



LOCAL FIVE-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN
A revised version of the plan presented yesterday will be announced during the second quarter of 2016
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STANLEY AU PESSIMISTIC
SMEs will face more difficulties if the housing market continues to sink, Stanley Au predicts
P12



RUSSIA CONFIRMS PLANE WAS BOMBED
P18 EGYPTIAN AIR CRASH

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POLICY ADDRESS 2016

Gov't moves to strengthen welfare measures P2,4



WORLD BRIEFS



USA Former "Two and a Half Men" star Charlie Sheen (pictured) says he has the HIV virus. In an interview yesterday on NBC's "Today," the 50-year-old Sheen says he tested positive for the virus that causes AIDS.

INDONESIA Two Indonesian newlyweds have been arrested on accusations they plotted to kill a man the woman said had raped her a week before her marriage, and police said yesterday the couple ate the victim's genitals after the man was killed.

CANADA-CHINA Anastasia Lin is an actress who believes her outspoken advocacy of human rights in her native China played a big role in her winning bid in May to become Canada's contestant in the Miss World pageant. But then the host country for the global beauty pageant was changed from Australia to China, and now the Communist country appears to have singled Lin out among the contestants and is stalling over her visa application.

More on backpage

From Giovanni to Tatiana, Macau on the backpacker trail P13 MDT REPORT

62 Times
GP SUPPLEMENT INSIDE
F3 big names compete for most coveted trophy

POLICY ADDRESS 2016

Gov't moves to strengthen welfare measures

Paulo Barbosa

CHUI Sai On went to the Legislative Assembly yesterday to present his Policy Address for 2016. Unlike in previous years' presentations, when mottos like "promoting local talents" or "scientific governance" were dominant, this year the Chief Executive (CE) preferred not to highlight one single policy, pledging instead to make improvements in many fields. Housing, transport and social welfare were the three areas that deserved most attention during his speech.

In terms of welfare, the CE noted that the elderly are "precious to society" and to support them is to continue "one of the Chinese traditions that we should keep." A bill on the rights of older people is slated for preparation next year and an inter-departmental group on elderly care is also to be established.

Mr Chui announced an increase to a set of subsidies, including those for the elderly and disabled (both updated from MOP7,500 to MOP8,000). The minimum subsistence index will likewise be raised to MOP4,050. Low-income full-time employees will continue to be subsidized to the tune of up to MOP5,000 per month.

The cash handout policy remains unchanged and the health vouchers for permanent residents will increase slightly to MO600. Every household will keep on benefiting from a maxi-



A group of parents staged a protest yesterday to demand family reunions with their mainland-born children unable to get local IDs

mum MOP200 in monthly subsidies towards electricity bills.

It was announced that the government would inject MOP10,000 of seed capital into the Central Provident Fund savings account of every eligible resident. In 2016 an additional MOP7,000 from the fiscal surplus will be deposited into those eligible accounts. A total of MOP37 billion will be added to the Social Security Fund in order to maintain its sustainability.

As in previous years, the protection of residents' jobs is con-

The fourth link between Macau and Taipa will be via a bridge

sidered a "priority" and employers "will be encouraged to update the salaries in order to achieve stability in terms of human resources." Civil servants will get a 2.53 percent salary update, lower than in previous years.

Other policies favoring residents include the review of the labor law in order to introduce paid paternity leave and "examination of issues arising from when a statutory holiday falls on an employee's rest day." Macau ID holders will continue to benefit from training programs like the Continuing Education Development Scheme.

Acknowledging that traffic congestion has become a major concern in Macau, "affecting mobility and road safety," Chui Sai On said that measures to control the increase in the number of vehicles will be in-

troduced. With heavier taxes and more inspections on older vehicles, it is expected that owning a car will become less attractive.

The government pledged to promote public transportation. For example, buses will have a dedicated corridor stretching from Lam Mau Dock to Barra.

The Light Rapid Transit (LRT) project is seen as central to the promotion of local public transportation. Chui Sai On announced that "the contract with the LRT depot builder will be canceled and works are expected to resume shortly, after suffering major delays. Studies are being made to implement "the Seac Pai Van line," deemed necessary given the huge public housing project that was built there. Another stalled project, the expansion of Taipa's Pac On ferry terminal, "will be fully working by the second semester of next year," Chui said. Still concerning major infrastructure projects, one of the Policy Address' novelties was the announcement that the fourth link between Macau and Taipa will be via a bridge, since the possibility of building a tunnel was discarded.

Regarding housing, Chui reiterated the government's intention to promote the recovery of unused land lots in order to build affordable housing, and mentioned the plan to provide 28,000 public housing units within the new reclamation Zone A.

Another topic addressed was the administrative revamp that will see "15 projects of adjustment and reorganization of public services within the next two years." The idea to create a municipal body "with no political power" was restated.

The role of Macau as a platform between China and Portuguese-speaking countries was also highlighted by the CE, who said there's a need to train bilingual talents in Chinese and Portuguese.

Stressing an ongoing mid-term review of the gaming industry, Chui said that authorities will encourage operators to engage more in large-scale tourism projects that would help diversify the sector by offering more leisure activities and non-gaming elements.

The prospects for local small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), according to the CE, will suffer "an even higher pressure" given the global economic downturn. To counter that, some of those companies will be able to access more loan funds.

Although recognizing the challenges posed by the gaming industry adjustment phase, Chui Sai On kept a positive tone. He said that "the local economy has been developing positively and the public finances are stable," adding that "the major [infrastructure] projects are being done in an orderly fashion and the unemployment rate is keeping at a relatively low level."

The Chief Executive will be at the AL today for the second consecutive day, tasked with answering lawmakers' questions.

NURSERY NETWORK UNDER EXPANSION

THE LACK of nurseries has created a strain on some local parents who are unable to access to childcare services. Chui Sai On intends to solve the problem and said that the number of places available will rise to 10,000 next year. That would be enough to include 90 percent of all 2-year-olds, he added.



Chui Sai On greets lawmakers after his speech

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POLICY ADDRESS 2016

New housing scheme may be introduced

THE Chief Executive (CE) hinted yesterday that a new housing scheme may be established in order to cater for the needs of the younger generation unable to buy residential properties in Macau, given its inflated prices.

At a press conference held yesterday after delivering his 2016 Policy Address at the Legislative Assembly, Chui Sai On listed other policies thought up by the government to improve the housing market. One of them is "to analyze projects to build private housing at a faster place in order to increase the offer available."

Admitting that apartments



Chui Sai On pictured during yesterday's press conference

nowadays are "too expensive" for local families, Chui noted that "a lot of money must be paid upfront only to pay the initial installment of the bank loan."

The CE told journalists at the

The rental increases must follow scientific patterns.

CHUI SAI ON

government headquarters that until now social housing (renting to low income families) has been privileged over affordable housing (sale at controlled prices). However, he acknowledged that "there are voices in local society that now ask for the opposite." Hence, the region's leader said a "third possibility" could be contemplated, although it may not be the on the same lines of a "Macau Property for Macau Residents" policy that was studied previously and apparently dropped. This time the government may be considering the implementation of a scheme to provide younger residents with flats that they would initially be able to rent at

affordable prices and later buy.

Upon being asked about the proposal approved at first reading last week to establish a new rental control mechanism, Chui said that uncontrolled rent increases influence families and retailers and that he agrees with the bill. The rental control mechanism is calculated by a rate based on a coefficient set by the CE. However, he didn't want to reveal what his prospective criteria will be to set the cap. "First we need to let the issue be debated at the AL. The rental increases must follow scientific patterns. We have specialized personnel that study the prices and know that those prices are volatile," Chui said.

The other major topic addressed during the press conference was the gaming industry "adjustment," which Chui considered "natural." He predicted that gross gaming revenue next year will amount to MOP200 billion, or an average of MOP16 billion per month.

"The adjustment phase will continue," the CE predicted. "But it won't affect the population's quality of life." **PB**

MAJOR MEASURES IN 2016

- The fourth crossing between Macau and Taipa will be a bridge
- Elderly and disabled subsidies updated from MOP7,500 to MOP8,000
- Cash handout policy remains unchanged
- Civil servants to receive a 2.53pct raise
- Health vouchers for permanent residents will increase slightly to MOP600
- Promote the recovery of unused land
- Possibility of establishing a new public housing concept
- Continuing Education Development Scheme carries on
- Training of bilingual staff in Chinese and Portuguese
- Introduction of paid paternity leave

'A CONSERVATIVE EXPECTATION'

CHUI'S FORECAST of MOP200 billion GGR next year is "a conservative expectation" given current levels, said Tim Craighead, a gaming analyst with Bloomberg Intelligence. "We expect the mass-market to stabilize and recover, and we believe the VIP business has structural challenges that

aren't going away any time soon." Grant Govertsen, an analyst at Union Gaming Group, said that possible crowd control measures by the government aren't a worry: "The reality is that visitation is down, so I think we have a way to go before we need to worry about bursting at the seams again."

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(TRANSLATED VERSION)

Highlights of Policy Address for the Fiscal Year 2016 of the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR)

Focusing on livelihoods, boosting economy, and ensuring stable development

2015 marks the first year of the present term of the Government. Facing an array of challenges, we have strived to uphold the principles of "One country, two systems", "Macao people governing Macao" and a high degree of autonomy. We strictly observed the stipulations of the Basic Law of Macao, and responded to emerging and existing intertwined conflicts and complicated internal and external changes with a strong sense of responsibility, effective measures and remarkable composure.

