mouse" as Dutch Safety Board chairman Tjibbe Joustra explained the conclusions of the 15-month investigation.

Ukraine and Western countries contend the airliner was downed by a missile fired by Russia-backed rebels or Russian forces, from rebel-controlled territory, on July 17, 2014,



A Malaysia Airlines crewmember places a flower next to candles forming the letters MH17 after multi-faith prayers for the victims

killing all 298 people aboard.

However, a statement from the Russian state-controlled

Almaz-Antey arms-maker said a draft of the Dutch report found the plane was shot down

by a Buk missile warhead that uses submunitions shaped like a capital letter I.

However, Almaz-Antey says it conducted two experiments - in one of which a Buk missile was detonated near the nose of an airplane similar to a 777 - that contradict that conclusion.

The experimental aircraft's remains showed a much different submunitions damage pattern than seen on the remnants of MH17, the company said in a statement.

The experiments also refute what it said was the Dutch version, that the missile was fired from Snizhne, a village that was under rebel control. An Associated Press reporter saw a Buk missile system in that vicinity on the same day.

Almaz-Antey in June had said that a preliminary investigation suggested that the plane was downed by a model of Buk that is no longer in service with the Russian military but that was part of the Ukrainian military arsenal. **AP**

IRAN

## Lawmakers vote to implement nuclear deal



Head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization Ali Akbar Salehi, center, is surrounded by a group of lawmakers after his speech in an open session of parliament

Nasser Karimi, Tehran

**I**RAN'S parliament voted yesterday to support implementing a landmark nuclear deal struck with world powers despite hardline attempts to derail the bill, suggesting the historic accord will be carried out.

The bill will be reviewed by Iran's 12-member Guardian Council, a group of senior clerics who could return it to lawmakers for further discussion. However, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who has the final say on key policies, has said it is up to the 290-seat parliament to approve or reject the deal.

Signaling the nuclear

deal's likely success, a spokesman for moderate President Hassan Rouhani's administration welcomed the parliament's vote and called it a "historic decision."

"Members of parliament made a well-considered decision today showing they have a good understanding of the country's situation," Mohammad Bagher Nobakht said. "We hope to see acceleration in progress and development of the country from now on."

The European Union's foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini, who helped facilitate the nuclear talks, also praised the vote as "good news" in a message on Twitter.

In the parliamentary session carried live by state radio, 161 lawmakers voted for implementing the nuclear deal, while 59 voted against it and 13 abstained. Another 17 did not vote at all, while 40 lawmakers did not attend the session.

A preliminary parliamentary vote Sunday saw 139 lawmakers out of the 253 present support the outline of the bill. But despite getting more support yesterday, hard-liners still tried to disrupt the parliament's session, shouting that Khamenei himself did not support the bill while trying to raise numerous proposals on its details.

The semi-official Fars news agency reported that Ali Aghar Zarei, a hardline lawmaker, broke down weeping after the vote. Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who led Iran's nuclear negotiation team, left the session when it grew tense, the state-run IRNA news agency said.

The bill grants responsibility for implementing the deal to Iran's Supreme National Security Council, the top security body of the country, which Rouhani heads. It allows Iran to withdraw from the agreement if world powers do not lift sanctions, impose new sanctions or restore previous ones. **AP**

ISRAEL

## Jerusalem attacks escalate wave of violence

Aron Heller, Jerusalem

**A** pair of Palestinian men boarded a bus in Jerusalem and began shooting and stabbing passengers, while another assailant rammed a car into a bus station before stabbing bystanders, in near-simultaneous attacks yesterday that escalated a monthlong wave of violence. Two Israelis and one attacker were killed.

The Jerusalem attacks, along with two stabbings in a central Israeli city, marked the most serious outbreak of violence since the current round of tensions erupted. More than 10 people were wounded.

The violence, coming at a time when peace prospects appear nil, have fueled a sense of panic in Israel and raised fears that the region is on the cusp of a new round of heavy violence.

