



SIN FONG OWNERS REACH CONSENSUS
The owners of the troubled Patane building have already reached a consensus to begin reconstruction

P2



INSPECTORS CRACK DOWN ON SMOKERS
Tobacco control enforcement agents have performed a total of 927,739 inspections, resulting in 29,958 charges

P6



XI, MA MEET FOR 1ST TIME

P10,11

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WORLD BRIEFS



CHINA Air quality reached extremely hazardous levels in the northeastern Chinese city of Shenyang yesterday, as northern China began to burn coal to heat homes for winter. Real-time data released by the Shenyang Environmental Protection Agency showed the density of the poisonous tiny airborne matters known as PM2.5 was more than 1,000 micrograms per cubic meter. Nearby cities also reported very high levels of the harmful particulates.



INDIA Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Hindu nationalist party conceded defeat yesterday in a crucial election in India's populous Bihar state. By midday yesterday India's election commission website showed that a self-proclaimed "grand alliance" of parties opposed to Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party was leading in more than 140 seats, comfortably in sight of the 122 seats needed to control the state's 243-seat legislature.

More on backpage

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FINANCIAL TIMES

China: Adapt or die

F1

Millions in Myanmar vote in historic election

P12,13



Caritas Charity bazaar more than just a fundraiser, Paul Pun says

P3 MDT REPORT

Customs authorities catch illegal migrants off Reclaimed Area A

Customs authorities have intercepted a motor-powered vessel carrying 11 illegal migrants early off Reclaimed Area A last Saturday morning. It was said that the officers stationed along the shore initially spotted a man and woman who were suspected of leaving the territory. Meanwhile, the boat was seen approaching the shore. The marine security vessel rushed to the scene following a notification from the officers and captured the people. The illegal migrants in question came to Macau with the aim of searching for jobs and entertainment.

Personal credit cards up 3.4pct

The total number of personal credit cards in circulation was 899,763 in the third quarter of 2015, signaling an increase of 3.4 percent compared with the previous quarter, according to data released by the government on Friday. Analyzed according to currency types, MOP cards amounted to 649,151, HKD cards to 79,793, and RMB cards to 170,819, up quarter-to-quarter by 3.2 percent, 1 percent, and 5.3 percent respectively. The delinquency ratio edged up from 1.06 percent in the second quarter to 1.1 percent in the third. Meanwhile, the credit card turnover grew by 3.1 percent to MOP4.5 billion, and the cash advance turnover was MOP221.7 million.

Resident takes gold in cake exhibition



Local resident Lidia Lourenço has taken gold at the Cake International Exhibition, in Birmingham, for the second consecutive year. This year, she only participated in the International Category – designated for non-residents of the UK. Lourenço was required, according to the rules of the International Category, to produce a cake that embodied her place of residence – Macau. She invested her effort into modeling the Chinese warrior Guan Gong from chocolate. The Cake International Exhibition is, according to organizers, the “most highly anticipated event in the cake world’s calendar.” It is a cake decorating and baking show comprising workshops and classes, held at the NEC venue in Birmingham, United Kingdom.

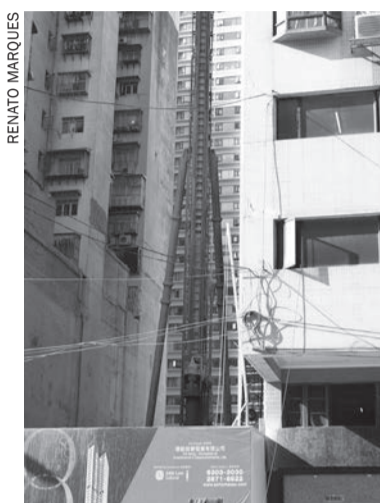
SIN FONG GARDEN

Proprietors expect reconstruction to start soon

PROPRIETORS at the Sin Fong Garden residential block have already reached a consensus to begin reconstruction works on the blighted property, with authorities receiving the request filed by the property owners’ committee last Tuesday.

According to the ad hoc committee’s president Wong Man Son, who spoke of the unanimous decision to TDM, all the property owners – including the one who operates a storefront at the building – have agreed to rebuild the structurally-flawed edifice into a new one based on the current land area, height and number of floors.

Wong appealed to the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau to speed up the proce-



The troubled Sin Fong Garden building

dures to implement the project following their request. The only possible changes to be made to the building’s technical drawings

would be the addition of piles to consolidate its base.

The Bureau also promised to accelerate the handling of the request in accordance with existing regulations.

The Jiangmen Communal Society, which promised to underwrite 60 percent of the reconstruction cost, stated it was favorable to the outcome, the media outlet reported. The group also believed that a tender for the rebuilding works would come very soon.

The exact cost for the entire project is still not available; yet the property owners, as some legal advisers suggested previously, could also face another financial challenge in the case of them having to repay the government’s

temporary subsidy that totals at least MOP20 million. The society’s financial support was said to not cover that regard.

In late September, seven flat owners were respectively sentenced by the courts to a fine of MOP9,000 or 60 days imprisonment. The whole episode started in 2012 when deepening cracks were discovered in the walls, resulting in an evacuation for all flat owners afterwards.

Last year, homeowners staged a camp-out on the road outside the cordoned-off building, accusing the government of being incapable of dealing with the issue. The camp-out later escalated into a minor clash with the authorities as scores of protesters were taken to the police station despite multiple warnings.

The detained residents later told media that the government had promised to drop the charges against them as long as they left the road. The authorities, including the Commission Against Corruption, later denied the allegation. **AU**

Funding of cultural projects likely to reach fewer applicants

Aries Un

THE identity of this year’s recipients of government grants to run cultural and creative projects will most likely be announced by the end of the year, according to the Cultural Industries Fund’s administrative committee.

In a press conference held by the fund last week it was revealed that only eight of those projects had managed to secure the financial support as of the end of October, while five others are still pending appraisals. The committee estimates the support given to the eight projects will be at least MOP15 million.

This year there have been far fewer applications than last year, when the fund, established in April 2014, received 321 applications and approved 86, amounting to a total of MOP89 million. The beneficiaries have gradually been implementing their projects with the help of

subsidies or interest-free loans.

The committee’s head, Leong Heng Teng, explained that the “year of 2014 was much anticipated,” because it was the first time that the fund called for applicants. “Everybody swarmed up to [the fund] regardless of the whether their enterprises were relatively more mature or less mature,” he said.

Of the 2014 grant recipients, 8 were said to be venues or platforms devoted to nurturing the creative scene. Currently, 4 have already commenced operations. In addition, the vast majority of the other projects have also begun, subject to a period of six months to five years for them to reach full execution.

The 2014 applicants’ projects, based on their own estimates, initially required a total of around MOP750 million from the fund to get started. However after a review by the fund’s evaluators, that number decreased to MOP461 million.

Leong went on to explain that many those applicants had little understanding of how to calculate the capital required to initiate their business. Therefore, the committee intensified its face-to-face communication with the candidates this year in order to assist them with their assessments before they submitted their reports.

Furthermore, the committee expressed its desire for burgeoning startups to benefit from the initiative, including, for example, part-time artists who occasionally sell their products at Tap Seac Square.

“It’s more like a personal hobby than a career to those people,” he said. “That those ‘seeds’ could thrive on our soil is what we have been looking forward to.”

The application model for the government’s funding has this year shifted from only being open during a designated period to an all-year online format.

HONG KONG police have

announced a crackdown on street racing ahead of the Macau Grand Prix, which will take place between November 19 and 22. The campaign will span the whole month of November with a particular emphasis on Friday nights and weekends, when illegal street races are the most common.

The announcement came after police officers stopped 15 sports cars about to begin a race yesterday. Since the beginning of the year 415 police operations

Hong Kong crackdown on street racing

have been launched against street racers, up by 70 percent from 2014. Eleven people have been arrested, compared with 6 people a year ago.

Hong Kong’s publication Ming Pao Daily reported that according to Tsang Kin-Keung, superintendent of the traffic management division, all of the police districts are taking part in the campaign.

Tsang said that police would

increase roadblocks and deploy more laser guns and cameras to deter racers. In addition, suspected vehicles would be checked for illegal modifications.

According to the police, most street racing happens either late at night or in the early hours of the morning. Most illegal races are not planned and occur spontaneously when drivers challenge each other on

the road.

Roads with sparse traffic, such as the Tolo Highway and the south-bound section of the North Lantau Highway, are favored by street racers.

Tsang said that his division has yet to draw up a contingency plan for the Formula E Championship, which Hong Kong is hosting next October, but added his team will be ready by the time of the event.

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Caritas Charity bazaar more than just a fundraiser, Paul Pun says

Aries Un

CARITAS Macau's charitable bazaar will always remain the territory's signature event for locals due to its longstanding place in the region's collective memory, said Paul Pun Chi Meng, the group's secretary general.

As the annual event entered its 46th edition in a format similar to preceding versions, Pun told the Times it was unnecessary to introduce tweaks to it, given that it was designed to obtain small donations from the general public, who are already more than acquainted with its operations.

"That the bazaar wasn't changed over the years was because we could get donations from citizens, besides those corporations with deep pockets from which we could always ask," the secretary general explained yesterday, during the closing day of the event.

Despite the funds raised every year failing to meet the group's target of at least



10 percent of the total expenditure, Pun said that he is always delighted to hold the two-day event, sometimes three-day, if it coincides with Halloween. It is likewise a venue that brings together "old friends." "Public involvement is what matters most," he stressed.

Asked if he wished the authorities would promote the traditional fundraising activity as a tourist attraction

to take in more donations, Pun argued that the bazaar already welcomes tourists' participation, although they are not the main focus.

"The point is this is an annual activity especially for Macau people," he stated. "If it's tailored into something for tourists, the format of operations will become different."

He continued: "It's like a rendezvous for old class-

mates and former colleagues, the value of which is far more important than increasing tourist income."

Some of the bazaar-goers also said that they wished to keep the fair just for Macau people instead of popularizing it as something accommodating to tourists.