Looking to the year ahead, we will firmly seize the opportunities arising from Macao's stable economy and society to maintain economic development and improve quality of life with innovative thinking, aiming to maximise the benefits for the public and society as a whole. With absolute determination and a pragmatic attitude, we will improve policies and measures with unceasing efforts, to strengthen the foundation for development of the Macao SAR. We aim to work together with the public to realise our plan of building a thriving Macao.



All Macao residents

Individual accounts of the Central Provident Fund

Start-up fund of 10,000 patacas (for eligible residents)

Additional fund injection of 7,000 patacas (for eligible residents)

Wealth Partaking Scheme

9,000 patacas (permanent residents)

5,400 patacas (non-permanent residents)

Healthcare voucher

600 patacas per person (permanent residents)

Electricity bill subsidy for residential units

200 patacas per month (each residential unit)

Continuing Education Programme

Maximum 6,000 patacas per person

Real estate tax

First 3,500 patacas tax waiver (Macao residents)

Waiver of real estate stamp duty (only for residential properties)

First three million patacas of a home's value (Macao permanent residents purchasing residential properties for the first time)



The elderly

Old age allowance

↑ Increased to 8,000 patacas per year

Pension

3,350 patacas per month

Benefits for the Elderly

Old age allowance 8,000 patacas

Pension 3,350 patacas x 13 months

Wealth Partaking Scheme
9,000 patacas

Additional fund injection to central savings account 7,000 patacas

Total amount for one year 67,550 patacas
(Or approximately 5,629 patacas per month)
Healthcare voucher 600 patacas



Students

Non-tertiary education: Textbook allowance

3,000 patacas per school year (each secondary school student)

2,600 patacas per school year (each primary school student)

2,000 patacas per school year (each kindergarten or pre-school pupil)

Students from families with financial difficulties

↑ Meal allowance: Increased to 3,400 patacas per school year

Stationery allowance:

↑ Increased to 2,900 patacas per school year (each kindergarten pupil or primary school student)

↑ Increased to 2,200 patacas per school year (each secondary school student)

Tertiary education: Study allowance

3,000 patacas (Macao residents)



People with disabilities

Disability gratuity

↑ Increased to 8,000 patacas per year (ordinary)

↑ Increased to 16,000 patacas per year (special)

Temporary disability allowance scheme

Ongoing and consider transitioning it to a long-term measure

Enterprises employing people with disabilities

Additional reduction of taxable income of 72,000 patacas subject to annual profit tax for each employee with a disability

Income subsidy for disabled workers

Under consideration



Employed citizens/ Middle-income group

Personal income tax

Continue with the 30 percent reduction in personal income tax, with the basic allowance set at 144,000 patacas

Extra tax rebate

An additional 60 percent rebate of the personal income tax paid by each tax-paying Macao resident, subject to a ceiling of 12,000 patacas (rebates to be received in 2017)



Disadvantaged families

Minimum subsistence index

↑ Increased to 4,050 patacas per one-person household

Financial assistance

Disburse an extra one-month's full amount of financial assistance to eligible families

Special subsidy and special living allowance for three categories of disadvantaged families

Ongoing

Short-term Food Assistance Programme

↑ Increase the daily budget to 40 patacas and turn it into a long-term measure

Public housing tenants

Implement priority-based rent waiver and reduction

Temporary housing subsidies for eligible families on the waiting list for public housing

Ongoing

Subsidy for low-income, full-time employees

Up to 5,000 patacas / month

Positive Life Programme and the Community Employment Assistance Scheme

Ongoing



Business owners and related persons

Profit tax allowance increased to 600,000 patacas;

Continue to provide waivers of all business taxes, hawkers licence fees, wet market stall rents, inspection and quarantine fees for live food, and stamp duty on life insurance, non life insurance and bank service charges;

Provide waivers of signboard taxes for businesses; exemption from tourism tax for restaurants;

Provide waivers of stamp duty on entrance passes and tickets for cultural and arts performances, exhibitions and entertainment programmes.

(TRANSLATED VERSION)

Highlights of Policy Address for the Fiscal Year 2016 of the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR)

Focus on livelihoods		Economic development	
Housing  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocated Home-Ownership Scheme housing units in accordance with the "ballot drawn before assessment" mechanism; Complete the feasibility study on new public housing categories; Steady progress with planning for five pieces of reserved land, on which more than 4,000 public housing units can be built; Conduct reasonable planning for various public facilities; and the new Urban Zone Area A is expected to provide approximately 28,000 public housing units; and Expedite the approval of private residential building plans. 	Land reserve  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence formulation of the overall urban plan; Establish the Urban Renewal Committee, to facilitate redevelopment of old districts; and Idle land expropriated in future will be prioritised for the construction of public housing units. 	Protect local workers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amend laws relating to paid paternity leave for men and overlapping leave; and Promote upward and horizontal mobility of local employees. 	Medical and health services  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence construction of Islands District Medical Complex; three newly constructed or expanded health centres and health stations will be completed or commence operation this year; Introduce elderly health care services at health centres; Facilitate inclusion of traditional medicine in primary healthcare services system; Commence the territory-wide health survey pilot scheme; Encourage children and teenagers to take part in physical training; and Facilitate the amendment to the Prevention and Control of Smoking Law.
Transport  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence the pilot scheme for time-limited public transport lanes from Barra to Doca Lam Mau; Issue 250 ordinary taxi licences and initiate open tender for 100 special taxi licences; Complete the civil works for the 11 LRT Taipa Line stations and commence a feasibility study on the LRT Seac Pai Van line; Prepare to extend the LRT service to Barra Station; Complete the amendment to the design of LRT southern section and commence technical research on the waterfront line of the northern section; The new vehicle examination centre will commence operations; Continue the development of the walkway network; and complete construction of the Taipa Ferry Terminal, and gradually commence a trial run; and Propose constructing a cross-harbour bridge for the fourth Macao-Taipa passage. 	Social services  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 social service facilities will commence operations by the end of next year; Increase quotas for child-care services to more than 10,000; Implement the 10-year Development Plan for Rehabilitation Services; and Implement the 10-year Action Plan for Elderly Services. 	Environmental protection  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence legislative procedures for environmental impact evaluation mechanism; Implement Macao Solid Waste Management Programme; Implement the proposal for disposal of inert construction and demolition materials in mainland China waters; Facilitate the project for cross-boundary disposal of scrap vehicles from Macao; Promote the use of environmental friendly vehicles; and Facilitate three-dimensional urban greening. 	Security and safety  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence research on formulating a development plan for the Age of Big Data in Macao; Strengthen the police force through applying high technology to prevent and combat crimes; Introduce four new food safety standards; and Establish territory-wide 4G network coverage.
Education/Youth /Talent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete interim review for the 10-year Plan for Non-tertiary Education; Reduce the number of schools operating on podiums; Launch the Thousand Talents Programme; Commence the Youth Science and Technology Talents Cultivation Programme; and Follow up on the cooperation framework for vocational training and promotion of skills accreditation between the Government and the private sector. 	Coordinate planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the Committee for the Establishment of a World Tourism and Leisure Centre; and Formulate the MSAR Five-year Plan (2016-2020). 	Economic diversification  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devise a system of statistical benchmarks for convention and exhibition, cultural and creative, and Chinese medicine industries; Conduct the Study on Blueprints for Development of Convention and Exhibition Industries in Macao; Consider formulating the Cultural Industry Incentive Scheme; Facilitate cooperation between Guangdong-Macao Traditional Chinese Medicine Technology Industrial Park and state key laboratories; Launch joint development projects with two renowned enterprises from mainland China; The industrial park will launch a pilot scheme in one or two Portuguese-speaking countries to promote close cooperation in international registration and trade in services; and Encourage gaming operators to purchase more Macao products and services. 	

(TRANSLATED VERSION)

Highlights of Policy Address for the Fiscal Year 2016 of the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR)

Gaming industry



- Conduct interim review and study on the future development of the industry;
- Issued internal guidelines to all gaming promoters; and
- Encourage gaming operators to develop large-scale integrated tourism projects.

Tourism

- Continue to assess the city's ability to receive tourists and tourism carrying capacity;
- Optimise statistical work for tourism satellite account;
- Train multilingual tour guides; and
- Consider revitalising the Mong Ha villa cluster.

Small and medium-sized enterprises



- Fully implement the "SME Outreach Scheme";
- Establish the Study Group for Community Economic Development ;
- Offer secondary aid for enterprises that have repaid loans granted under the SME Aid Scheme;
- Local products and services are prioritised in government tender evaluations;
- Introduce the Youth Innovative Business Scheme with the Internet as the main theme; and
- Broaden the support of the Young Entrepreneurs Aid Scheme to the three major free trade zones in Guangdong Province.

Regional cooperation

- Deploy dedicated staff and task forces to the offices of the MSAR in Beijing and Lisbon, to expedite the establishment of a cooperation platform; and
- Allocate a portion of the financial reserve for investment in the development of major projects of Guangdong, Fujian and China Development Bank.

Administrative reform

Public administration

- Restructure 15 departments in two years;
- Plan and prepare for the establishment of a municipal organisation that is not an organ of political power;
- Follow-up on the issues related to the number and the tenures of consultant positions to be held by members representing the community;
- Analyse and optimise cross-departmental procedures for Administrative Permits/Licences; and
- Enable online appointment for all registration and notary services.