Police closed major highways leading in and out of Jerusalem, while Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called an emergency meeting of his Security Cabinet, where police were to present a plan to halt the violence. Police spokeswoman Luba Samri said the country's internal security minister, Gilad Erdan, was considering a number of immediate steps, including a closure on Arab neighborhoods in east Jerusalem,



Israeli medics carry a wounded person at the scene of a shooting attack in Jerusalem

where many of the attackers have come from, and making it easier to get gun licenses.

In the bus attack, police said two men, one carrying a gun and the other with a knife, boarded the vehicle and attacked passengers. Police said a 60-year-old man was killed, as was one of the attackers. The second attacker was subdued by a crowd.

Elsewhere in Jerusalem, a Palestinian motorist rammed his vehicle into a crowded bus stop, then got out and began stabbing people. One Israeli was killed, police said.

The Jerusalem attacks, coupled with a pair of stabbing attacks in the central Israeli city of Raanana that injured five, came in rapid succession. Emergency services said several of the wounded were in serious condition. **AP**

## what's ON



## BONSAI AND FLORAL ART, 3-DIMENSIONAL PAINTINGS – BONSAI PHOTO EXHIBITION

TIME: 8am-8pm

UNTIL: October 25, 2015

VENUE: Taipa Houses-Museum

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8504 1218

## 'PAINTER • PAINTING'

## WESLEY CHAN COMICS EXHIBITION

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

UNTIL: November 1, 2015

VENUE: Calçada da Igreja de S.Lázaro, 10, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 4582

## 2015 ART TROUPE-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAMME – FREE YOURSELF

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

UNTIL: November 1, 2015

ADMISSION: Free

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

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 4582

## TEA CULTURE HOUSE

TIME: 9am-7pm daily

(Closed on Mondays, open on public holidays)

VENUE: Macau Tea Culture House, Lou Lim Ioc Garden, Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2882 7103 / 2858 6250

## WESTERN VIEWS ON CHINA:

## PAINTS OF THE 19TH CENTURY ABOUT CHINA

TIME: 10am-7pm

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

UNTIL: December 31, 2015

VENUE: Macau Museum of Art,

Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE

ADMISSION: MOP5

(Free on Sundays and public holidays)

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

## Offbeat

## RUNNING COUPLE SAYS 'I DO' AT MILE 8 OF CHICAGO MARATHON



One couple ran away to get married ... at the Chicago Marathon.

Stephanie Reinhart says she just wanted a "short and sweet ceremony." Mark Jockel wanted a big wedding surrounded by friends and family. The 35-year-old Reinhart and 46-year-old Jockel compromised, marrying at the 8-mile mark of Sunday's Chicago Marathon in the city's Boystown neighborhood.

Reinhart wore a white running outfit and held flowers. Jockel wore a tuxedo T-shirt. They exchanged vows under a garden arch decorated with race medals. The ceremony took less than four minutes.

Reinhart says she got her simple wedding and Jockel got "several thousand guests."

Chicago Marathon organizers gave the couple customized bride and groom bibs. They toasted with Gatorade.

The couple met two years ago through the Chicago Area Runners Association.

## TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
18:20	Trail of Lies (Repeated)
19:00	TDM Interview (Repeat)
19:40	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Montra do Lilau
21:40	Miscellaneous
22:10	Trail of Lies
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
01:00	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

## cinema

## CINETEATRO

08 Oct - 14 Oct

## THE MARTIAN

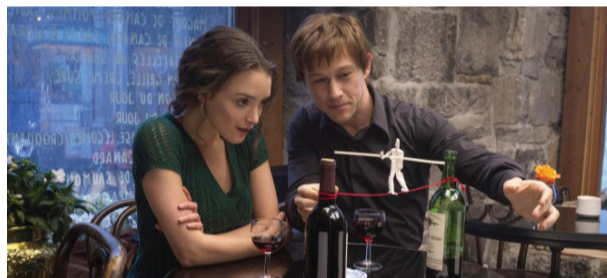
ROOM 1  
(2D) 2.15, 4.45, 9.45 pm  
(3D) 7.15 pm