According to Mr Pun, the income raised through the bazaar accounts for about one third of the group's overall financial support received from other parties. Last year Caritas managed to raise MOP7.6 million via the activity. This year he aimed for a little more.

Pun also said that casino-resorts' presence at the fair has been expanding over the years as they not only contribute with donations, which usually make up over one seventh of the event's total revenue, but they also supply volunteers.

Owing to the fast-changing cityscape, the fair has been relocated to numerous locations before it finally settled at the Nam Van Lake.

MGM holds topping off ceremony at Cotai

MGM China held a celebration on Friday to mark the "topping off" of the MGM Cotai. The ceremony was conducted in the presence of senior executives from China State Construction Engineering. It featured a combination of Chinese and Western rituals, including a Chinese Bai Sun ceremony of incense offering and roasted pig-cutting, followed by the placing of a pine tree on the highest beam of the building. "We see MGM Cotai as an opportunity for us to do more for the Macau community, to increase the diversification of our offerings and to make Macau an even more desirable destination," the co-chair of MGM China, Pansy Ho, said of the occasion. MGM Cotai is set to open in 2016.

MIMF closes with many sold-out concerts



The 29th Macau International Music Festival (MIMF), organized by the Cultural Affairs Bureau, reportedly sold 90 percent of the tickets

available for the month-long festival. The MIMF came to a close on November 1 after a month that featured 23 shows, along with over 60 performances and outreach activities. This year's theme was "Soundmazing" and featured performances in a variety of styles, such as classical, jazz and a cappella. Festival organizers said that the performances generated a positive response from the public, and that "most of the concert tickets were sold in a short amount of time." They added that there would be similarly high-quality performances at next year's festival, the 30th edition of MIMF.

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Alexis Tam explains why Uber deemed illegal

Renato Marques

THE Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, declared last Saturday that he does “not agree with the provision of transport services in private vehicles by Uber”, stating that this activity “violates the law and, therefore, is illegal.” The secretary added that the government would continue to oppose these activities, further stating that “the tourism sector is in line with this decision.”

In a public statement, made as he was questioned by media, Mr Tam said, “The Macau Government Tourist Office recently released a statement informing travel agencies informing agencies that the provision of transport services with private vehicles is illegal.” The same official recalled that in last week’s meeting of the Council for Tourism Development, the council had already issued a warning to its members, which was extended to the whole of the tourism sector. This advice was centered on the fact that “the provision of such services is illegal and that the government will tackle this type of action,” stating once more that “the position of both the government and the tourism sector in relation to the services provided by Uber is unanimous.”

Mr Tam also noted that “the territory has its own legal and public transport systems.” He does not wish



Alexis Tam

to see the tourism sector capitalizing on these private vehicle transport services because “vehicles registered in the tourism sector are to serve only tourists and not the population in general.” The Secretary added that the tourism sector aims to maintain a cooperative relationship with the government, saying that the authorities will fully support the sector in their difficulties, and, accordingly, that the provision of transport services in private vehicles should not be made by travel agencies.

According to several media reports in Hong Kong, the big hurdle that Uber has faced in gaining traction in the neighboring territory is mainly due to the pressure from the taxi industry. The taxi industry in Hong Kong is a highly speculative sector due to the fact that a taxi license can reach an open market value of about HKD7 million. In this sense, the introduction of a service like Uber poses serious threats both directly to the taxi industry and indirectly to the government department that manages it.

Vehicles registered in the tourism sector are to serve only tourists and not the population in general.

ALEXIS TAM

Cristina Morais appointed Forum Macau coordinator

AFTER she was appointed by the Secretary for Economy and Finance as Coordinator of the Supporting Office to the Permanent Secretariat of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-Speaking Countries (Macau) on November 3, an official inauguration ceremony for Ms Cristina Morais was held on November 6 in the presence of the Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong.

During the ceremony, Mr Leong said, “Cristina Morais is the ideal candidate to take over the office given her dedication over the years, which allowed her to accumulate extensive knowledge and experience in foreign trade, as well as particular knowledge and experien-



Cristina Morais (left)

ce related to economic and commercial services between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries.” He also stressed that Ms Morais has organized and participated in various economic and trade activities of great importance, which have given her a privileged perspective on world trade. He complimented

her by highlighting her professional and linguistic expertise, as well as her leadership capabilities, which make her the ideal person to pursue the development of Forum Macau.

Cristina Morais thanked the secretary for his trust shown in appointing her to the position.

“It is a great challenge for me, but I face it in a very positive way and I will count on the help of everyone to take care of all the tasks we have at hand,” she said. “The main priority for next year will be to organize the 5th Forum Macau Ministerial Conference as well other seminars and conferences,” she added.

Cristina Morais is fluent in Chinese, Portuguese and English. She also holds a Master’s Degree in Business Administration from the University of Macau, and a Degree in Business Management from the University of Washington, USA. She has been working since 1991 in the Macau Economic Service (DSE), and has led the bureau’s external relations department since 2009. **RM**

Large computer graphics conference to be held in town

ASIA’S most extensive conference and exhibition on computer graphics and interactive technologies is slated to come to Macau next year, showcasing cutting-edge software and hardware for animation production in the territory for the first time.

The eighth edition of the four-day event, organized by ACM SIGGRAPH, concluded last Thursday in the Japanese city of Kobe. The news of Macau’s selection as next year’s host city came at the closing ceremony, where the executive director of MSAR’s Trade and Investment Promotion Institute, Irene Lau, invited the exhibitors and conference participants to continue supporting the event in Macau.

According to authorities, the 2016 instalment, which will be held in December, is expected to attract over 5,000 industry professionals. The function was proof that Macau’s strengthened efforts in promoting itself as a hub for international conventions and exhibitions have been successful.

The computer technology-oriented function was first held in Singapore in 2008. Hong Kong, Seoul and Shenzhen have subsequently hosted the event. **AU**

STATISTICS

Local business capital surges 87.4 percent


GOVERNMENT data released last week indicated that registered capital, the amount of capital available to shareholders, significantly increased by 87.4 percent year-on-year to a total of MOP 377 million for the third quarter of 2015. The registered capital of companies in the business services industry, which makes up a majority of Macau’s total capital, soared by 260.1 percent to a total of MOP 293 million.

Meanwhile, the number of companies in dissolution during the third quarter of 2015 totaled 150, with the value of their registered capital amounting to MOP 127 million.

Analyzed by registered capital, there were 881 new companies with capital under MOP50,000, with a combined total capital of MOP23 million. In addition, there were 22 new companies registered in the third quarter of 2015 with capital of MOP1 million or over, down from 30 new companies in the previous quarter. The total value of the 22 new companies amounted to MOP316 million and 83.8 percent of the newly registered capital.

During this third quarter, most of the capital of new companies has come from mainland China (MOP181 million) and Macau (MOP77 million). Further, there were 834 new companies established solely by Macau shareholders, and 126 joint ventures between shareholders from Macau and those from other countries or regions.

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Anti-smoking inspectors fine almost 30,000 people

SINCE the adoption of the Tobacco Prevention and Control Law on January 1 2012, tobacco control enforcement agents have performed a total of 927,739 inspections, resulting in 29,958 charges to people who have been caught smoking in forbidden places, the Health Bureau has revealed.

These figures show that until October 31 last year, agents undertook an average of 663 inspections on a daily basis.

According to a statement issued by the Health Bureau on Friday, this year alone a total of 241,515 inspections have been carried out, which raises the daily average to 794 inspections per day. In this period, the services also received a total of 5,806 complaints, including 5,768 for smoking in places in which public smoking had been outlawed.

Among the identified cases of people smoking in prohibited places in 2015, the majority of illegal smoking cases (totaling 5,345 cases altogether) were perpetrated by male citizens.



About 62.5 percent of these perpetrators were residents of Macau.

Internet cafés remain the places in which law infringement is most frequently detected, with a total of 1,171 cases (20.2 percent), while parks, gardens and recreational areas came in second with 745 cases (12.8 percent).

Regarding enforcement of the law in casinos, the bureau also noted that, from January 1 to October 31, 343 joint inspections operations were carried

out by several departments, resulting in 368 individual cases of illegal smoking. In contrast with the outcomes of the majority of other cases in the territory, in the casinos, tourists reportedly perpetrated a total of 81.0 percent of the cases.

The Health Bureau also reported that, until October, they had received a total of 945 complaints about violations of the anti-smoking law in casinos, of which 417 (44.1 percent) were related to the Le Royal Arc casino. **RM**

Residents disappointed over lack of 'inflation relief'

RESIDENTS who have been expecting the fall in inflation over the last year to have an impact on food prices have been disappointed. TDM reported that many residents did not witness the "inflation relief" that they expected this year.

Inflation has eased in the past few months, with the economy shrinking and the yuan depreciating. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) put inflation at 4.23 percent year-on-year for September, down from 6.18 percent for October 2014, according to government data.

However, residents say that they have not noticed a difference in prices, despite the fact that inflation has slowed over the last five months. The price of food is the main concern among locals. Inflation affecting food prices continued to rise above the average inflation rate in September, increasing by 4.58 percent year-on-year.

In 2012, the government established a cross-departmental food price committee that pledged to solve the

continued rise in inflation. However, dependence on a food supply from mainland China, which is in turn controlled by a small number of companies, has stymied government efforts.

"Once the gaming revenue is stable, and [the] economy does not go down anymore, there will be no big fluctuation and I do not think inflation will go up again. This is the case especially when the renminbi becomes stable. So I think the inflation rate for next year's first quarter will be the same as this year," said Jacky So, dean at the University of Macau's Faculty of Business Administration.

Mr So thinks that the government should continue the subsidy policy in order to ease financial pressures impacting residents.

With the Policy Address for 2016 scheduled for November 17, less than two weeks away, some are urging the government to launch a price regulation mechanism, along with more measures to help residents financially.

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

Renato Marques

Mid-term gaming industry review to conclude this year

THE government expects its mid-term review of the city's gaming industry to be complete within this year, the Secretary for Economy and Finance announced on Friday. According to Lionel Leong, the findings of this report will be made public by early next year.