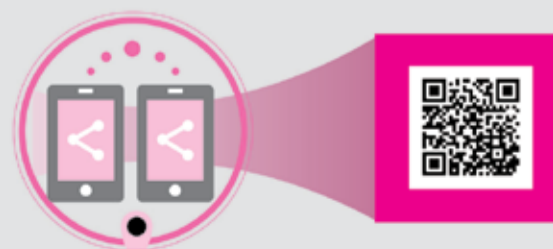
Civil servants

- Reform the centralised recruitment system;
- Complete the amendment to the Recruitment, Selection and Promotion Training System for Civil Servants;
- Commence reform of system for assessing performances of public servants, and officially incorporate a third-party assessment into the system for assessing performances of department heads; and
- Complete the comprehensive review of the Civil Servant Ranking System, hence providing an institutional basis for rank-based salary adjustment.

MACAO SAR BUDGET - REVENUE AND EXPENSES FOR 2016 OVERVIEW

REVENUE ITEMS	Proposed budget for 2016	REVENUE ITEMS	Proposed budget for 2016
General integrated budget of public expenditure			
RECURRING REVENUE	93,070,245,300.00	CAPITAL REVENUE	1,759,040,900.00
Direct tax	79,456,698,600.00	Disposal of investment assets	152,245,300.00
Indirect tax	4,473,083,400.00	Transfer	21,000.00
Fees, fine and other monetary penalties	1,875,848,100.00	Financial assets	424,691,000.00
Asset revenue	1,726,800,800.00	Other capital revenue	1,150,655,500.00
Transfer	4,197,203,000.00	Refunds not deducted from payments	31,428,100.00
Sale of durable items	2,456,300.00		
Sale of labour and non-durable items	1,236,741,000.00	General integrated budget of public revenue	94,829,286,200.00
Other recurring revenue	101,414,100.00		
Revenue of special organisations			
Statutory income and transfer from the MSAR budget	22,231,705,200.00	Total revenue of special organisations	26,123,152,200.00
Income from sales and provision of services	229,830,000.00		
Income from financial investments	3,561,685,900.00	Adjustment	17,700,915,400.00
Other income	99,931,100.00	Grand total	103,251,523,000.00
EXPENSES ITEMS	Proposed budget for 2016	EXPENSES ITEMS	Proposed budget for 2016
General integrated budget of public expenditure			
Macao SAR Government	19,752,200.00	Cartography and Cadastre Bureau	80,558,800.00
Office of the Chief Executive	296,879,300.00	Judiciary Police	857,795,500.00
Executive Council	32,182,800.00	Environmental Protection Bureau	333,639,200.00
Office of the Secretary for Administration and Justice	36,855,600.00	Legal Affairs Bureau	252,089,000.00
Office of the Secretary for Economy and Finance	45,523,800.00	Lands, Public Works and Transport Bureau	458,886,900.00
Office of the Secretary for Security	32,121,500.00	Macao Sports Development Board	179,834,200.00
Office of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture	188,719,700.00	Cultural Affairs Bureau	445,463,200.00
Office of the Secretary for Transport and Public Works	31,679,800.00	Investment projects	11,068,782,000.00
Macao Economic and Trade Office in Lisbon	11,656,900.00	Designated accounting items: designated appropriations, shared allocations and transfer budget	17,698,915,400.00
Macao Economic and Trade Office to the European Union in Brussels	4,923,100.00	Student Welfare Fund	429,328,100.00
Office of the Macao SAR in Beijing	22,900,200.00	Housing Loan Fund	43,128,100.00
Macao Economic and Trade Office to the World Trade Organization	13,423,200.00	Industrial and Commercial Development Fund	784,422,400.00
Office for Personal Data Protection	63,856,200.00	Tourism Fund	870,268,400.00
Infrastructure Development Office	66,712,200.00	Social Welfare Bureau	2,967,808,400.00
Office for Development of the Energy Sector	37,433,500.00	Judiciary Police Welfare Association	7,520,800.00
The Supporting Office to the Permanent Secretariat to the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries	157,696,900.00	Public Security Police Force Welfare Association	32,710,900.00
Financial Intelligence Office	27,210,600.00	Coffer of Legal Affairs	220,664,600.00
Human Resources Office	56,851,900.00	Government Printing Bureau	85,976,500.00
Transportation Infrastructure Office	80,393,100.00	Macao Prison Fund	6,398,100.00
The Macao SAR Government Policy Research Centre	49,897,300.00	Housing Bureau	445,973,100.00
Macao Economic and Cultural Office	16,396,700.00	Civil Aviation Authority	77,165,300.00
Protocol, Public Relations and External Affairs Office	89,504,600.00	Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute	660,920,700.00
Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau	408,292,700.00	Commission Against Corruption	353,144,800.00
Education and Youth Affairs Bureau	5,495,290,200.00	Health Bureau	7,075,154,800.00
Statistics and Census Service	196,917,400.00	University of Macau	2,340,705,800.00
Bureau of Telecommunications Regulation	169,864,100.00	Macao Polytechnic Institute	749,879,100.00
Finance Services Bureau	464,037,100.00	Sports Development Fund	816,754,000.00
Pension and retirement compensation	7,941,200.00	Culture Fund	538,097,500.00
General expenses	16,809,186,300.00	Consumer Council	39,382,400.00
Tertiary Education Services Office	243,242,700.00	Institute for Tourism Studies	414,859,800.00
Traffic Affairs Bureau	1,662,557,200.00	Macao Public Administration Welfare Fund	49,590,600.00
Law Reform and International Law Bureau	52,086,400.00	Fire Services Welfare Association	6,970,000.00
Identification Bureau	272,984,200.00	Commission of Audit	209,135,700.00
Macao Economic Services Bureau	208,363,500.00	Public Prosecutions Office	418,340,800.00
Macao Prison	525,179,100.00	Office of the President of the Court of Final Appeal	541,062,500.00
Macao Customs Service	719,228,600.00	Legislative Assembly	183,914,500.00
Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau	107,051,200.00	Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau	2,607,202,800.00
Government Tourist Office	317,680,800.00	Customs Welfare Association	3,598,500.00
Government Information Bureau	122,823,100.00	Science and Technology Development Fund	269,433,200.00
Unitary Police Service	40,537,700.00	Welfare Committee of Marine and Water Bureau	2,727,600.00
Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau	255,121,500.00	Fisheries Development and Support Fund	90,853,100.00
Marine and Water Bureau	1,115,549,900.00	Property Maintenance Fund	78,446,200.00
Public Security Forces Affairs Bureau	4,313,106,900.00	Education Development Fund	915,408,200.00
Labour Affairs Bureau	354,976,200.00	Giant Panda Foundation	7,383,600.00
Judicial Council	605,800.00	Environmental Protection and Energy Conservation Fund	149,530,100.00
		Cultural Industry Fund	244,948,200.00
		General integrated budget of public expenditure	91,359,968,300.00
Expenditure of special organisations			
Macao Post	355,510,000.00	Macao Foundation	2,922,743,700.00
Postal Savings Office	43,835,800.00	Deposit Protection Fund	3,125,000.00
Macao Pension Fund	2,013,894,400.00		
Social Security Fund	4,467,831,200.00	Total expenditure of special organisations	11,378,987,500.00
Monetary Authority of Macao	1,563,637,400.00	Adjustments	17,700,915,400.00
Automobile and Maritime Security Fund	8,410,000.00	Grand total	85,038,040,400.00
Budget balance & estimated surplus for this year			
Central budget balance	3,469,317,900.00	Budget balance & estimated surplus of the year	18,213,482,600.00
Estimated surplus of special organisations	14,744,164,700.00	Total expenditure, budget balance and estimated surplus of the year	103,251,523,000.00

Download the Chief Executive's Office App here



(TRANSLATED VERSION)

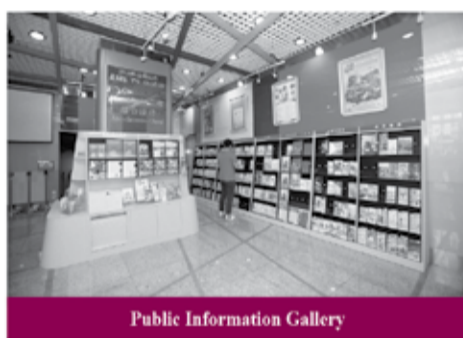
Major Policies on Various Areas

Administration and Justice

We adhere to the administrative approach of “perfecting the legal system, streamlining structure and administration, and increasing efficiency”; support the “one centre and one platform” development approach set out for Macao; improve and optimise administrative plans and projects in line with new economic developments; and respond actively to the expectations and demand from society for sustainable development.

Public administration

- Continue to implement the first-phase civil service structural reform, push forward with the study of establishing a municipal organisation that is not an organ of political power, and improve the function and operation of consultative bodies;
- Implement in an orderly way the five-year plan of e-Government, increase efficiency and optimise services to offer convenience to the public;
- Implement the new regulations of centralised recruitment, the dual-track revamp of the civil service system, and the comprehensive review of civil servant ranking system;
- Continue to organise various training courses to raise all-round legal expertise and professionalism of civil servants;
- Incorporate third-party evaluation into public official performance review, and extend the same to various levels and areas of public service;
- Improve multi-level communication and dialogue channels to foster effective interaction and communication among the Government, community groups and the public; and
- Implement a complaint handling mechanism with regard to civil servants, and continuously provide civil servants in need with supplementary financial subsidy.