Director: Ridley Scott

Starring: Matt Damon, Jessica Chastain, Kate Mara

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 141min



## THE WALK

ROOM 2  
2.30, 4.45, 9.30 pm

Director: Robert Zemeckis

Starring: Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Ben Kingsley,

Charlotte Le Bon

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 123min

## THE INTERN

ROOM 2

7.15 pm

Director: Nancy Meyers

Starring: Robert De Niro, Anne Hathaway

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 121min



## SAVING MR WU

ROOM 3  
2.30, 4.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Sheng Ding

Starring: Andy Lau, Ye Liu, Wu Ruofu, Qianyuan Wang

Language: Mandarin (Cantonese/ English)

Duration: 105min

## HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA 2

ROOM 3

7.30 pm

Director: Genndy tartakovsky

Language: Cantonese (Chinese/English)

Duration: 89min

## MACAU TOWER

01 Oct - 14 Oct

## THE MARTIAN

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: Ridley Scott

Starring: Matt Damon, Jessica Chastain, Kate Mara

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 141min

## this day in history



## 1994 ISRAELIS AND ARAFAT SHARE PEACE PRIZE

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, and two Israelis, the Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, have been named the winners of this year's Nobel peace prize.

The announcement has been marred by the resignation of one of the Nobel peace prize committee members.

Kare Kristiansen objected to the honour being given to the PLO leader, whom he described as "too tainted by violence, terror and torture".

The award has also been overshadowed tonight by the bungled rescue of a kidnapped Israeli soldier from his militant Palestinian captors, which ended in the deaths of the captive, three of his kidnappers and one of his would-be rescuers.

It is the first time the prize has been divided among more than two named individuals and only the third time in the prize's 93-year history that a committee member has broken ranks publicly and quit.

The peace prize follows the historic handshake between the PLO leader and the Israeli Prime Minister on the White House lawn on 13 September 1993, marking an agreement to give the Palestinians limited autonomy in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho.

The Nobel Committee statement said the award was to honour a political act "one that called for great courage on both sides...By concluding the Oslo accords Arafat, Peres and Rabin have made substantial contributions to a historic process through which peace and cooperation can replace war and hate".

But the failed rescue attempt of Corporal Nahshon Waxman has served to highlight how frail the peace is in the Middle East.

The Israelis had accused Hamas of holding Corporal Waxman in PLO-administered territory. But after the PLO leader ordered a search and detained some 150 suspects, the soldier was eventually found in an Israeli-occupied area of the West Bank.

The kidnappers were demanding the release of their leader, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, and 200 Hamas extremists being held in Israeli jails. Otherwise, they said, they would kill Corporal Waxman.

Mr Rabin refused to negotiate and - an hour before the captors' deadline expired - Mr Rabin ordered the rescue attempt.

He said afterwards: "I would happily give back the Nobel Peace Prize to bring back the lives of the soldiers who fell.

"Whoever wants to advance peace must fight the radical, murderous terrorists of Hamas and Islamic Jihad and the rejectionists because they are the murderers of peace."

Middle East experts were surprised at the inclusion of Mr Peres in the award. Although he and Rabin represent the same political party, they are bitter rivals. Both men have claimed the credit for last year's breakthrough.

Today's was the second Nobel peace prize awarded to peacemakers in the Middle East, the first being the 1978 joint award to Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israel's Prime Minister Menachem Begin.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The award was controversial and generated a great deal of criticism. Adrian Hamilton of The Observer called it a "peace of opportunism rather than one of principle".

David Horowitz of the Financial Times said it was a decision based on "hopes of peace rather than peace itself".

Events since 1994 have tended to prove them right.

Prime Minister Rabin was assassinated in November 1995 by a right-wing Jewish extremist opposed to the peace process.

Yasser Arafat died in 2004.