The mid-term review aims to identify the main achievements of the city's six gaming concessions since the liberalization of the industry in 2002, in order to gain a sense of direction for the coming years. The six concessions will expire between 2020 and 2022.

Mr Leong was speaking on the sidelines of the inauguration of Ms Cristina Morais as the new Coordinator of the Supporting Office to the Permanent Secretariat of the Forum for Economic and Trade Co-operation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries (Macau).

In addition, the secretary also



The Studio City casino resort, developed by Melco Crown Entertainment

said that he was "considering candidates for the role of Director of the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau." As previously reported by the Times, the current director, Manuel Neves, is due to retire this month, leaving the deputy director, Leong Man Ion, with the task of leading the bureau in the interim period before a replacement is appointed.

"The existing structure of governance in the public administration allows us to accommodate changes to the management of a particular bureau without affecting its operations and the quality of its service," the secretary stressed.

Questioned by the press, Mr Leong revealed that no other se-

nior officials under his portfolio had asked to leave. However, he added that the government would respect the decision of any other official who wished to leave public service, if that were to happen in the future.

Another topic considered by the secretary at the same event was Macau's Wealth Partaking Scheme. Mr Leong said he was "confident there would be an adequate amount of accumulated funds during the year to continue the measure in 2016," while noting that "the maintenance of favorable economic conditions was one of the major factors to be considered in order to guarantee the scheme's continuation."

ANALYSIS

Decline in gaming stocks could be coming to an end

INVESTORS and gaming analysts are speculating as to whether the positive casino revenue from October is a sign that Macau's gaming stocks are starting to recover, or that the recent good news will be overwhelmed by the opening of new casino resorts in Cotai.

The Motley Fool, a financial services-oriented media organization, said the October figures indicated that while the market will not enter another phase of "explosive growth", the fall in gaming stocks could be coming to an end.

October's gaming revenue of MOP20.04 billion marks a significant improvement on September's MOP17.16 billion, and reassuringly exceeds the average monthly

revenue for the last six months, which sits at MOP18.52 billion.

However, the figures from October were still down by 28.4 percent from a year ago. For some analysts, this marks the first example of good news for gaming revenue in 18 months, and possibly a sign of the upswing that investors have been anticipating. Others, however, point out that the market is still a long way from attaining the pre-slump revenues of early 2014.

A number of new casino-resorts are expected to open in the next few years, including Melco Crown's recently opened Studio City, as well as the Wynn Palace, which will open next year. In addition,

projects are being planned by Sands Macao, MGM, SJM and Galaxy.

Travis Hoiium, of The Motley Fool, warned that unless gaming revenues pick up substantially in the next year, the "added supply could cannibalize existing profits, meaning gaming stocks could fall further."

Growth in the mass gaming market, along with less dependence on the VIP segment, is expected to bring stability to the market, optimists say. According to an article from the Financial Times, mass gaming is four times more profitable to casinos than VIP gaming. However, in Macau, VIP gaming still constitutes more than half of the market.

HERITAGE

Border Gate's historic archway vandalized

POLICE have launched an inquiry after a policeman on patrol at the border gate checkpoint discovered graffiti adorning the historic archway on Saturday afternoon. The vandalism consisted of simplified Chinese characters and was located at the bottom of the archway that once marked the border between Macau and China.

The ink, which covered an area of 0.5 square meters, was removed several hours later. The Cultural Affairs Bureau's head Ung Vai Meng later visited the monument. Authorities condemned the illegal act and stressed that the offender could face criminal charges if further damage is found to the structure. Earlier, several people were arrested for committing a similar



offence with spray paint on heritage architecture located in the St. Lazarus district, yet the affected area in that instance was much larger than the current case. The repairs reportedly cost the bureau MOP21,000. **AU**

AD



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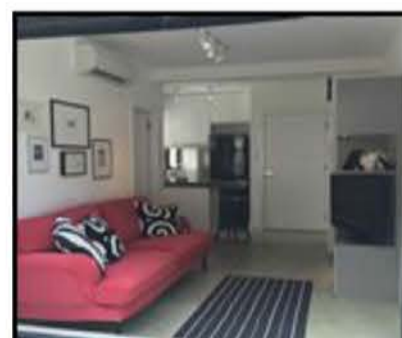
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Email:



Jou Fai Kuok, St Pauls Ruin's Macau

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CHINA'S exports fell for a fourth straight month and imports matched a record stretch of declines, signaling that the mounting drag from slower global growth will push policy makers toward expanding stimulus.

Overseas shipments dropped 6.9 percent in October in dollar terms, the customs administration said yesterday, a bigger decline than estimated by all 31 economists in a Bloomberg survey. Weaker demand for coal, iron and other commodities for China's declining heavy industries helped drag imports down 18.8 percent in dollar terms, leaving a record trade surplus of USD61.6 billion.

The report signals that policy makers may need to unleash more fiscal stimulus to support growth even after the People's Bank of China cut the main interest rate six times in the last year to a record low and devalued the currency. The government has already relaxed borrowing rules for local authorities, and the top economic planning body has stepped up project approvals.

"The October trade data keep pressure on for more domestic easing," said Louis Kuijs, head of Asia economics at Oxford Economics in Hong Kong. "Measures are likely to continue to focused on shoring up domestic demand rather than weakening the currency. And over time the role of fiscal policy expansion should rise."

Fiscal stimulus this year includes more infrastructure spending and expanding the lending capacity for the China Development Bank and other policy banks. The PBOC has also made repeated reductions to the amount of reserves required of lenders.

Exports to Japan slumped 9 percent in the first 10 months from a year earlier, while those to the European Union declined 3.7 percent. Shipments to

China trade decline signals more stimulus measures coming



BLOOMBERG

Hong Kong dropped 11.7 percent during the same period.

"Exports continue to face structural headwinds," said Rajiv Biswas, Asia-Pacific chief economist at IHS Global Insight in Singapore. "With recent economic data continuing to indicate some moderation in Chinese economic growth during the second half of 2015, the Chinese government may utilize additional monetary and fiscal stimulus measures to boost gross domestic product growth in 2016."

Exports to the U.S., China's largest trading partner, jumped 5.8 percent in the first 10 months from a year earlier, while those to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations increased 4.2 percent. Shipments to India rose 8.9 percent.

Output this year is on pace

for the slowest expansion in a quarter century. The world's second-largest economy grew 6.9 percent in the three months through September from a year earlier, the slowest quarterly increase since the first three months of 2009. Fourth-quarter growth will be at the same 6.9 percent pace, according to economists surveyed by Bloomberg.

The International Monetary Fund last month cut its outlook for global growth this year to 3.1 percent from a July forecast of 3.3 percent. The world economy will expand 3.6 percent next year, the IMF said, less than the 3.8 percent it projected in July.

China's imports declined for a 12th month, matching a record-losing streak from 2009. Yesterday's report showed the

value of imported iron ore, crude oil and coal all slumped more than 40 percent in the first 10 months of 2015 from a year earlier, highlighting lackluster demand from Chinese factories and construction sites.

Imports from all 10 of the major trade partners listed by the customs administration declined in the first 10 months. Imports from Australia, a major source of China's iron ore during the real estate boom, plunged 25.7 percent.

Top leaders have signaled that they won't tolerate a sharp slowdown. President Xi Jinping said last week that average annual growth should be no less than 6.5 percent in the next five years to realize the nation's goal to double 2010 GDP and per capita income by 2020.

■ Weaker demand for coal, iron and other commodities for China's declining heavy industries helped drag imports down 18.8 pct

China still has ample ammunition, with a relatively small fiscal deficit and a central government with a light debt load. The central bank still locks up 17.5 percent of bank deposits from the biggest lenders as required reserves, even after recent reductions.

The record trade surplus helped spur a surprise increase in foreign-exchange reserves in October despite an erosion of holdings after the PBOC intervened to boost the yuan. The central bank's stockpile rose to \$3.53 trillion last month from \$3.51 trillion at the end of September, the PBOC said Saturday.

"The large trade surplus could offset capital outflow" and curb expectations for the yuan's depreciation, Liu Li-gang, chief Greater China economist at Australia & New Zealand Banking Group Ltd. in Hong Kong, wrote in a note. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

AARON KWOK FANS FILL STUDIO CITY EVENT CENTER



Studio City Event Center's ("SCEC") inaugural season of acts kicked off Saturday night when 'Asia's King of Dance', Aaron Kwok, returned to the concert stage at the newly opened Studio City. One of Hong Kong entertainment's "Four Heavenly

Kings", Aaron Kwok has been a dominant force in the world of music and dance for more than 30 years. As an all-round entertainer, Kwok continued to push the choreographic envelope on the Hollywood-themed entertainment resort's new stage.

"Our team has specially redesigned a whole new stage exclusively for Studio City as its first show. The extendable V-shaped stage enhanced the intimacy with my fans, making my Macau concert the most memorable one," Kwok stated.

For the fifth year in a row, the Sands China Care Ambassadors participated in the Caritas Macau Charity Bazaar over the weekend, helping raise funds for Caritas' annual event.

At the bazaar's opening ceremony Saturday, Sands China Ltd. President Wilfred Wong presented a cheque for MOP200,000 to Caritas Macau Secretary-General Paul Pun Chi Meng. The donation will be used by the non-profit charitable organization to support its operational expenses. Since 2004, Sands China has contributed over MOP3.3 million to Caritas Macau through charity dinners and bazaars. The funds help support Caritas Macau's efforts to develop and implement social services in the community.

Around 100 Sands China Care Ambassadors were vo-

SANDS CHINA PARTICIPATES IN CARITAS CHARITY BAZAAR FOR FIFTH YEAR



lunteering during the two-day charity bazaar at the Nam Van Lake Nautical Centre, where they manned three booths

featuring games, a lucky draw, and an over 2-meter-tall figure from DreamWorks Animation's "Madagascar" franchise.