Public Information Gallery

Justice

- Gradually implement a coordinated legislative mechanism incorporating decision-making, coordination, drafting and consultation; establish a medium-to-long term legislative plan; and work towards building a strengthened team of law drafters;
- Attach high importance to the improvement of fundamental laws; intensify legislative work with regard to the people's daily lives; push forward with the revision of laws and regulations;
- Continue to collaborate with community groups to organise a series of programmes to promote the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and the Basic Law of Macao, tailored to different members of the public; and
- Revise the Chief Executive Election Law and the Legislative Assembly Election Law to enhance the competitiveness of indirect election and the impartiality of election.

The people's daily lives

- Enhance both active supervision and law enforcement with regard to food safety; further improve the relevant standards and guidelines; continue to promote food safety and risk education, and increase regional exchange and cooperation regarding food safety management and the relevant skills;
- Determine the final policy and work schedule of replacing live poultry supply with chilled and frozen poultry supply, based on consultation results; and
- Upgrade community services, optimise municipal facilities, and further improve urban greening and hygiene.

Economy and Finance

We will strengthen the foundations for maintaining stable development, promote employment and safeguard the people's well-being, seek structural enhancements and expedite diversification, foster innovation and vitality, join hands with all sectors in overcoming challenges and seizing opportunities, and promote development through adjustment, thereby maintaining stability and fostering Macao's sustainable development.

Strengthen foundations to maintain stable development

- Improve legal system and industry regulations to further refine and strengthen the gaming industry to achieve orderly development, and urge gaming operators to increase non-gaming elements;
- Encourage gaming operators to lead smaller businesses to create synergy with SMEs and micro enterprises; and
- Maintain fiscal and financial stability, optimise budgeting and taxation systems, and save on administrative expenses.

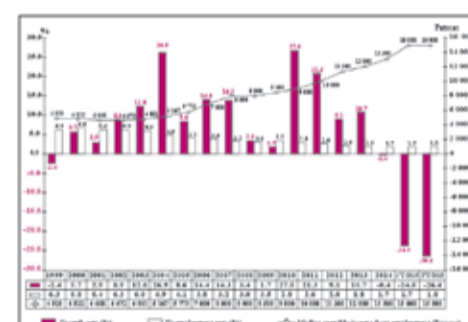
Promote employment and safeguard the people's well-being

- Safeguard local citizens' employment opportunities and strengthen the regulation of non-resident workers;
- Encourage occupational training and professional accreditation among local citizens to foster lateral or upward mobility;
- Enhance publicity and law enforcement regarding occupational safety and health; and
- Monitor goods prices and widen sourcing channels to protect consumers' rights and interests.

Seek structural enhancements and expedite diversification

- Nurture new loci of economic growth by fostering the development of nascent industries spanning exhibition and convention, financial services, Chinese medicine and electronic commerce;

- Promote transformation and upgrading of traditional industries;
- Push forward with planning and research on industrial development, and improve the statistical benchmark system for adequate economic diversification;
- Take part in and support the Belt and Road initiative, and seize the opportunities arising from free trade zones and CEPA;
- Collaborate to ensure success of the fifth Ministerial Meeting of the Forum for Economic and Trade Cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries (Macao);
- Set up a dedicated department to build online and offline “One platform, three centres”, establish a new Portuguese food product exhibition centre, and plan the establishment of service counters in Portugal and Brazil; and
- Launch an import, export and re-export credit insurance system.



Economic growth rate in real term, median income, and unemployment rate (1999-2015)

Foster innovation and vitality

- Build a platform for better cooperation between the Government and the community, optimise the business environment, and promote community economy;
- Optimise administrative services, and foster a quality and well-regulated business environment that offers convenience to both businesses and the public; and
- Implement various measures to support and assist small-and-medium sized enterprises as they seek innovative development and maintain ethical business operation, and further support youth entrepreneurship with the principle of “Teach a man to fish instead of give him a fish”.

Security

With a forward-looking spirit in law enforcement, we will continue to implement the principle of putting people first, strengthen our vigilance, and actively understand our citizens' concerns. By combining the power of the public security forces, relevant departments and all Macao residents, we join hands in our pioneering and progressive effort to improve our ability in law enforcement, prevent and combat crimes, and maintain stable development of society as well as the freedom and safety of residents and tourists.

Improve abilities and enhance law enforcement

- Adjust law enforcement practices for comprehensive crime prevention and focused crackdown on crimes and efficiently investigate serious crimes to safeguard public security and order; and
- Strengthen police forces through technology and enhance police operational training to further optimise the operational efficiency and ability of police forces, and improve security mechanisms to strengthen disaster relief capacity.

Improve systems and facilitate reforms

- Begin preparatory work on establishing a cyber security centre and conduct studies on personnel systems, and design a new system for promotions to higher ranks; and
- Support legislation to jointly promote legal reform and implement the Government's policies on streamlining administrative structures.

Uphold discipline and improve management

- Implement policing concepts to promote a modern policing model and sustain alertness and uphold strict discipline in police forces; and
- Improve monitoring mechanisms and strictly implement hard management while putting officers first to boost morale and introduce a flexible organisational culture.



The public security authorities effectively prevent and combat crimes, ensure safety of local residents and tourists, and maintain stable development of Macao society

Initiate collaboration and maintain close relationships

- Innovate in police cooperation, safeguard community safety through concerted efforts and raise the efficiency and effectiveness in crime prevention in different areas; and
- Enhance the production of TV programmes that promote police-community relations to boost public cooperation, initiate diverse publicity channels to promote interactions between police and citizens and to promote mutual understanding and enhance efficiency of cooperation between police and the media.

Optimise border-crossing facilities and maintain a positive image

- Optimise border-crossing facilities, enhance human resources of the police forces and initiate courtesy training to boost efficiency of border-crossing services to help build a tourism and leisure centre; and
- Make good preparations for administering Macao waters in future.

Promote and provide assistance on rehabilitation

- Foster cooperation between various parties to promote construction of a new prison and provide diverse counselling on social rehabilitation to help offenders return to society; and
- Maintain strict internal supervision to strengthen prison management and press ahead with the merger between the Reformatory for Juvenile Delinquents and the Macao Prison.

(TRANSLATED VERSION)

Major Policies on Various Areas

Social Affairs and Culture

The Government will keep striving to improve residents' livelihoods, intensify medical system reform, pragmatically promote the principle of "letting Macao thrive through education", support the underprivileged, and boost the establishment of long-term mechanisms. The Government will also explore new tourism markets, tourist sources and diverse products, and fully leverage synergies by promoting cooperation among tourism, culture and sports sectors for the benefit of the public.

Healthcare

- Cope with the risks of new infectious diseases, enhance overall ability of disease control and rescue services;
- Strengthen chronic disease prevention and control, improve elderly healthcare services, and enhance the community healthcare services network; and
- Implement sound medical services management system, train medical professionals and enhance specialist healthcare.



Communication session with youth – a variety show to celebrate Macao's return to the motherland

Education and youth

- Perfect the laws and regulations on tertiary education and develop plans for nurturing talented people;
- Expedite implementation of the ten-year development plan, promote the "Blue Sky Project" to reduce the number of schools operating on podiums and improve the environment for talent cultivation;
- Strengthen talent training and deepen education on morality, civic awareness and the nation's situation; and
- Advocate Chinese culture and raise the sense of nationalism and patriotism among young people.

Social work and social security

- Protect the underprivileged and strengthen cooperation between the Government and the community;
- Increase quotas of services, implement the ten-year development plan for elderly and rehabilitation services, and improve the social services system;
- Optimise subsidy schemes, promote professional certification, restructure and expand service scopes; and
- Implement the two-tier social security system, and enhance service quality.

Tourism

- Deepen the planning of tourism development, develop e-Government services and improve tourism service quality;
- Promote "smart travel", develop innovative and diverse tourism products, and optimise tourist sources; and
- Seize opportunities arising from the Belt and Road initiative, and promote cooperation, innovation and joint development within regional cultural tourism.

Culture

- Implement cultural heritage protection and promote relic conservation;
- Support the nurturing of cultural and arts talents, popularise art education, and expedite development of cultural and creative industries; and
- Develop Macao's cultural tourism facilities through inter-departmental cooperation, and create a fascinating cultural expo area.

Sports

- Provide more favourable conditions for young people and the public to participate in sports activities;
- Improve sports training mechanisms to nurture talented athletes; and
- Organise successful major international sports events and fully leverage Macao's strength in sports tourism.

Transport and Public Works

Transport and public works are closely related to people's daily lives. Apart from overall urban planning, major livelihood projects - such as transportation, housing and environmental protection - have already been and will continue to be our policy priorities.

Urban planning

- Support strategic research for urban planning and promote preliminary work on formulating overall urban planning;
- Commence tender processes for the planning of New Urban Zone Area A, Area B and Area E1;
- Commence the design of the fourth Macao-Taipa cross-harbour passage;
- Continue combating illegal occupation of government land;
- Handle and follow up on land cases according to the Land Law; and
- Strengthen maritime management of Macao waters.



Pac On Ferry Terminal, Taipa

Public works

- Re-commence suspended public works and speed up delayed construction projects;
- Complete construction of the main structure of LRT Taipa line, and follow up on the design of Seac Pai Van line;
- Expedite construction of public housing;
- Achieve progress in the layout and design of new border checkpoints;
- Complete construction of the Taipa Ferry Terminal, and deliver it to various operational units for trial operations in phases; and
- Ensure orderly progress with construction of the Islands District Medical Complex.