Elections in January 2005 were won by former Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas. Under his leadership there have been tentative moves towards renewed peace talks despite continuing violence on both sides.

Sheikh Yassin was released in 1997. He was killed in an Israeli missile strike on 22 March 2004.







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VENETIAN MACAO OPEN

# World-rated golfers gear up for Macao Open

Aries Un

**I**NDIAN golfer Anirban Lahiri pledged to reprise last year's victory at the 2015 Venetian Macao Open that kicks off tomorrow, while double-win record holder Zhang Lian-wei from China also vowed to rekindle his championship ambitions on the fairway.

During a media briefing held yesterday afternoon at Sands Cotai Central, Lahiri and Zhang were interviewed together with three other celebrated professional golfers, namely Australia's Scott Hend, South Africa's Ernie Els and another Chinese player, Liang Wen-chong. The golfers revealed their individual determination to take home the trophy during this year's edition of the tournament that starts tomorrow.

Despite the missed short putt in the Presidents Cup held in the South Korean city of Incheon three days ago that shattered his victory dream, 28-year-old Lahiri quickly regained his confidence, setting his eyes on the 17th edition championship trophy in a city he also perceives as "a home to play comfortably."

"Obviously the fifth place finish at PGA Champs gave me a lot of confidence. I am now back at one of my favorite tournaments and so I will be keen to do well again," said the Asian Tour Order of



Merit leader. "History suggests it isn't easy to win here multiple times, but the course suits my game and I think I have as good a chance as any."

In the history of the territory's annual championship, Zhang is the only golfer who coasted home with the trophy in two consecutive years. Describing himself a genuine golf lover, the 50-year-old hoped he could continue to win all the way out.

To even a seasoned professional player like himself, the course at the Macau Golf and Country Club can occasionally prove challenging. "I think Macau's course is easy either for offensive or defensive, yet when the wind picks up, it's difficult to play the game," said the Chinese golfer. "The course here is rather short, yet full of obstacles, especially if it's a windy day."

As one of the significant

tournaments on the Asian Tour, the four-day competition also drew many Chinese rising stars such as Li Hao-tong, Guan Tian-Iang, and Jin Cheng – a number one amateur golfer set to test himself on Macau's hilly course hot on the heels of his win at the Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship.

Zhang told the media that Li and Jin have been in good form, evident from a mutual training session yesterday

morning.

For another experienced Chinese golfer Lian, his maiden victory at the Japan Golf Tour Championship has significantly boosted his confidence, he admitted. "I have been working pretty hard since then, and my game is definitely coming together. Practice has been going well so I am looking forward to mounting my challenge this week," said Liang.

**“**The course here is rather short, yet full of obstacles, especially if it's a windy day.  
**”**

ZHANG LIAN-WEI

Making his appearance in the tournament for the third year in a row, Els said he has been gearing up for the games as last week's tournament in Scotland has pepped him up from a brief recess last month. "It is a strong field once again this year in Macau but as always, I will give it my best shot and hopefully be in a position to win on Sunday," said the South African.

Last year's first runner-up Hend was also positive about reigniting his 2013 victory on Sunday. The Australian player has also already rolled up his sleeves for what he reckoned as "the toughest competition ever" with so many world-level winners.

**The Macau Daily Times is the tournament's official media partner.**

**V**ENUS Williams rallied to beat Yuliya Beygelzimer of Ukraine 2-6, 6-4, 6-4 yesterday in the opening round of the Hong Kong Open. The third-seeded Williams wore a bandage on her left thigh and looked hampered in her movements. However, she came from a break down three times in the final set to close out the win in 2 hours, 13 minutes.

After leveling for 4-4 in the decider, she held her serve for the first time in the set to take a 5-4 lead before breaking again to secure the win.

"I like easy matches but there are no givens out there, and she came out and played the match of her life and that is what I

TENNIS

## Venus Williams rallies to advance to 2nd round in Hong Kong

have to be ready for all of the time," Williams said. "These are the kind of matches you want to win and then come out and improve on in your next match."