Protesters rally against the meeting of Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou and Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping in Singapore, outside of the Songshan Airport in Taipei

ANALYSIS

Historic encounter realizes hopes for Taipei, Beijing

Christopher Bodeen, Singapore

MANY thought it might never happen: The presidents of China and Taiwan — inheritors to the Communist and Nationalist regimes that fought a civil war and remained bitter rivals for decades — coming together as equals for talks.

While it isn't yet clear what the impact will be, or whether and when it will happen again, on a rainy Saturday in Singapore, the possibility of a fundamental shift in relations between the feuding neighbors suddenly seemed possible.

China's Xi Jinping and Taiwan's Ma Ying-jeou didn't produce any concrete achievements, or even issue a joint statement after their hour-long discussions at an upscale hotel.

But no one was really expecting them to. Both men, the scions of senior figures in their respective parties, underscored the importance of their meeting as a sign of how far the two sides of the Taiwan Strait have moved since the days they lobbed shells at each other and resolutely refused to negotiate or compromise.

"We are sitting together today to prevent the historical tragedy from repeating itself, prevent the fruits from peaceful

development of cross-strait ties from being lost again, enable compatriots across the Strait to continue to create a peaceful life, and enable our next generations to share a bright future," Xi said in opening remarks.

■ **Xi appeared to calculate he had more to gain by appearing sympathetic to Taiwan, probably out of concern over rising anti-mainland sentiment**

Ma, who unlike Xi spoke to reporters after the meeting, emphasized how arduous the road to Singapore had been, and how much work remains to be done.

"Think about it; is there any relationship in the world like the cross-strait relationship? No.

It's extremely complex. There's domestic politics, diplomacy, defense, economics," Ma said.

The meeting was the first between the leaders since China and Taiwan split amid the still unresolved civil war in 1949. Although preparations spread out across two years, it wasn't announced until Wednesday, catching almost everyone by surprise.

Although overwhelmingly symbolic, the meeting wasn't entirely without substance. Ma said he raised a number of sensitive issues, especially Taiwan's desire to escape the fetters of China-imposed diplomatic isolation and its extreme unease over the growing arsenal of missiles located just across the 160-kilometer-wide Taiwan Strait. Xi offered pleasant-sounding but bland responses and made no promises.

The two also discussed setting up a hotline between their Cabinet-level agencies entrusted with overseeing relations, as well as a long-mooted proposal to set up representative offices on each other's territory. Ma again expressed Taiwan's desire to join the China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. Xi repeated China's promise to consider Taiwan's request "in an appropriate manner,"

pointing to China's insistence that Taiwan do so only under a name that implies it is part of China.

Also remarkable was Xi's agreement to hold the meeting on neutral territory and without flags or other trappings of Chinese nationalism. The two even dropped their official titles to refer to each as "Mr. Xi" and "Mr. Ma."

"From the mainland perspective, Xi Jinping's decision to meet with Ma demonstrates that he is willing to take some degree of risk in order to change the dynamics of the relationship," said Mary E. Gallagher, a political scientist who studies China at the University of Michigan. "Xi's move further solidifies his image as a strong and confident leader."

Xi appeared to calculate that he had more to gain by appearing sympathetic to Taiwan, probably out of concern over rising anti-mainland sentiment on the self-governing island. Ma, six months before leaving office, appeared to hope that the meeting would help his legacy despite the considerable political risk for the Nationalists in upcoming elections.

Ma "wants to drive home the point that cooperation with the mainland is possible and that it

is better for Taiwan's residents than the alternative," Columbia University China expert Andrew Nathan wrote on the Asia Society blog ChinaFile.

Though opposed by some in Taiwan, the meeting drew huge attention and overwhelmingly favorable response in China and across the Chinese-speaking world, as well as in Washington.

The biggest obstacle to future talks could be Taiwan's ferociously democratic system — new elections for the presidency and legislature are scheduled for January. The main opposition Democratic Progressive Party, which advocates Taiwan's formal independence from China, is favored to win one or both elections and its presidential candidate Tsai Ing-wen has refused to endorse the so-called "92 Consensus," under which China has allowed negotiations between the sides to proceed.

That consensus states that Taiwan and the mainland are part of a single Chinese nation, although each side interprets that according to their own constitutions.

The Chinese side made a particular point of stating that there could be no future meetings between the leaders without the Taiwan side affirming the principle.

"The big question going forward is whether this meeting will change how Taiwanese view the mainland. Will this meeting improve the chance of further rapprochement under the next administration, which is almost surely to be under the DPP?" Gallagher said. **AP**

TAIWAN

Xi, Ma meet for 1st time, shake hands

Christopher Bodeen, Singapore

THE leaders of China and Taiwan met Saturday for the first time since the formerly bitter Cold War foes split amid civil war 66 years ago, and though no concrete agreement resulted, both hailed the meeting as a sign of a new stability in relations.

Chinese President Xi Jinping and Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou came together on neutral ground in the Southeast Asian city-state of Singapore, walking toward each other in a hotel ballroom in front of a backdrop of yellow — a traditional color of Chinese emperors.

The two men smiled broadly as they shook hands for more than one minute, turning slightly to the side to accommodate a host of photojournalists in the ballroom. No national flags were present — a necessary work-around to overcome China's refusal to recognize Taiwan's sovereignty or its government's formal legitimacy — and the two men were referred to merely as "Mr. Xi" and "Mr. Ma" to further reduce the chances of bruised sensitivities.

In brief opening remarks in front of reporters before going into a closed-door meeting, Xi said, "History will record this day." He alluded to China's long-cherished goals of unification with Taiwan, saying, "We are one family," and "No force can pull us apart."

Ma said, "Both sides should respect each other's values and way of life," while adding that relations between the sides were "the most peaceful and stable they have ever been."

When they split in 1949, both sides aspired to absorb the other, with each claiming the mantle of the only legitimate government of all of China, Taiwan included. Communist Party-ruled China still demands that Taiwan eventually be unified with the mainland, by force if necessary, while many citizens of democratic Taiwan increasingly prefer to simply maintain the separate status the island has carved out over more than six decades.

Critics of Ma in Taiwan are wary that his meeting with Xi and similar contacts will pave the way for Beijing to assert greater control over the island, further deepening its international isolation.

However, Ma said at a post-meeting news conference that he discussed with Xi the Taiwanese people's desire for greater participation in global society, particularly for nongovernmental organizations. China refuses to acknowledge the island as anything other than a breakaway

AP PHOTO



Chinese President Xi Jinping, right, and Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou, left, shake hands at the Shangri-la Hotel on Saturday in Singapore

province, and pressure from Beijing keeps Taiwan out of the United Nations and other major multinational organizations.

Ma said Xi told him that China would "appropriately handle" Taiwanese moves toward greater participation on a case-by-case basis.

■ The two men smiled broadly as they shook hands for more than one minute, turning slightly to accommodate a host of photojournalists

Each leader hopes to seal his legacy as one who helped bring decades of division and mistrust to a mutually acceptable end. But the meeting was more about the symbolism of coming together than about substance. Both sides had said no agreements would be signed or joint statements issued.

In all, the two men met for an hour. Afterward, the two sides held separate news conferences, handled for the Chinese side by spokesman Zhang Zhijun of the

Taiwan Affairs Office and for the Taiwanese side by Ma himself.

"We are here today so that the tragedies in our history cannot be replayed," Zhang quoted Xi as saying at the meeting.

Zhang said that China understands Taiwan's desire for greater international space, but that Beijing cannot agree to moves that would "split the country," reflecting its insistence that only it can represent the Chinese nation.

Ma also said they discussed upgrading a hotline between their Cabinet-level agencies responsible for contacts between the sides and agreed to study the issue of establishing representative offices on each other's soil, a long-shot proposal that has languished for years.

He said he also told Xi about fears in Taiwan that China might make good on its military threats, as seen in the scores of missiles based directly opposite the island and recent Chinese war games that appeared to simulate an attack on Taiwan's presidential office.

Ma said Xi told him that China's defense was "comprehensive" and not directed at any parties in particular.

Following his news conference, Ma joined Xi at a banquet at the upscale Shangri-La Hotel, where the meeting was held.

Three decades of hostilities followed the 1949 split, occasionally bursting into warfare in the Taiwan Strait — including over the once heavily militari-

zed Matsu and Kinmen island group — making dialogue all but impossible. Tensions eased after China shifted to endorsing the option of "peaceful unification" alongside military threats in 1979, although it wasn't until 1993 that representatives of the two governments met in Singapore to establish the groundwork for future talks.

While subsequent talks achieved little, they began bearing fruit after Ma's election in 2008, resulting in 23 agreements on trade and technical matters. Although that has failed to produce Beijing's desired progress on political matters, Saturday's meeting was seen as moving the relationship into a new stage.

"It is because of what has been accumulated over the past seven years that the two sides of the strait can take this historic step today," Xi said.

In China, where nationalism runs high, many have cheered the meeting as a further step in what they consider an inevitable trend toward unification.

Beijing salesman Huang Xiaojie said the compromise required to arrange the meeting boded well for cross-strait relations. "At an official level, it will definitely accelerate Taiwan's return," he said.

Many in Taiwan are wary of such a result, and several hundred protesters gathered at the Economic Affairs Ministry in Taipei, waving banners warning that Ma was aiming "to sell out Taiwan."

However, others see Xi's willingness to meet with the top Taiwanese leader on foreign soil as a nod of respect toward the island's government — even if the meeting's negotiated protocol demanded that the two leaders refer to each other with the title "Mr." rather than "President."

"If the two sides meet each other, only then will they understand more and gradually become more familiar with each other," said 50-year-old Taipei resident Peter Sun.

In Washington, State Department spokesperson John Kirby welcomed the meeting between the two leaders and "the historic improvement in cross-strait relations in recent years."

"The United States has a deep and abiding interest in peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, and we encourage further progress by both sides toward building ties, reducing tensions, and promoting stability on the basis of dignity and respect," Kirby said.

Ma is required to step down after two terms next year, with elections in January to choose his successor. He has denied that the meeting with Xi was aimed at affecting the polls, and the event's effect on voter sentiment remains to be seen.