Transportation

- Commence the preliminary work on formulating Macao's transportation legislation framework;
- Review private vehicle taxes and raise standards for vehicle inspections;
- Press ahead with the policy of putting public transport first, and improve bus services;

- Complete the review of the Legal System on Light Rental Vehicles (Taxis) Passenger Transportation;
- Complete the issuance of special taxi licences;
- Adjust the charges for public car parking spaces, provide additional public car parking facilities, and optimise the electronic payment system; and
- Strengthen coordination of road works.

Housing

- Progressively promote public housing planning;
- Implement allocation and management of public housing;
- Complete research on the initiative concerning new public housing categories; and
- Conduct an overall review of the Public Housing Law.

Environmental Protection

- Promote legislation on a construction waste management system and restrictions on the use of plastic bags;
- Deepen cooperation with Guangdong province on expediting projects regarding scrap vehicles;
- Construct sorting facilities for inert construction and demolition materials in landfills; and
- Commence a public consultation on the environmental impact assessment system for construction projects.

Commission Against Corruption

In 2016, the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) will act in accordance with the law, give first priority to combat corruption, and continue to perform its function to handle complaints to the Ombudsman.

Action against graft

- Monitor areas of public administration considered prone to corruption, and corruption in the private sector, in order to maintain a corruption-free social environment;
- Make good use of the CCAC's resources to improve anti-corruption strategies, and strengthen up-to-date technical support in order to raise the enforcement standard;
- Enhance professionalism and skills of investigators, and strengthen their investigative capability;
- Review legal systems related to the CCAC's functions, and provide recommendations regarding improvements to these systems; and
- Enhance efficiency of cross-border cooperation, and ensure that joint investigation of cross-border cases are carried out smoothly.

Complaints to the Ombudsman

- Review the current workflow, and apply simpler and more efficient methods to handle complaints to the Ombudsman;
- Conduct special investigations into public services or administrative procedures that are closely related to people's livelihood, and provide improvement recommendations on administrative operations and legal systems;
- Enhance the private sector's performance in corruption prevention, and strengthen cooperation with the private sector by providing corruption prevention guidelines; and
- Strengthen the use of information technology, optimise the management of work concerning complaints to the Ombudsman and enhance staff's investigative ability.

Publicity and education

- Intensify integrity education amongst civil servants, heighten their awareness of conflicts of interest, and raise the standards of self discipline;
- Strengthen the promotion of the Law of Prevention and Suppression of Bribery in the Private Sector, in order to advocate integrity in governance and business ethics; and
- Continue to promote integrity and moral education among teenagers and the public, and further develop social networks, in order to create a social atmosphere against corruption.

Commission of Audit

In 2016, the Commission of Audit will continue to adopt a pragmatic approach, exercise its right of supervision independently and in accordance with the law, uncover problems of dereliction of duty in government departments, and strengthen audits of major projects and those related to people's livelihoods, and highlight the major problems in order to achieve improvement and prevent risks.

The Commission will also encourage government departments to provide active and serious support, and understand the solemnity and importance of auditing work, in order to improve administrative efficiency and optimise management system.

Audit and computer-assisted audit

- The Commission of Audit will continue to adopt a risk-based audit methodology, which will be adjusted in high risk projects with reference to existing and potential problems that often appear in such accounts;
- The commission will conduct research and make appropriate deployment according to actual need and with consideration of the government's fiscal reserve and investments and the preparation and introduction of the new Budget Framework Law; and
- The commission will also improve the On-site Audit System and enhance its data analysis function.

Performance audit and special audit

- The commission will carry out performance audit and special audit according to existing plans, and assist departments to understand clearly their power and obligations, and implement the concept of performance in the execution of work, in order to enhance public service quality; and
- The commission will also apply continuous audit and other audit approaches to motivate its audit subjects to use public funds prudently, strengthen management and plug loopholes.

Auditing team

- The commission will enhance training to improve quality and efficiency of its audit teams. Professional training courses will be arranged systematically to equip all audit team members with professional knowledge up to international standards.

Promote audit culture

- The commission will continue organising seminars to promote audit culture for civil servants, schools and local communities, with the aims to establish and maintain a just, independent, professional and reliable image, and to educate people on the importance of treasuring public funds.

Committee presents five-year development plan proposal

THE Committee for the Construction of the World Tourism and Leisure Center of Macau presented its five-year Development Plan yesterday in a meeting with the press held at the government headquarters.

The plan analyses current estimates and suggests "high-priority projects" in five domains (transportation, environmental protection, health, urban development and urban security) for the coming five years.

These projects are: the construction of the Macau Light Rapid Transit (LRT); the construction of a new cross border access point; and the construction of a fourth connection between Macau and Taipa sides; which was also referred to by the CE earlier in the presentation of the 2016 Policy Address.

The government also proposes the extension and optimization of the solid waste incineration plant, as well as the construction of a new landfill for solidified ashes, and the extension and optimization of the wastewater treatment station in



Lei Ngan Leng

the Area Preta district.

Regarding healthcare, the only item considered a high priority is the construction of the long awaited Islands' Health Care Complex.

To complete these priorities and to address urban development and security were the planning and development of new landfills, the construction of a new major water pipeline, and the installation of a monitoring system for the city, which would include security cameras.

Lei Ngan Leng, advisor to the

Chief Executive and member of the newly formed committee, mentioned that the envisaged plan has been based on input from the Chief Executive (CE) and top government officials.

This proposal will be on display on a website specially created to collect public opinions for a period of 3 months.

After the public consultation period, the committee is expecting to present a revised and more detailed version of the plan during the second quarter of 2016. **RM**

COOPERATION

USJ runs 14-day Lusophone training program

A 14-day training program focusing on business and economic activities for participants from Portuguese-Speaking Countries was launched on November 9 at the Grand Lapa Hotel.

The training program, organized by the University of Saint Joseph (USJ) and conducted in Portuguese, aims to provide participants with an in-depth understanding of economic activities. The course includes 21 representative participants from Brazil, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau and Portugal, and covers topics such as "International Legal Status of the Special Administrative Region"; "Environmental and Urban Policy"; "E-commerce Policy"; and "Tourism and the Creative Industry".

The course is being complimented with on-site visits to both private enterprises and government inspection agencies in order to allow

participants to gain first-hand knowledge of Macau's public and private sectors.

Participants in the program, led by the Dean of the Faculty of Administration and Professor José Alves from the University of Saint Joseph, were hosted by members of the City of Dreams and the creative team from Dragone Entertainment's "House of Dancing Waters".

Participants were also taken on a back-stage tour sponsored by the City of Dreams. The head of the host team explained the concept and inception of the "House of Dancing Water" and the construction process of the state-of-the-art facilities, which took five years and HKD2 billion to complete.

The colloquium was sponsored by the "Forum for Trade Economic Cooperation between China and Portuguese-Speaking Countries (Macau)", and will last until November 22.

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- Over 40 bazaar booths in the Garden Marquee
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Proceeds from the bazaar are donated to the ILCM charity fund.

Inquiries please contact bazaar@ilcm.org.mo



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DELTA ASIA 80TH ANNIVERSARY

Stanley Au pessimistic about economic prospects

Aries Un

ISSUES concerning negative equity and bankruptcy will be aggravated if the already collapsing housing market continues to sink further, said the chairman of Delta Asia Financial Group, Stanley Au, on the sidelines of the group's 80th anniversary celebrations.

As the market weakens following the gaming industry's slowdown, Au argued that the lending market has already suffered some negative consequences and hoped that it could recover soon. "As far as I know, the housing market has fallen between 20 percent and 40 or 50 percent," he claimed.

Following his earlier criticism of the extensive presence of gaming operators in the territory's economy, he renewed his call to shed ex-



Stanley Au

cessive foreign labor from the battered gaming industry while allowing small and middle-sized enterprises to employ more imported workers.

"The unemployment rate will rise if the 'virtual economy' turns bad while if the 'real economy' becomes good, the rate will go down," he stated.

As far as I know, the housing market has fallen between 20pct and 40 or 50pct.

STANLEY AU

He also added that vocational fallouts of the gaming industry would linger as the younger population still sets their sights on gambling-related jobs, which are still deemed lucrative in the future.

"It has done harm to this generation of local youngsters, who are no longer accustomed to society," he said while condemning the cash handout scheme, which he believed has made locals "unmotivated."

As the region still holds about MOP433.6 billion in its fiscal reserve, the group's head proposed to invest part of the hoard into profitable overseas-based companies.

Furthermore, local potential sources of talent could also be dispatched to learn about those companies' operations in managerial positions, he suggested, as a way to respond to the authorities' long-touted determination to nurture talented individuals from within Macau.

During his address, Au admitted that the group was still reeling from the North Korean money laundering scandal in 2005 when the government's treasury had to intervene with the bank's operation following the US authorities' ban.

BNU secures position as strongest contributor to CGD

PORTUGUESE state bank Caixa Geral de Depósitos (CGD) recorded a profit of EUR 3.4 million in the period from January to September, the bank said in a statement. The profit for the first three quarters denotes a decrease of 92 percent when compared with the January-September period of 2014.

The statement said that the bank's units, located in Africa and Asia, had seen the best performance. These banks included BNU Macau, Mozambique's BCI and Banco Caixa Totta of Angola. The combined performance of the three units added EUR 80.1 million to the accounts of the CGD for the first three quarters of 2015.