Williams said she picked up the leg injury en route to winning the Wuhan Open title last month, but that it's something she can cope with.

"I'm just trying to stay on court and play smart," Williams said. "The smartest thing to



Venus Williams prepares to return a shot against Yuliya Beygelzimer

do would be to play two sets."

Former No. 1 Jelena Jankovic also advanced with a 6-4, 6-2 victory over Romanian qualifier Ana Bogdan. "It was not an easy match. I didn't know my opponent and it took me some time to figure her out," Jankovic said.

Second-seeded Angelique Kerber defeated Italy's Francesca Schiavone 6-7 (4), 6-2, 6-3. Two other seeded players, No. 5 Samantha Stosur of Australia and No. 7 Caroline Garcia of France also earned straight-set victories.

Stosur defeated Japan's Risa Ozaki 6-3, 6-1 while Garcia brushed aside American Lauren Davis 6-1, 6-3. **AP**

opinion

**Macau Matters**  
 Richard Whitfield



**HOTEL DIVERSIFICATION**

The media reported recently that Melco Crown had asked for its new Studio City hotel to be downgraded to 4-star to align with the Macau Government policy of diversifying the hospitality and tourism industry offering in Macau. I think that such a policy of hotel diversification would be misguided, to say the least.

I have done an Internet search but cannot find any further information on this government policy, but this may be because I am limited to reviewing information in English, which can often be limiting in Macau where it is not an official language. However, it may also be because information on this policy is not publicly available, which seems to be the case for substantial elements of local government policy. The government's penchant for secrecy is something I do not like about living in Macau.

Going back to this supposed "hotel diversification policy", Macau is a very small place with very limited space and so the potential number of hotel rooms is limited by necessity. In such situations I think it only makes sense to maximize the potential income from limited resources, and in the case of hotel rooms and restaurants this means offering the highest quality rooms/meals that can attract the highest prices. We want tourists with the highest spending power paying premium room rates and eating in high quality, expensive restaurants. This should maximize the tourism spend within Macau.

Some would argue that focusing on serving bigger spending tourists will raise the living costs for locals. But if the last 10 years of tourism growth has shown us anything, it is very clear that while rising tourism has increased local living costs it has also led to much bigger rises in local incomes, so that locals have seen a large net benefit.

People seem to forget that Macau does not sit in a vacuum, and is surrounded by nearby, relatively low cost locations like Zhuhai. Macau hoteliers and restaurateurs cannot compete on price with their compatriots in Zhuhai so why try? I firmly believe that a far better market positioning is to focus on higher quality offerings in Macau. We should see Macau and Zhuhai as dual cities that have complementary strengths.

Zhuhai is also a very important living cost management resource for many locals. Many local residents frequently visit Zhuhai to shop and to eat. Increasing numbers of Macau residents also live in Zhuhai because of its lower living costs.

This same argument applies for shopping, entertainment, restaurants and other aspects of life in Macau and Zhuhai. We need to dissolve the artificial border between Macau and Zhuhai and consider the combination to be a dual city, which it has been in reality for many years.

Following a dual city strategy, to me it seems clear that we need to make travelling through the Macau-Zhuhai border as easy and painless as possible for both tourists and locals. We need 24-hour border openings and simplified and streamlined immigration procedures much more than policies for hotel and restaurant diversification that only reduce Macau's competitiveness.

Macau and Zhuhai can take complementary roles in the development of our region - and isn't integration with China the long term goal anyway, so let us push forward in this direction and not promote competition between these two halves of a dual city.

Let us rethink Macau's tourism "market positioning" to focus much more on the quality and uniqueness of what we have to offer, and not fall into a price competition trap that we can never win.