Zhang, the Chinese official, said China had no interest in meddling in Taiwan's election, but was concerned only that cross-strait relations continue to develop "in a correct manner." AP

AP PHOTO



A police officer stands guard as voters queue up outside a polling station in Mandalay

MYANMAR ELECTIONS

5 things to know

MYANMAR was holding a general election yesterday, its second since polls in 2010 ended almost a half-century of military rule. Five things to know about the Southeast Asian country:

REFORMS

President Thein Sein's government makes the case that it is prudently managing a successful transition to democracy. Shortly after coming to power in 2011, Thein Sein — a former general and prime minister in the previous military government — instituted economic and political reforms that resulted in Western nations largely lifting trade and investment embargoes they had maintained against the

previous military government. This spurred foreign investment and much-needed economic growth.

Supporters of the opposition National League for Democracy see the country's democracy as half-empty rather than half-full. They believe the generals and their cronies have too much of a vested interest in the status quo to challenge exploitation of natural resources and ensure economic justice.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The euphoria over long-overdue reforms has already gone sour, as new political prisoners have replaced those freed in mass releases, prior censorship has been replaced by lawsuits against the press, and

liberalizing the economy has failed to solve problems such as income inequality and land grabbing.

The government has also come under criticism, mostly from abroad, for failing to stem violence against the Muslim Rohingya minority, who are also denied citizenship. Some Buddhist monks formed a group to channel the anti-Muslim sentiment into a political force that has already successfully lobbied for laws restricting the Muslim community. The monks' group does not support the National League for Democracy because it considers the party soft on the issue. The party and its leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, have also disappointed admi-

rers by failing to stand up for Muslims' rights.

ELECTORAL HISTORY

The 2010 election was boycotted by the National League for Democracy, which saw it as illegitimate and unfair. It won 43 of the 44 seats it contested in 2012 by-elections. But its small share in the 664-member parliament meant it could not challenge the authority of the ruling Union Solidarity and Development Party and its ally, the military, which allotted itself an automatic 25 percent of parliament's seats when it drafted a constitution in 2008.

For the NLD, Sunday's polls are a chance to test the mandate it won in the 1990 election, when it garnered just over 80 percent of the seats, only to have the polls annulled by the military.

THE PLAYERS

There are 91 parties running

candidates, but the election is a two-horse race, with several wild cards. Suu Kyi's NLD has popular support across the board, in city and countryside, and is expected to win a strong plurality. President Thein Sein and his USDP have a well-organized political machine with all the advantages of incumbency, including the opportunity to rig the vote if they so choose. They also enjoy the support of many of the country's tycoons, whose status as cronies to the previous military regime carried over to the military-backed ruling party.

With its automatic 25 percent of the seats in parliament, the army does not need to campaign, but it can use its strong presence in the vast rural backwaters to intimidate voters to the advantage of its USDP allies. Parties representing the country's various ethnic minorities are likely to win seats in their home regions. While most are at least loosely allied with the NLD, the votes of their lawmakers will be in play when it comes time for parliament to select the nation's president early next year.

ETHNIC TROUBLES

Last month, the government signed a cease-fire agreement with many of the country's fractious ethnic minority guerrilla groups, nominally putting an end to decades of armed conflict. But major groups with the heaviest firepower stayed away from the accord. Also, many cease-fires have come and gone over the decades of ethnic insurgencies, and like them, the latest makes no concession to the bedrock demands of the ethnic groups for greater autonomy.

Not included among the cease-fire groups are the Kachin, whose combat against the government has been the fiercest in recent years. They believe there can be no last settlement of ethnic complaints under a government dominated by the military, which claims that aggressive counterinsurgency is crucial to maintaining national unity. **AP**

THAILAND'S Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) has confirmed that it will be launching a new six-month multiple-entry tourist visa (METV) starting this Friday, the travelandtourworld.com website reported on Saturday.

The visa, at a cost of 5,000 Thai baht, will allow travelers multiple entries during a 6-month period, for up to 60 days per entry. All foreign nationals are eligible to apply.

According to the tra-

TOURISM

Thailand to launch six month multiple entry tourist visa

vel website, there has been speculation about the METV since August this year with travellers and tour operators in India especially excited about the prospective added convenience. The site quoted Ms Soraya

Homchuen, director at TAT's Mumbai office, as stating: "I expect that frequent travellers from India as well as Indian travel agents, will be very happy with the news of the METV. Of late, Thailand has gained

popularity for weekend getaways, especially on long weekends, in addition to already being India's favorite for family vacations and annual holidays. I am certain that the convenience of already having a visa

in-hand will encourage more impromptu trips to Thailand."

Under the current rules, tourist visas are valid for only 60 days and visitors must leave the country or apply to a local immigration offi-

ce for an extension. The new rules will allow visitors to enter and leave the country as often as they want over the six-month period, providing they leave the country every 60 days.

Applications for the METV can only be made at Royal Thai Consulates. It is not available on-arrival. Travellers should keep a buffer of two days, after submitting a completed visa form with all documents for the processing.

Vijay Joshi and Eather Htusan, Yangon

MYANMAR

With excitement and hope, millions vote in polls

WITH tremendous excitement and hope, millions of citizens voted yesterday in Myanmar's historic general election that will test whether the military's long-standing grip on power can be loosened, with opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi's party expected to secure an easy victory.

In a country that was under military rule for almost a half-century, many of the eligible 30 million voters cast ballots for the first time in what was billed as the nation's freest election ever. It was the first time even for Suu Kyi, the epitome of the democracy movement who had defied the junta for decades.

Wearing her trademark thazin flowers in her hair, a smiling Suu Kyi arrived at the polling station near her lakeside residence, where she was mobbed by hundreds of journalists. She quickly cast her vote and left without speaking to reporters.

Many people lined up in Buddhist temples, schools and government buildings early in the morning to vote, well before a heavy downpour beat down in Yangon an hour before voting ended peacefully in the late af-



AP PHOTO
Opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, center, leaves after casting her ballot at a polling station in Yangon

ternoon with no reports of major irregularities or violence.

Vote counting began immediately, and hundreds of supporters gathered under umbrellas at the opposition National League for Democracy party's office, where unofficial results were to be shown on large TV screens through the night. Official results will be released beginning today.

"I am so excited. I've never been this happy in my life," said Aye Mhu, 49, as she watched a live broadcast of the ballots being counted on the giant screen. "This is the happiest day of my life."

Election monitors called it "a remarkable day" full of excitement and energy.

Although more than 90 parties are contesting, the main fight

is between Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy and the ruling Union Solidarity Development Party, made up largely of former junta members. A host of other parties from ethnic minorities, who form 40 percent of Myanmar's 52 million people, are also running.

Certainly, though, the election will not bring full democracy to this nation, which spent nearly

five decades under brutal military rule and the last five years under a quasi-civilian government. Myanmar's constitution guarantees 25 percent of seats in parliament to the military, and was rewritten to keep Suu Kyi, the country's most popular politician, from the presidency. This time, however, there is hope that the election will move Myanmar a step closer to democracy.

Even if Suu Kyi's party secures the highest number of seats in the bicameral legislature in Sunday's vote, it will start with a disadvantage because of the reserved places for the military in the 664-seat parliament.

This means in theory that the USDP, with the military's support, need not win an outright majority to control the legislature. To counter that scenario, the NLD would require a huge win.

That may not be farfetched, given Suu Kyi's popularity. AP

AD

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EGYPTIAN PLANE CRASH

Noise in last second of Russian aircraft's cockpit recording



Tourists arrive at the departure hall of the Sharm el-Sheikh airport, south Sinai

Maram Mazen and Nour Youssef, Cairo

A noise was heard in the last second of the cockpit voice recording from the Russian plane that crashed in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, the head of the joint investigation team said Saturday. The statement bolstered U.S. and British suspicions that the plane was brought down by a bomb.

However, Ayman el-Muqadem warned it was too early to say what caused the plane to apparently break up in mid-flight. Analysis of the noise was underway.

"All scenarios are being considered ... it could be lithium batteries in the luggage of one of the passengers, it could be an explosion in the fuel tank, it could be fatigue in the body of the aircraft, it could be the explosion of something," said El-Muqadem, who is Egyptian and leading the investigation committee that includes experts from Russia, France, Germany and Ireland, where the plane was registered. El-Muqadem appeared alone at the news conference in Cairo.

U.S. and British officials have cited intelligence reports as indicating that the Oct. 31 flight from the Sinai resort town of Sharm el-Sheikh to St. Petersburg was brought down

by a bomb on board. All 224 people onboard, most of them Russian tourists, were killed.

Islamic State extremists claimed they brought down the Metrojet flight, without offering proof, saying it was in retaliation for Moscow's airstrikes that began a month earlier against fighters in Syria.

The statement bolstered U.S. and British suspicions that the plane was brought down by a bomb

El-Muqadem said debris was found scattered across a 13-kilometer stretch of desert, indicating the Airbus A321-200 broke up mid-air, but initial observations don't shed light on what caused it. Some pieces of wreckage were still missing, while the recovered pieces will be taken to Cairo for analysis, he said.

Egyptian airport and security officials told The Associated Press on Saturday that

authorities were questioning airport staff and ground crew who worked on the plane and had placed some employees under surveillance. The officials all spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

Also Saturday, Egypt's foreign minister complained that Western governments had not sufficiently helped Egypt in its war on terrorism.

Egypt's past calls for assistance and coordination on terrorism issues from "the countries that are now facing the danger" had not been dealt with seriously, Sameh Shoukry told a news conference. "European countries did not give us the cooperation we are hoping for," he said.

Egyptian authorities have been trying to whip up support for a war on terror after the military overthrow of Islamist President Mohammed Morsi in 2013. A crackdown on Islamists and a series of militant attacks on security buildings and checkpoints, mainly in the Sinai Peninsula, have followed Morsi's ouster — with a Sinai-based affiliate of the Islamic State group claiming responsibility for some of the most devastating attacks.