However, Macau's Banco Nacional Ultramarino (BNU) was the business unit that contributed the most to overall accounts; it added EUR 45.8 million between January and September 2015 – almost double the French branch which provided EUR 28.9 million for the same period.

CGD explained that the sharp decline is due to the irregular profit registered in 2014 – itself the result of the sale of holdings in insurance companies Fide-



lidade, Cares and Multicare.

"Earnings in the first nine months of 2014 were higher due to non-recurring factors, such [as] the sale of holdings in insurance companies," the statement revealed. CGD retains a 15 percent stake in Fidelidade, and 20 percent of both Cares and Multicare.

The sales raised EUR 278.9 million for CGD – turning what would have been a loss of EUR 232.6 million into a profit of EUR 46.3 million. **Staff Reporter**

Woman who swallowed a fake diamond convicted

A mainland Chinese woman, who swallowed a fake diamond, and her accomplice, Huang Yanming, have been jailed for 28 months after a failed diamond heist in Hong Kong that took place at the Jewellery and Gem Fair on June 25.

Hunan resident Liu Xiuluan was caught attempting to swap a fake diamond made of zirconium and oxygen with the real 3.54 carat diamond worth at least HKD1.6 million. When the plan backfired, she swallowed the fake diamond.

Liu had asked a marketing manager at the booth which belonged to Star Brilliance Company to show her the diamond, the District Court heard. She



then swapped the real diamond with one of the fakes, but attempted to reverse the swap after she realized that the manager had noticed the act.

She then swallowed the fake diamond after it had dropped to the floor during the second swap. However the court heard that two gemstones, weighing 1.38 and 1.11 grams respectively, were found in Liu's stool four days later.

Liu and Huang each pleaded guilty to one

count of attempted theft during the hearing on Monday.

Judge Gary Lam Kar-yun noted that although the theft was not sophisticated, it was well planned. "They were armed with two diamonds to perform the swap," said Lam, before adding that they had dressed for the occasion and used fake permits to enter the fair.

Lam initially sentenced the duo to four years in jail, however reduced their sentences in view of their guilty pleas.

Authorities record 60pct surplus drop over past 10 months

THE latest statistics from the Financial Services Bureau indicate that the government's surplus for the first ten months of the year has plummeted by almost 60 percent to MOP34.583 billion from MOP85.855

billion last year.

The major source of the administration's wealth - tax from the gaming sector - has plunged 35.3 percent to MOP71.378 billion from MOP110.238 billion a year ago. This significantly

dragged down last year's revenue of MOP132 billion to around 91 billion this year, suggesting a fall of 31.2 percent.

By contrast, the government spent 21.5 percent more than last year with

MOP56.41 billion recorded, which was inclusive of the social security fund of MOP14.262 billion. The administration has spent MOP3.153 billion on investment, compared to last year's MOP2.168 billion.

A Russian traveler recently stopped in Macau as part of an epic journey spanning thousands of miles and lasting three years. Tatiana Fedoseeva, 20, told the Times about her journey, which began in her hometown of Perm near the Ural Mountains, and which has so far brought her through Mongolia and China to Macau.

After traveling throughout China, Tatiana remarked that “Macau is very different, like another country. The money, the architecture, the character of the people, and the fact that locals understand English, makes it very different.”

She continued, “Macau is wealthy, like Hong Kong, but here there are also poorer neighborhoods [in contrast to the wealth]. I don’t know how everyone can live here as it’s so expensive.”

Tatiana’s journey began five months ago when she traveled through southern Siberia, visiting cities such as Omsk and Irkutsk, and hiking more than 70 kilometers along the historic Circum-Baikal Railway in Eastern Russia.

She then headed south towards the town of Mondy, known for being the last Russian town before the Mongolian border. There she met with two friends, and the three of them set off on a nine-day hike around Khovsgol Lake in Mongolia, of which they completed a half circuit.

Along the way, they met the local Yurt people. “They were surprised [that] we were hiking on foot and they warned us to be careful of wolves and bears in the area. We were pretty scared,” Tatiana recalled, “but in the end we didn’t see any [wolves or bears].”

Tatiana and her friends then traveled to the Mongolian capital, Ulaanbaatar, and took a train to the Chinese-Mongolian border town of Zamiin-Üüd located in Inner Mongolia. From there they took buses, walked, and hitchhiked all the way to Beijing. In addition to the Chinese capital, Tatiana said that she also visited Xi’an and several mountain ranges in China, before leaving for the next leg of her journey to Vietnam.

TRAVEL

Russian backpacker impressed with city’s character



Tatiana Fedoseeva

“I like the Chinese language [Mandarin] more than English. I know about 50 words and can write about 10 characters [in Mandarin]. I also like the Chinese people; they are very friendly,” said Tatiana. The

whole trip could last two or three years.

The whole trip could last two or three years.

TATIANA FEDOSEEVA

Russian traveler admitted that she was less keen on Chinese food, however, adding that she preferred Vietnamese cuisine.

She said that her future travel plans include visiting more of China, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. “After those countries I want to go to Myanmar and India, and then I might take a flight to South America and explore the region. The whole trip could last two or three years.”

“I want to see the world: the countries, the culture, the lifestyles and lives of ordinary people. I also want to try different types of work,” said Tatiana, before adding that she would like to work on coffee or rice plantations.

Tatiana finished her university education in Russia and decided to embark on a journey spanning several continents around five months ago. She said that she wants to be a travel journalist when she returns.



Tatiana's journey to Macau (in red)

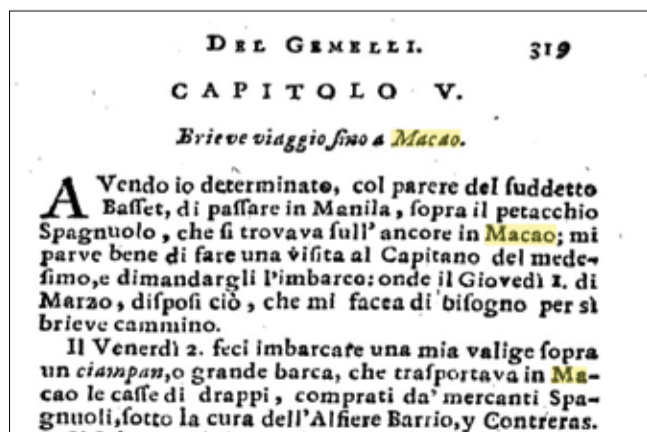
“I will know a lot about the world when I have finished, and I will be able to talk [and write] about my journey.”

She carries a notebook in which she often writes. Some of her entries record the sights of her trip, but most entries are useful phrases and translations written in Russian and Mandarin

Chinese.

“My advice to fellow travelers from Russia is to visit China but to make sure that you have phrases or a phrasebook to hand, because many Chinese people don’t know English,” said Tatiana. She recommends tourists visit the Chinese mountain ranges. **Staff Reporter**

Macau on the map: A short history of backpacking



The opening page of the Macau chapter in “Giro del Mondo”

BACKPACKING is an activity that combines hiking, camping, and the maxim that with all you need on your back you can truly go anywhere.

Backpacking is typically

signaled by the presence of the backpack itself – often the main or sole accompaniment to the traveler. However scholars Barbara Adkins and Eryn Grant define backpackers

as having “displayed a common commitment to a non-institutionalized form of travel, which was central to their self-identification.” By most definitions, a backpacker needs to spend at least one night outdoors and can only use what is in the traveler’s backpack.

The development of backpacking as a recreational activity dates back to the 1920s with Lloyd F Nelson’s invention of the camping backpack. Nelson designed a rigid pack board which gave structure to the backpack and made it easier to carry over long distances, thus making it more comfortable

for travelers.

But it was not until the passing of the U.S. National Scenic Trail Act in 1968 that backpacking began to advance into the mainstream activity that it is today. The Act encouraged individuals to rediscover the outdoors, and led to a series of further innovations in hiking and camping gear to meet a renewed interest.

A popular, if informal, trail of the 1960s and ‘70s can be accredited with having had a significant influence on the rise in popularity of backpacking. The so-called “Hippie Trail” traced the ancient route of the Silk

Road in reverse – often originating somewhere in Europe and terminating at Kathmandu, Nepal.

One of the main routes to Kathmandu meandered through Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. Backpackers who socialized and congregated in certain areas along the way created pockets known as “hippie hang-outs,” which in turn became celebrated hotspots of music, casual sex, and drug consumption.

Today manufacturers continue to find ways to improve and lighten conventional equipment and clothing used in backpacking. These innovations,

along with the growth of low-cost airlines and budget accommodation, have made backpacking easier for seasoned explorers and more accessible to novices.

According to several accounts, the first known “backpacker” was Italian adventurer and traveler Giovanni Francesco Gemelli Careri (1651–1725). In his journal “Giro Del Mondo” he recounts his “Brief voyage to Macao.” From Macau, Neapolitan-born Careri sailed to Manila, where he stayed two months while waiting to embark on the famous Manila galleon to Acapulco.

Apple Pay expands as it vies for broader acceptance



In this Oct. 17 2014 file photo, Eddy Cue, Apple Senior Vice President of Internet Software and Services, demonstrates the new Apple Pay mobile payment system at a Whole Foods store in Cupertino, Calif.

Anick Jesdanun
Technology Writer, New York

APPLE'S year-old mobile-payments service is expanding to more countries, banks and merchants, as it faces growing competition and some challenges before it becomes as commonplace as plastic cards.