**THE BUZZ** TOP LEGISLATOR MEETS LOCAL LAWMAKERS

China's top legislator Zhang Dejiang yesterday urged Macau's lawmakers to continue to contribute to "one country, two systems." Zhang, chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), made the remarks at a meeting with a delegation headed by Ho Iat Seng, president of the

Legislative Assembly (AL). According to Xinhua, Zhang listened to a report and expressed his recognition of the work of the AL. Zhang expressed hopes that the local lawmakers can fulfill their duties and "unite people from all circles" so as to support a governance in accordance with the law.



Station	Air quality
Roadside	55-75 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	95-125 Bad
Ambient	80-110 Bad

SOURCE: DSMG

**Vanuatu in political chaos after lawmakers pardon themselves**

AP PHOTO



Vanuatu President Baldwin Lonsdale

**Nick Perry**

**T**HE South Pacific island nation of Vanuatu found itself in political chaos yesterday following an extraordinary few days in which 14 lawmakers were found guilty of corruption but were then pardoned by one of their own while the president was abroad.

The events have created a constitutional crisis for President Baldwin Lonsdale, who promised he would find a legal avenue to "clean up the mess." "Vanuatu's credibility has been tarnished throughout the world, and as head of state, I am deeply

sorry to see this," Lonsdale told reporters Monday, according to the Vanuatu Daily Post.

On Friday, the Supreme Court found Parliament speaker Marcellino Pipite and 13 other lawmakers guilty of bribery. A judge said many had accepted bribes of 1 million vatu (USD9,000) to help overthrow the previous government.

But the next day, Pipite signed a pardon for himself and the others. Because the president was away, Pipite was the acting head of state.

He told the Australian Broadcasting Corp. he signed the pardons out of con-

cern for the nation's interests rather than his own.

"I decided to make such orders to maintain the peace, unity, in this country," he said.

But the move has angered many people in Vanuatu, who had turned out in large numbers to hear the Supreme Court verdicts. Many hoped the verdicts would mark an end to the corruption which has plagued the country's political system.

"People are sick to death of the ongoing changes in government and the corruption issues," said Kiery Manassah, a former government public relations officer.

He said there were rumors there would be a legal challenge to the pardons Tuesday but nothing had eventuated. The men were due to be sentenced next week, he said, but for now it remained unclear whether that would proceed.

"At the moment, it's very, very confusing," he said.

Vanuatu is continuing to recover from Cyclone Pam, which struck the archipelago in March. The cyclone killed at least 11 people and affected 180,000 by destroying homes and crops. The country has a population of 275,000. **AP**

**THE DECISIVE MOMENT**

Xinhua/Lo Ping Fai



Vintage cars pictured last weekend during the second vintage vehicle carnival in Hong Kong.

**WORLD BRIEFS**

**MYANMAR**'s election commission proposes delaying the Nov. 8 general election either nationwide or in some areas hit by landslides and flooding. **More on p12**

**PHILIPPINES** The Philippines backs a reported U.S. plan to challenge China's territorial claims by deploying a Navy ship close to a Chinese-built island in the South China Sea, saying it is important for the international community to safeguard freedom of navigation in the disputed waters.

**AUSTRALIA** A 62-year-old recreational hunter lost in a hot and arid region of the Australian Outback survived without water for six days by eating ants, police say.

AP PHOTO



**USA** Playboy magazine will no longer publish photos of nude women as part of a redesign of the decades-old magazine, according to a news report Monday. Executives for the magazine company told The New York Times that the change will take place in March 2016. The paper reported that the print edition of Playboy will still feature women in provocative poses, but they will no longer be fully nude.

**PAKISTAN** A landslide hits three makeshift homes in a slum in Pakistan's port city of Karachi, killing 13 people.

**PAKISTAN** A Pakistani prison official says authorities have hanged nine convicts, including four brothers, the latest in a series of death sentences to be carried out since the country lifted a moratorium last year.

**UK-SAUDI ARABIA** The U.K. gov't pulled out of USD9 million deal to sell prison expertise to Saudi Arabia that had drawn opposition from rights groups and senior politicians. David Cameron's office said Britain had withdrawn its bid for the training contract after reviewing Ministry of Justice "priorities."