Shoukry also said countries that have suspended flights

to Sharm el-Sheikh — which include the U.K. and Russia, though the foreign minister did not specifically name them — did not share the intelligence that drove their decisions with Cairo. Egypt "expected that the information available would be communicated to us instead of being broadcast" in the media, he said.

Russia announced Friday it was suspending flights to all of Egypt, joining the UK and Ireland, which had stopped flights to Sharm el-Sheikh. At least a half-dozen Western

European governments told their citizens not to travel there. Empty charter planes have been flying to Sharm el-Sheikh to bring home stranded Russian and British tourists. Passengers were banned from checking in luggage — reflecting an apparent concern about security and luggage-screening procedures at the airport.

The crash a week and a half ago dealt a huge blow to Egypt's battered tourism sector, which is yet to fully recover from years of political turmoil. Russians comprise nearly a third of all tourists who visited Egypt in the past year.

There are currently 80,000 Russians in Egypt — 79,000 of them in the resort areas of Hurgada and Sharm el-Sheikh, Russian tourism chief Oleg Safonov was cited as saying by Russian news agencies.

Maya Lomidze, acting director of the Russian Association of Tour Operators, said authorities were sending 93 empty planes to Egypt on Saturday and yesterday to bring tourists home. The Russian Emergencies Ministry also said it would send planes to transport the checked baggage of Russian tourists who were forced to leave their suitcases behind.

Thousands of tourists waited in slow-moving security lines at the Sharm el-Sheikh airport on Saturday as they tried to board charter flights home. Many complained about a lack of information from travel agents and airlines, but seemed to accept tight security measures.

Designer Georgy Kononov and his family hoped to catch a flight to Moscow after a seven-hour delay. He said he agreed with Russia's decision to suspend flights to Egypt.

"When we're talking about the safety and security of people, it's more important than the business," he said, though he added that there should have been better planning for such a complicated situation. **AP**

SHARM EL-SHEIKH AIRPORT OFFICIALS REVEAL POROUS SECURITY

THE AIRPORT at Egypt's resort of Sharm el-Sheikh has long had gaps in security, including a key baggage scanning device that often is not functioning and lax searches at an entry gate for food and fuel for the planes, security officials at the airport told The Associated Press. Seven officials involved in security at Sharm el-Sheikh airport, several for more than a decade, told the AP of the gaps, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the press. Several said the malfunctioning scanner had been noted in secu-

rity reports to their superiors, but the machine was not replaced. One of the officials, involved in security for planes, also pointed to bribe-taking by poorly paid policemen monitoring X-ray machines. "I can't tell you how many times I have caught a bag full of drugs or weapons that they have let through for 10 euros or whatever," he said. A spokesman for Egypt's Aviation Ministry, Mohamed Rahma, dismissed the accounts of inadequate security, saying "Sharm el-Sheikh is one of the safest airports in the world," without elaborating.

Josh Lederman, Washington

USA

With Keystone snub, Obama aims for more leverage on climate

FOR years, President Barack Obama chided Republicans and Democrats alike for treating the Keystone XL pipeline as a signal of whether the U.S. would seriously fight global warming. Now that he's killed the project, Obama is holding it up as Exhibit A as he works to lock in his environmental legacy with a powerful international climate accord.

Rejecting Keystone, the proposed 1,897-kilometer crude oil pipeline from Canada to the U.S., was the latest in a long and growing list of steps Obama has taken to try to show the U.S. is leading the effort against global warming. Even while Republicans have fought Obama tooth-and-nail at home, he's sought to use those steps to pressure other countries into taking similar action — especially poorer, developing countries that for years have argued that climate change is not their problem.

At the center of Obama's efforts are landmark carbon dioxide emissions limits on U.S. power plants that have been cheered by environmentalists but derided by most energy advocates. Although the rules are proceeding for the time being, they face an uncertain future. Half of the states in the U.S. are suing to try to block them.

"There has been a steady drumbeat of steps the president has taken that are more impactful for climate change, factually, than Keystone," said White House communications



President Barack Obama walks into the Roosevelt Room of the White House in Washington to make a statement on the Keystone Pipeline

director Jen Psaki. "Our view is that we need to continue to lead by example. Is that difficult?"

Yes, of course it is. If the power plant rules falter, Obama would be hard-pressed

to secure the 26 percent to 28 percent cut in U.S. emissions that he's pledged as Ameri-

ca's commitment to the climate treaty. If the U.S. comes up short, analysts predict, other countries like China will start backing out.

Obama is counting on the climate treaty, to be finalized early next month in Paris, to vault him into a category of his own: the first president to treat climate change like a top-tier issue, and the first to secure the type of commitments from other countries need to address the problem significantly.

In rejecting TransCanada's application for Keystone, Obama set aside the litmus test he established in 2013 when he unveiled his second-term climate change agenda with plenty of pomp. Wiping sweat from his brow under the summer sun at Georgetown University, Obama said he'd block the pipeline if it would "significantly exacerbate the problem of carbon pollution."

It wouldn't, Obama's administration concluded, but he nixed it anyway. Casting forward to global climate talks, Obama suggested he'd have less credibility if he approved Keystone — not because it would hasten climate change, but because that's what people think. In documents, his administration cited the "broad perception" that Keystone would carry "dirty" oil.

"America is now a global leader when it comes to taking serious action to fight climate change," Obama said in the Roosevelt Room. "And frankly, approving this project would have undercut that global leadership." **AP**

EBOLA

Sierra Leone declared free of outbreak



A woman celebrates with others as the country is declared Ebola free in the city of Freetown

Clarence Roy-Macaulay, Freetown

CCHEERS erupted and people danced in the streets Saturday as Sierra Leone marked the end of the Ebola outbreak within its borders, although neighboring Guinea still struggles to stamp out the deadly virus that has killed more than 11,000 mostly

in West Africa.

Nearly 4,000 people have died in Sierra Leone of Ebola since the outbreak began in late 2013. The World Health Organization said 42 days have passed since the country's last confirmed Ebola patient was discharged on Sept. 25 after two consecutive negative test results.

Hundreds of people cele-

brated in the streets of the capital, Freetown, when Anders Nordstrom, Sierra Leone representative for the World Health Organization, declared the end of the Ebola outbreak.

"WHO commends the government and people of Sierra Leone for the significant achievement of ending this Ebola outbreak," he said.

A country must go 42 days — equal to two 21-day incubation periods — without an Ebola case in order for WHO to declare it free of Ebola transmission. It's a benchmark that neighboring Liberia reached in May only to then experience a brief reappearance of cases before it was declared Ebola-free again in September.

Sierra Leone now enters a 90-day intensive surveillance period.

"We have prevailed over an evil virus. We persevered and we have overcome. We must not let down our guard," said Sierra Leone President Ernest Bai Koroma. **AP**

SYRIA

Activists say IS group releases 37 Syrian Christian captives

Albert Aji, Damascus

ISLAMIC State militants on Saturday released 37 Syrian Christians, mostly women, who were among more than 200 people from the Assyrian minority group abducted in February, activists said.

Also Saturday, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the death toll from an airstrike on an IS-controlled eastern city near the border with Iraq rose to 71. The group initially reported that the Thursday attack killed 25 people.

The Observatory, which relies on a network of activists on the ground to monitor the war in Syria, said at least six children were among the dead. Other activist groups, as well as the Islamic State, said the attack was carried out by Russian jets, targeting a school and a popular market in Boukamal.

The Assyrian Human Rights Network posted pictures on its Facebook page of the newly freed Christians arriving in the predominantly



ethnic Assyrian village of Tal Tammr, in the northeastern Hassakeh province. The photos show a woman kissing the hand of an elderly woman in tears, and a priest greeting the former captives in a church ceremony.

The group said in a statement that negotiations continue for the release of another 124 people who remain in captivity.

Edmond Gabriel, chairman of the Assyrian Charitable Association in Hassakeh province, said 27 of the released are women. He said another group of captives was expected to be released today. **AP**

what's ON



THE XXXI COLLECTIVE EXHIBITION OF MACAU ARTISTS

TIME: 9am-9pm (open on public holidays)

UNTIL: November 15, 2015

VENUE: Temporary Exhibitions Gallery of IACM

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4100

MACAU SCIENCE CENTRE

TIME: 10am-6pm daily (Except Thursdays)

ADDRESS: Avenida Dr. Sun Yat-Sen

ADMISSION: Exhibition Centre: MOP25

Planetarium (Dome/Sky Shows): MOP50

Planetarium (3D Dome/3D Sky Shows): MOP65

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2888 0822

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ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8399 6699

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TIME: 10am-8pm daily (Except Tuesdays)

VENUE: Rua Luis Gonzaga Gomes, 431, basement

(Tourism Activities Centre-CAT)

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8798 4108 / 2833 3000

'SCAPE' - DRAWINGS BY RUI RASQUINHO

TIME: 12pm-8pm (closed on Tuesdays)

UNTIL: December 31, 2015

ADMISSION: Free

VENUE: Signum Living Store,

Rua do Almirante Sérgio, no. 285, R/C, Macau

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2896 8925

REMINISCENCE

- MACAU OLD PHOTOS COLLECTION EXHIBITION

TIME: 9am-10pm

VENUE: Team Building, Institute for Tourism

Studies, Colina de Mong-Ha, Macau

TIME: 12pm-10pm

(Closed on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays)

VENUE: Educational Restaurant, Institute for

Tourism Studies, Colina de Mong-Ha, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2856 1252

Offbeat

MAN TO PLAY ICONIC LEAD IN 'HELLO DOLLY'

A Boca Raton production of "Hello Dolly" is breaking ground with a male taking on the iconic lead role made famous by Carol Channing and Barbra Streisand.

Boca Raton's Wick Theatre had to get special permission from composer Jerry Herman. The Sun-Sentinel reports it will be the first production in the U.S. where the role of Dolly Levi has been played by a man. Danny La Rue took on the role in England in 1982. This time around, Lee Roy Reams is stepping into the part.