Apple Pay was available in Canada starting yesterday and in Australia tomorrow. Those are two countries where "tap" payments — tapping a phone or chip-embedded card to the store's payment machine — are already more common than in the U.S. In those countries, however, Apple Pay is limited initially to American Express cards.

In the U.S., where Apple

Pay started in October 2014, the service was to expand yesterday to more than 100 additional card issuers — mostly smaller banks and credit unions. Apple Pay already accepts Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover cards from most major banks. In the U.K., Tesco and TSB banks were joining Apple Pay yesterday.

The developments come a few months after Google launched its own tap-and-pay service, Android Pay, while Samsung started Samsung Pay. Both are for Android phones, while Apple Pay requires iPhones.

Jennifer Bailey, Apple's vice president for Apple Pay, said the company is starting with American Ex-

press in Canada and Australia because it's both the card issuer and the payment-network operator, so coordination is easier. With Visa and MasterCard, individual banks issue the cards, and each bank has its own way of verifying a customer's identity when setting up Apple Pay, for instance.

Meanwhile, Apple is working with makers of various payment machines to bring tapping capabilities to additional merchants, small and large. When Apple Pay launched, the U.S. had 200,000 tap-capable machines. That's expected to surpass 1.5 million this year. The growth includes about 100,000 small to medium-sized merchants each month, Apple said.

Apple said yesterday that Cinnabon will add Apple Pay to all its U.S. locations next year, while Domino's company-owned pizza stores will get it by year's end. Earlier, Apple said Starbucks will conduct a pilot this year, with a broader rollout next year, while KFC will launch next spring.

Despite the momentum, several million more U.S. retailers still have older machines that lack the right technology.

Even if a merchant has the equipment, it's often located behind a counter, out of arm's reach. At sit-down restaurants, a customer needs to get up to make the tap, as opposed to leaving a card with a waiter, at least in the U.S. (In Canada and many European countries, it's common for staff to bring a portable card machine to your table.)

Addressing that will require a combination of approaches, Bailey said. She said Chili's is installing tablets at tables so people can order and pay right there, starting in the spring. The restaurant-reservation service OpenTable already lets diners use its app to pay at some restaurants. Other U.S. restaurants, she said, will embrace portable card machines.

"You'll see restaurants really look to innovate," Bailey said, adding that restaurants can squeeze in more customers with faster payments, and customers are happier if they don't have to wait for the check. AP

VW sales dip in Europe, but no more than competitors

Colleen Barry, Business Writer, Milan

EUROPEAN car buyers appear reluctant to punish Volkswagen for its emissions scandal, penalizing the German automaker's sales last month no more than some of its mass-market competitors.

The European car market expanded 2.9 percent in October, topping 1.1 million units as growth slowed in all major markets, according to new figures released yesterday by the European carmakers' association ACEA.

The expansion marked the 26th straight month of growth, albeit sluggishly with two of the biggest markets, France and Germany, growing by just 1 percent, and Britain contracting by as much.

Volkswagen remained the top seller, commanding a quarter of the market, in the first full month of figures since it acknowledged cheating on U.S. diesel emissions tests. Volkswagen brand sales slipped 0.2 percent, while all of Volkswagen group sales — including the brands SEAT, Skoda, Porsche, Audi and Lamborghini — dropped 0.5 percent.

By comparison, mass-market competitor PSA Peugeot Citroen saw sales fall 0.9 percent, while Renault sank 0.7 percent.

German luxury carmakers BMW and Daimler posted double-digit increases, up 13 percent and 21 percent respectively. Daimler got a big boost from its Smart, which saw sales rise more than 200 percent to over 8,800 units.

Mass-market carmaker Fiat Chrysler significantly outpaced the market with an 8 percent upswing in sales, led by the Fiat Panda and the 500 compact cars along with the Jeep brand. Alfa Romeo sales, meanwhile, slid. It was the 10th month consecutive that the U.S.-Italian carmaker bettered the market. AP



corporate bits

EASON CHAN COMES TO THE VENETIAN FOR NEW YEAR'S COUNTDOWN



Hong Kong singer Eason Chan will return to The Venetian Macao bringing 'Another

Eason's Life in Macao' to the Cotai Arena with two back-to-back concerts on Dec. 30

and New Year's Eve.

Eason's latest concert series explores the details and nuances of life using an entirely new production, energetic dance routines, and intricately designed costumes. His unique voice and the visual experience are guaranteed to thrill when he belts out his catalogue of smash hits. Tickets for previous concerts sold out very quickly, so fans should book early to avoid disappointment. The New Year's Eve concert will offer an opportunity to welcome in the new year with Eason.

'Another Eason's Life in Macao' will be held at the Cotai Arena on Wednesday, Dec. 30 and Thursday, Dec. 31. Tickets go on sale today.

CAM CHAIRMAN VISITS 4TH MACAU BUSINESS AVIATION EXHIBITION

Ma Iao Hang, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Macau International Airport Co., Ltd. (CAM), and Dr. Deng Jun, Chairman of the Executive Committee, paid a visit to the 4th MBEA accompanied by Macao Convention and Exhibition Association Chairperson Li Zhizhong. With a view to the increasing future business aviation market, Macau International Airport will increase international routes and improve supporting service facilities, so as to promote the multiple development of Macau's civil aviation.

The 4th MBEA was jointly organized by the Macao Convention and Exhibition Association, Nam Kwong (Group) Company Limited, China



Aviation Supplies Holding Limited and China Aviation Supplies Group Corporation, undertaken by China Civil Aviation Technology & Equipment Corporation Limited and

Nam Kwong (Group) International Convention and Exhibition. The three-day exhibition attracted thousands of professional buyers, industry experts and the general public.

Official hopes East Asia summits not to focus on maritime disputes

CHINA hopes the upcoming East Asia leaders' meetings in Malaysia will focus on regional cooperation instead of heightening the South China Sea disputes, said a senior diplomat yesterday.

The leaders' meetings, including the 18th leaders' meeting between China and the ASEAN; the 18th ASEAN-China, Japan and Republic of Korea leaders' meeting; and the 10th East Asia Summit, should concentrate on promoting growth and development amid the economic slowdown, Vice Foreign Minister Liu Zhenmin told a press conference.

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang will fly to Kuala Lumpur to at-

AP PHOTO



Although we don't want to see the South China Sea issue become a hot topic at the summit, it is unavoidable that some countries may take up the matter

LIU ZHENMIN
VICE FOREIGN MINISTER

tend the annual meetings later this week. U.S. President Barack Obama will also participate in the East Asia Summit, and hold a U.S.-ASEAN meeting during his stay.

U.S. National Security Advisor Susan Rice had said that the South China Sea will be a central issue of discussion both at the East Asia Summit and at the ASEAN-U.S. Summit.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe also reportedly plans to raise issues concerning China's construction activities in the South China Sea in Kuala Lumpur.

China has urged the U.S. side to be discreet "to avoid sending wrong signals to regional countries"; and says Japan has

no right to wade into the issue.

"Although we don't want to see the South China Sea issue become a hot topic at the summit, it is unavoidable that some countries may take up the matter," Liu said, noting China will reaffirm its stance in that case.

China hopes all involved in Kuala Lumpur will work together to enhance cooperation in the South China Sea instead of sparking quarrels, said the vice minister.

The meetings are not the appropriate occasion to discuss the South China Sea disputes, according to the Chinese Foreign Ministry, which holds that the issue should be addressed by China and con-

cerned ASEAN members in bilateral channels.

Senior diplomats from China and the ASEAN held their routine meeting on the South China Sea in Chengdu last month.

Song Junying, a researcher with the China Institute of International Studies, said most ASEAN members don't want to linger on the South China Sea issue given their economic ties with China.

"Although the disputes cannot be fully solved in the near future, its negative effect can be managed and controlled," said Song.

During yesterday's press conference, Liu defended China's construction on the Nansha islands, saying it is a

"completely lawful, reasonable and sensible" process that will improve the living conditions of personnel in China's own territory and provide more public good for countries in the region as well as the international community.

The building serves mostly civilian purposes, the vice minister said, denying it would "militarize" the South China Sea amid international claims that China is building military-grade air strips on the islands.

Liu pointed to "some countries making a show of force in the area" as justification for China "taking measures to ensure the safety of its people as well as national security." **Xinhua**

Thailand believed to have deported 2 mainland activists

THE U.N. refugee agency criticized Thailand yesterday for deporting two refugees who were about to be resettled in a third country. Rights groups identified the two as Chinese pro-democracy activists.

The Bangkok office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees did not give the names or nationalities of the two, or the country that granted them asylum. It said it was deeply concerned about the Thai govern-

ment's action, which was taken despite numerous appeals from its office and others.

The U.S. branch of Amnesty International issued a statement Monday identifying them as Jiang Yefei and Dong Guangping, and said they were most likely sent to China on Friday. U.S. government-supported Radio Free Asia gave the same identification.

Thai and Chinese officials were not immediately available for comment.

Radio Free Asia said Jiang is a political cartoonist who was detained and tortured after criticizing China's ruling Communist Party for mishandling relief and recovery efforts after a massive Sichuan earthquake in 2008. It said he has been living in Thailand since fleeing his country, and was granted refugee status by UNHCR in April.

It said Dong was imprisoned for subversion in 2001-2004 and was secretly detained for eight

months in 2014 before fleeing China with his family two months ago.