Reams starred opposite Channing twice in the Tony-award winning show and has even directed it.

The musical tells the story of a matchmaker who sweeps into the staid lives of a Yonkers store owner and his staff, as well as two ladies in a New York millinery. The show runs through Dec. 6. **AP**

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
17:45	Trail of Lies (Repeated)
18:30	Non-Daily Portuguese News (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Sports
22:10	Trail of Lies
23:00	TDM News
23:30	UEFA Champions League 2015/2016 Magazine Programme
00:05	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:40	RTPi Live

cinema

CINETEATRO

05 Nov - 11 Nov



007 - SPECTRE

ROOM 1

2.15, 6.45, 9.30 pm

Director: Sam Mendes

Starring: Daniel Craig, Christoph Waltz, Léa Seydoux

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 148min

ARE YOU HERE

ROOM 1

5.00 pm

Director: Jill Wong

Starring: Nina Paw, Helena Law, Susan Shaw

Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)

Duration: 86min

OUR TIMES

ROOM 2

2.15, 4.45, 7.15 pm

Director: Ding Sheng

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

Language: Mandarin (English/Cantonese)

Duration: 134min

ARE YOU HERE

ROOM 2

9.45 pm

Director: Jill Wong

Starring: Nina Paw, Helena Law, Susan Shaw

Language: Chinese (Cantonese and English)

Duration: 86min



SHE REMEMBERS, HE FORGETS

ROOM 3

2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Wong Say Ping

Starring: Miriam Yeung, Jan Lamb

Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)

Duration: 110min

MACAU TOWER

05 Nov - 25 Nov

007 - SPECTRE

ROOM 3

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: Sam Mendes

Starring: Daniel Craig, Christoph Waltz, Léa Seydoux

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 148min

this day in history



1989 BERLINERS CELEBRATE THE FALL OF THE WALL

The Berlin Wall has been breached after nearly three decades keeping East and West Berliners apart. At midnight East Germany's Communist rulers gave permission for gates along the Wall to be opened after hundreds of people converged on crossing points.

They surged through cheering and shouting and were met by jubilant West Berliners on the other side. Ecstatic crowds immediately began to clamber on top of the Wall and hack large chunks out of the 45-kilometre barrier.

It had been erected in 1961 on the orders of East Germany's former leader Walter Ulbricht to stop people leaving for West Germany. Since 1949 about 2.5 million people had fled East Germany.

After 1961, the Wall and other fortifications along the 1,380-kilometre border shared by East and West Germany have kept most East Germans in. Many of those attempting to escape have been shot dead by border guards.

The first indication that change was imminent came earlier today when East Berlin's Communist party spokesman, Gunther Schabowski, announced East Germans would be allowed to travel directly to West Germany.

The move was intended to stem an exodus into West Germany through the "back door" which began last summer when the new and more liberal regime in Hungary opened its border.

The flow of migrants was intensified last week when Czechoslovakia also granted free access to West Germany through its border. West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl has hailed the decision to open the Wall as "historic" and called for a meeting with East German leader, Egon Krenz.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The opening of the Berlin Wall was preceded by a series of momentous events in East Germany. They included the removal of the country's hardline Communist leader, Erich Honecker, and the resignation of the entire cabinet. East Germany's new leader, Egon Krenz, called for free democratic elections.

But it was not enough to turn the tide and once the Berlin Wall was breached, East Germany disintegrated.

On 3 October 1990 the two Germanys merged to form a new united country.

In 1997 Egon Krenz received a six-and-a-half year jail sentence for the manslaughter of people killed by border guards when trying to escape to the West.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 You may feel like you've lost everything, but you're mistaken. You need to do what you can to defend what you still have. That doesn't even count what matters most, like your relationships.

Taurus April 20-May 20 It feels like a long time since you've had caresses of any kind, charm or no charm. Getting some extra cash is like a big, wet kiss from the universe today. Pucker up.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Even your closest friends and family members can't read your thoughts today. In fact, they can hardly understand when you speak plainly. You'll have to express yourself in the universal language. Cash.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Connecting with others is fine, as long as it's not a form of procrastination. Sticking to your goals means finalizing plans, not just shooting the breeze. Making a profit can't wait.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 You're not impulsive, exactly, but you're not thinking things through all the way to the end. Don't put down so much as a penny without thinking through all the possibilities first.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You might not have much of your own on your plate but that shouldn't mean you have nothing to do. Help others with their plans and projects if you need a way to keep busy.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 If you're feeling overwhelmed, join the crowd. You're perceptive enough to see that others are in the same boat, whether they say so or not. Keep that in mind as you interact today.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 You may stumble across a secret it goes without saying you weren't meant to hear. Do a friend a favor and don't act on it. You wouldn't make money on it anyway, if that helps you do the right thing.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Are you pushing onward and upward or are you running around like a chicken with its head cut off? Stop and take a breath. Make sure your need to rush ahead is based on more than desperation.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 When you're designing new proposals, don't forget about all the annoying details, especially those most likely to change. If you've learned nothing else from the last year, it's to have a contingency plan.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 A bad economy makes dealing with others trickier than ever. Don't lose your cool the moment you sense someone has a hidden agenda. That should almost go without saying.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 You're so hungry for a project that you'll take almost anything. You may think you can figure out who you're dealing with later, but you should be doing that before you begin. Certainly before you invest a single penny.



SUDOKU

Two Sudoku puzzles: 'Easy' and 'Easy+'. Each is a 9x9 grid with some numbers pre-filled. The 'Easy' puzzle has numbers 7, 1, 9, 6, 4, 5, 8, 6, 8, 4, 9, 7, 4, 2, 3, 5, 2, 9, 3, 1, 3, 8, 6. The 'Easy+' puzzle has numbers 4, 7, 8, 9, 2, 1, 3, 7, 6, 8, 3, 2, 4, 6, 9, 8, 3, 2, 4, 5, 4, 5, 7, 5, 1, 8.

Two Sudoku puzzles: 'Medium' and 'Hard'. Each is a 9x9 grid with some numbers pre-filled. The 'Medium' puzzle has numbers 7, 1, 2, 8, 2, 7, 4, 5, 6, 3, 8, 7, 2, 1, 6, 2, 8, 9, 9, 4, 5, 6, 4, 9, 3. The 'Hard' puzzle has numbers 3, 4, 9, 8, 1, 5, 2, 8, 8, 6, 7, 1, 3, 1, 6, 5, 4, 6, 5.

WEATHER

Table with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION. Rows include CHINA (Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, Urumqi, Xi'an, Lhasa, Chengdu, Chongqing, Kunming, Nanjing, Shanghai, Wuhan, Hangzhou, Taipei, Guangzhou, Hong Kong) and WORLD (Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, London, New York).

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Boring, so to speak; 5- ...vu; 9- Hold responsible; 14- Suva is its capital; 15- Former spouses; 16- Good ...; 17- Diary of ... Housewife; 18- Catalog; 19- Vixen's master; 20- Fate; 23- Baseball's Mel; 24- Gore and Hirt; 25- Judicial inquiry; 29- Ink spot; 31- Uno + due; 34- Lush; 35- Sewer line?; 36- Ancient France; 37- Kind principles; 40- Catch a view of; 41- Social standing; 42- Parsonage; 43- Airline to Oslo; 44- Soviet news agency; 45- 39th president of the U.S.; 46- Absorb, as a cost; 47- Strike; 48- Star groups; 56- Narrow mountain ridge; 57- Ethereal: Prefix; 58- First-class; 60- More current; 61- After the bell; 62- General ... chicken; 63- Adlai's running mate; 64- Till bills; 65- Cuts down; DOWN: 1- Arts deg.; 2- Lame movement; 3- Partly open; 4- Cover up; 5- Erase; 6- Are; 7- Joke; 8- Italian wine center; 9- Igneous rock of a lava flow; 10- Atty.-to-be exams; 11- Years in old Rome; 12- Take ... your leader; 13- Actor McGregor; 21- Group of 12; 22- Mother-in-law of Ruth; 25- Barbecue leftovers?; 26- March man; 27- Cesspools; 28- Brit's exclamation; 29- Legumes; 30- Carefree adventure; 31- Spoil; 32- Charlotte ...; 33- Bugs bugs him; 35- RR stops; 36- Growl; 38- Steamed; 39- Valuable violin; 44- Spuds; 45- Large towns; 46- Lauder of cosmetics; 47- Poker Flat chronicler; 48- Walking stick; 49- Raw materials; 50- Salamander; 51- "Le Roi d'Ys" composer; 52- Incline; 53- Sworn thing; 54- It runs in the cold; 55- Winter fall; 59- Tricky curve

Friday's solution crossword grid with filled-in words. Words include: SSTS, CEDAR, BARA, ECRU, OPERA, ELAL, LOEB, PALER, GAZE, AWFUL, ENERGI, RODER, ARIA, VINBLANC, PROSE, ELO, ALERO, SLAIN, NERD, ERICA, YSER, UNSER, OSHEA, INO, SEETO, PROPOSAL, SPINNING, DARTS, REBA, SOAVE, TORI, ANET, EOSIN, EMIT, SATE, STPAT, DAME.

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PJ (Open line) 993
Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333
Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
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Tai Nin Macau 1 Bedroom Apartment Near Senado Square HKD 10,000 / 850 sq ft Ref: 15090536

Dahlia Court Ocean Gardens, Taipa 1,054sq ft / HKD 6.88M HKD 6,527sq ft Spacious and Bright Ref: 15095453
Manhattan F Unit, Central Taipa 3 Bedroom Apartment Resort Style Facilities HKD 23,500 / 1,720 sq ft Ref: 15090534

Va Fu, Old Taipa Village Taipa 670 sq ft. / HKD 3.9M HKD 5,820sq ft Very Centrally Located Ref: 15085449
One Oasis, Tower 3, Unit B Coloane 2 Bedroom Apartment On South of the Cotai Strip HKD 15,500 / 1,286 sq ft Ref: 15070515

THE STUDIO Macau 399 sq ft / HKD 2.98M HKD 7,468sq ft New Development Apartments Ref: 15085451
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RENAULT
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MOTOGP

Lorenzo wins season ending Valencia GP, secures title

JORGE Lorenzo won his third MotoGP title with a victory at the season-ending Valencia GP yesterday as Valentino Rossi failed to make up enough ground on his Yamaha teammate from the back of the grid.

Lorenzo entered the race trailing Rossi by seven points but the veteran Italian couldn't manage more than a fourth-place finish. Rossi, who needed to finish at least second, started last on the grid because of a penalty for kicking Marc Marquez in the previous race.

Lorenzo ended with 330 points, five more than Rossi, who was trying to win his eighth world title and the first since 2009.

Lorenzo added to his MotoGP triumphs in 2010 and 2012. The 28-year-old Spaniard started from pole position and stayed in front at the Ricardo Tormo circuit outside of



MotoGP rider Jorge Lorenzo of Spain leads the race during the Valencia Motorcycle Grand Prix

Valencia.

Lorenzo grabbed Spain's flag and rode with it around the track in his victory lap.

Marquez, the winner of the last two MotoGP championships, finished the race right behind Lorenzo in second, but never tried to make a significant move for the lead. Pedrosa, winner of two of the last three races, was third to close out the all-Spanish podium. **AP**

TENNIS

Venus Williams beats Pliskova to win WTA Elite Open in Hengqin

TOP-SEEDED Venus Williams beat Karolina Pliskova 7-5, 7-6 to win the WTA Elite Trophy Zhuhai yesterday. The tournament was played at the newly built International Zhuhai Hengqin International Tennis Center, in the neighboring island of Hengqin.

Pliskova had a set point at 6-5 in the tiebreaker but Williams hit back-to-back forehand winners to close out the win. "Seven weeks here in Asia and now I feel like it's my home," Williams said. "I'm so excited to win the first trophy in Zhuhai. All the players felt so welcome here and we appreciated all of the enthusiasm."

With her third win of the year, Williams returns to the top 10 for the first time in more than four years.

The tournament brought together 11 of the top players who did not qualify for last week's WTA Finals in Singapore. Williams raced out to an early 4-1 lead in the first set but the third-seeded



Venus Williams returns a ball during a match at the 2015 WTA Elite Trophy tennis tournament in Hengqin

Pliskova fought back to 4-all before Williams took the first set.

Pliskova found her game in the second set and went up 4-2 but Williams got back on serve and forced the tiebreaker. "Even if I didn't make it today, it was a great week," Pliskova said. "Venus

played an unbelievable match today. But I'm proud of how I played this week and hopefully we'll have more matches like this."

Williams, a seven-time Grand Slam winner and former top-ranked player, has enjoyed a return to form this year, winning also at Auckland and Wuhan.

It's the first time she's won three WTA titles in a season since 2008 and the 41 matches she's won are the most in a season since winning 50 in 2007. **MDT/Agencies**

All the players felt so welcome here and we appreciated all of the enthusiasm.

VENUS WILLIAMS

AD

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opinion

Rear Window
Severo Portela



AN OFFICIAL POSITION

Besides the commonly applied superlatives giving the enclave its singular profile – trivia, such as cars inch by inch or the squeeze of people sharing space, air and water, GDP piling upon baccarat tables or going up in smoke – it should be noted that Macau holds a very good position in the ranking for number of committees, sub-committees, working groups, joint-groups, groups; hereby not counting the never ending non-governmental associations.

Worse than the annoying army of committees, the definition or scope being of but secondary concern, is only the long-established willingness to reproduce as soon as reform goes into agenda, or even worse, when difficulties or troubles challenge the government into action. To make the point, take notice of the number of overlapping departments taking care of public works and transportation. If not a recipe for a disaster at least a seasoned tactic used to put at abeyance any inconvenience.

And there is one more committee in town, one to help the Chief Executive transform Macau into an international city. Chui Sai On outlined, and we do quote, “seven aspirations” through which to realize the overall vision of a World Centre of Tourism and Leisure. However, if we go and consider one by one the suggested seven pillars we are recreating the CE’s policy address, better known by its Portuguese acronym LAG. Actually, the seven aspirations are to maintain economic vitality, develop the structure of local industry, improve infrastructure, to enhance the quality of life for the people of Macau, to improve standards in education, to raise awareness about the environment, and strengthen good governance and the rule of law.

At face value, there is nothing substantively new in these seven aspirations that aim to help Macau to “manage its macroeconomic policy, and to strengthen the long-term mechanisms for delivery of education, social security, healthcare, housing and cultivation of local talent”. In other words, this is an agreeable agenda.

This said, we have to set aside the seven aspirations and look for the relevance of the new committee both in its formal elements and in its guiding principles. The committee for the Development of the World Centre of Tourism and Leisure is politically a boundary spanning committee underpinning close active cooperation between the Central Government and the Macau Special Administrative Region: The five-year plan “incorporates” advice from the National Development and Reform Commission, funneling contributions from Tsinghua University in Beijing and from other agencies, like the CNTA (China National Tourism Administration).

More than this, under “the seven aspirations” lie around 21 tools to fulfill the larger agenda, for example, to optimize the planning of the city or to encourage regional integration. One cannot be less than intrigued with the decision to publish the five-year blueprint together with the Policy Address for the 2016 Fiscal Year. At least it runs the risk of overlapping if not coming surprisingly similar to a LAG.

Final note: We ought to believe that the new five-year plan may help to overcome some problems such as the serious pollution levels or to put some order into the shoddy statistics or help lessen the shortcomings in accountability, transparency and openness. Omertà, however, works against a public feedback system.

THE BUZZ 2 YEARS AFTER HAIYAN, DEAD STILL BEING DUG UP IN PHILIPPINES

A Philippine official says bodies of villagers who perished when Typhoon Haiyan ravaged the country’s central region two years ago continue to be dug up, including the skeletal remains of six people found over the weekend.

Joedina Gumagay, the chief health officer of Tacloban city, says most of the skeletons were found by residents Saturday in a coastal village, where storm surges swept away houses and people when Haiyan hit with

enormous force.

Gumagay said yesterday that she, along with police forensic investigators, examined the skeletons, which were found with pieces of clothing, sandals and other belongings, and concluded they were among the thousands killed by the storm.

Thousands of survivors, many of them teary-eyed, attended a memorial to remember those who perished in the Nov. 8, 2013, storm.

Station	Air quality	
Roadside	20-40 Good	😊
High Density Residential Area	30-50 Good	😊
Ambient	30-50 Good	😊

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

ROMANIA Three more people have died of burn-related injuries they sustained in a nightclub fire in Romania, bringing the total death toll from the fire to 44. The medical director of the state burns hospital, Cristian Nitescu said yesterday a man succumbed to his injuries late Saturday.

CROATIA Amid a massive migrant surge and deep economic woes, Croatia’s ruling center-left coalition faces a strong challenge from a conservative opposition in the Balkan country’s first parliamentary election since joining the European Union in 2013.



BRAZIL The 28 people missing since the failure of two dams at an iron ore mine flooded a village in southeastern Brazil are unlikely to be found alive, the governor of the affected state said yesterday. Speaking at a news conference, Minas Gerais Gov. Fernando Pimentel said it was still not known what triggered Thursday’s failure of dams at the Samarco mine, which sent viscous red mud, water and debris flooding into the hamlet of Bento Rodrigues, flattening all but a handful of buildings.

AP PHOTO



USA U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter accused Russia of endangering world order, citing its incursions in Ukraine and loose talk about nuclear weapons, and said the U.S. defense establishment is searching for creative ways to deter Russian aggression and protect U.S. allies. In remarks Saturday at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library after eight days of travel in Asia, Carter also expressed concern about China’s expanding influence and growing military might.

BOXING

Bradley stops Rios in 9th round of title bout



Timothy Bradley, right, hits Brandon Rios during a WBO welterweight title bout

Tim Dahlberg, Las Vegas

TIMOTHY Bradley won a fight he needed badly Saturday night, stopping Brandon Rios in the ninth round to stake his claim for a title in a welterweight division that is wide open following Floyd Mayweather Jr.’s retirement.

Bradley (33-1-1) dominated from the opening bell against a sluggish Rios (33-3-1), using his speed and superior boxing skills to win round after round before suddenly dropping Rios with a left hook to the body in the ninth round. Rios got up at the count of eight but offered no resistance to Bradley when the fight resumed and quickly went down under another flurry of punches at 2:49 of the round.

Bradley retained his piece

of the 147-pound title with an impressive performance under new trainer Teddy Atlas. He won every round on all three ringside scorecards but hadn’t seemed to seriously hurt Rios before the fight came to a sudden end.

Perhaps more importantly, Bradley served notice that he’s a name to be reckoned with in the 147-pound division. He might have even been impressive enough to get a third fight against

“The better man won. I have no excuses.”

RIOS

Manny Pacquiao sometime next spring in what would be Pacquiao’s last fight.

“That’s the best Bradley I’ve ever seen,” said Bob Arum, who promotes both fighters.

Bradley brought in Atlas, more known recently as a ringside announcer for ESPN, to sharpen his skills and stop him from getting hit too much.

It worked to perfection in a fight that Bradley controlled from the first punch.

“I did exactly what Teddy told me to do,” Bradley said. “I took a piece of him every round.”

Bradley set the pace for the fight right away, landing a series of head shots early in the first round. Rios, who ballooned up in weight after Friday’s weigh-in, plodded forward trying to land a big punch but was never able to land more than one shot at a time.

Rios said he would probably retire after the loss. “The better man won. I have no excuses,” Rios said. “I think I’m done.”

In the semi-main event, two-time Olympic gold medalist Vasyl Lomachenko defended his piece of the featherweight title by stopping Mexico’s Romulo Koasicha with a series of body shots in the 10th round. AP

THE DECISIVE MOMENT



Japan’s rugby team celebrates after qualifying for the 2016 Rio Olympics as they won yesterday’s Asia Rugby Sevens final against Hong Kong.

AP Photo/Kin Cheung