Thailand was criticized earlier this year for forcibly repatriating more than 100 members of the Uighur minority who had fled China, where they say they face repression. China said some were terrorists and all had left the country illegally. An August bomb blast in central Bangkok that killed 20 people was blamed by Thai police on a criminal gang that allegedly

smuggled Uighurs out of China, but the authorities deny it was revenge for the mass deportation. Suspects in the case have not yet come to trial.

Thailand's military junta, criticized by the United States for toppling an elected government last year, has sought warmer economic and political relations with China.

Thailand has not signed the international agreement pledging to honor U.N. refugee status — which would prevent their involuntary repatriation to their homeland while under threat — although it generally has informally allowed such people to stay here, sometimes in detention

centers.

The latest deportations came shortly after the disappearance of Gui Minghai, a Hong Kong-based book publisher, from his vacation home in Thailand. Three other members of his company, Sage Communications, are reported to have disappeared while visiting mainland China, and all four are believed to be in the custody of the Chinese authorities. The company, taking advantage of Hong Kong's status as a special region with more freedoms than the rest of China, had published books critical of the Communist Party and sold them and others at a bookstore it runs. **AP**

In signal to Beijing, Obama to give 2 ships to Philippines

Josh Lederman
and Kathleen Hennessey, Manila

WITH a towering warship behind him, President Barack Obama announced yesterday that the U.S. will hand over two ships to the Philippine Navy to boost its maritime security capabilities, in a bid to show the U.S. and its allies won't be cowed by China in disputed waters far off its coast.

Obama said the pair of ships — one U.S. Coast Guard cutter, one research vessel — were part of a broader American plan to scale up assistance to naval forces in Southeast Asia, where coastal nations feel threatened by China's aggressive moves to assert control over the South China Sea. Obama said the U.S. had an "ironclad commitment" to the Philippines — a U.S. treaty ally — and a mutual commitment to free and safe navigation at sea.

"More capable navies, in partnership with the United States, are critical to the security of this region," Obama said as



U.S. President Barack Obama talks with Capt. Vince Sibala, Commanding Officer of BRP Gregorio del Pilar, while touring the the Philippine Navy frigate in Manila

he opened a six-day tour of the Philippines and Malaysia. He said the ships would help the Philippines navigate and patrol its territorial waters.

Obama never mentioned China by name as he stood in front of the BRP Gregorio del Pilar, a onetime U.S.-owned frigate, but the intended recipient of his message was clear. As regional tensions with China have sim-

mered in recent years, the U.S. has sought out symbolic ways to counter Beijing's claims in the region without putting itself in direct confrontation with the powerhouse nation.

Earlier this month, U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter boarded a U.S. aircraft carrier plodding through the South China Sea, a week after a U.S. Navy destroyer patrolled wi-

thin seven miles of a reef where China is building an artificial island and has asserted a 12-mile territorial boundary. The U.S. has refused to comply with China's self-proclaimed air defense zone over the South China Sea.

Obama's announcement came at the start of his ninth trip to Asia, and this one, like the others, was designed to illustrate his efforts to strengthen alliances as part of his seven-year campaign to increase U.S. influence in Asia.

"You can count on the United States," the president said.

During back-to-back summits in Manila and Kuala Lumpur, Obama planned a particular focus on touting the Trans-Pacific Partnership that the U.S. recently struck with 11 other nations — China not included. The sweeping free trade agreement is at the heart of Obama's Asia policy, but its prospects for ratification by U.S. lawmakers remain uncertain.

Flanked by U.S. and Philippine troops, Obama said he

would seek to provide another USD140 million in maritime security aid to Southeast Asia next year, although it was unclear whether Congress would approve those funds.

The Philippine government's eagerness for more muscular U.S. military assistance here illustrates how concerns about China appear to have superseded the nation's resentment of its former colonial master and its reluctance to give U.S. troops free reign. Yet while Obama's commitments fall short of what some countries in the region have sought, not all of that is Obama's doing.

Six Asian countries assert overlapping claims to parts of the South China Sea, and Beijing is locked in a parallel dispute with Japan and South Korea over the East China Sea. China views control of the waters, with their abundant underwater oil deposits and strategic shipping lanes, as key to its rise as a major economic and military power.

China's ongoing march in contested waters has become a major tension point with the U.S., joining cyber-spying, human rights and trade disputes. Still, Obama has sought to foster a productive relationship with China, striking major deals with Beijing over climate change. AP

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Jim Gomez, Manila

APEC TALKS

Paris attacks, South China Sea draw focus

ASIA-PACIFIC leaders are voicing outrage over the attacks in Paris as security and geopolitical concerns overshadow talks on trade and the economy at an annual regional summit being held under ultra-tight security in the Philippines.

Leaders of the 21-member Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum are planning to condemn the Paris attacks in a joint statement to be released on the last day of meetings, according to a draft of their declaration seen yesterday by The Associated Press.

"We strongly condemn these atrocities that demand a united voice from the global community. We, therefore, reaffirm our strong collective resolve to counter terrorism," the draft statement says.

The attacks by suspected Islamic State group extremists killed 129 people and wounded 350 others. Victims were from at least 19 nations, according to French President Francois Hollande.

Friction over territorial disputes also was not on the official APEC agenda, whose mission is promoting trade and development. But the rifts were inevitably bursting through APEC's facade of handshakes and unity photo ops.

China's territorial ambitions in disputed waters of the South China Sea were weighing on the minds of foreign ministers who met in Manila ahead of the leaders' summit, which begins today, officials said.

Five APEC countries including the Philippines are at odds with Beijing over conflicting claims to islands in those resource-rich waters.

U.S. officials plan to further



Philippines President Benigno Aquino III, speaks during the opening of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) 2015 CEO Summit in Manila

highlight the territorial disputes during Obama's stop in Manila and later on in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where he is to attend the East Asia Summit, an 18-nation bloc that also includes China and U.S. allies Japan and the Philippines.

The Philippines signed an agreement with Vietnam yesterday to elevate their relationship to a strategic partnership, enabling the countries, which are most at odds with

Beijing in the South China Sea, to deepen trade, maritime and defense cooperation.

Vietnamese President Truong Tan Sang said he and Philippine President Benigno Aquino shared their concerns over recent developments in the South China Sea "affecting trust, peace, security and stability in the region."

"We also reaffirmed the importance of ensuring the stability, maritime security, safety

and freedom of navigation and of flight in the South China Sea," he told reporters.

Before APEC leaders began arriving, officials were divided over whether to issue a statement on the Paris attacks or let each leader speak on his or her own.

After debating behind closed doors over the weekend, they initially forged a compromise: a paragraph on terrorism to be added to the statement released

at the end of the summit tomorrow.

There was a shared desire to call for bringing "to justice those who perpetuated the horrific developments in Paris last Friday," Philippine Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario told reporters.

He said the ministers' comments on the attacks were "personal expressions of sympathy." "Everyone who spoke, spoke the same language," del Rosario said.

One diplomat, however, had rejected any mention of the attacks in the statement, fearing it would draw the Islamic State group's attention to APEC, said a Southeast Asian diplomat who attended the meetings. The diplomat spoke on condition of anonymity because the conversations were not intended to be public.

The U.S. wanted a strong statement.

"This is an attack on the entire civilized world and the entire international community and APEC represents a very important group of countries," said U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken. "It would be, I think, appropriate and necessary for those countries, those economies which are so significant to make a strong statement."

Japan, likewise, favored a strong stance, said deputy government press secretary Koichi Mizushima. **AP**

JAPAN

Tokyo sues Okinawa in US base relocation dispute

Mari Yamaguchi, Tokyo

THE Japanese government took the local government in Okinawa to court yesterday, launching a legal battle in their longstanding dispute over the planned relocation of a U.S. military air base on the southern island.

The lawsuit seeks to overturn Okinawa Gov. Takeshi Onaga's recent decision to cancel an earlier approval for land reclamation for the base's relocation.

The long-stalled plan would move the U.S. Marine Air Station Futenma from a densely populated

neighborhood to a less-populated part of Okinawa, but many residents want the base moved out of the prefecture entirely. They feel Okinawa bears an unfair burden of the U.S. military presence in Japan. The prefecture houses more than half of the 50,000 American troops stationed in Japan and U.S. bases occupy nearly a fifth of the land on its main island.

"The central government's one-sided imposition of the burden of (American) bases on us clearly discriminates against Okinawa," Onaga told reporters. He said the central government's

action is "incomprehensible" to many Okinawan residents and that "I will make the case in court that our position is valid."

The hearing is to begin next month.

Onaga's predecessor approved the land reclamation, but then lost to him in a re-election bid. The central government sued Okinawa after Onaga refused to follow an order from the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism to reinstate approval for the work.

Land and transport minister Keiichi Ishii said Okinawa's resistance only prolongs Futenma's risk to



This aerial photo shows Henoko of Nago city, Okinawa prefecture

its current neighborhood and prevents Japan from keeping its diplomatic

promise to the U.S. Tokyo briefly suspended the reclamation work ear-

lier this year while seeking a compromise but has since resumed it. **AP**

EGYPTIAN AIR CRASH

Russia: Plane brought down by homemade explosive device



In this Sunday, Nov. 1 file photo, Egyptian Military cars approach the wreckage of a passenger jet bound for St. Petersburg in Russia that crashed in Hassana, Egypt

Lynn Berry, Moscow

A homemade explosive device brought down a Russian passenger plane over Egypt last month, the head of Russia's FSB security service said yesterday, telling Russian President Vladimir Putin it's now clear the bombing that killed 224 people was a "terrorist" act. The Islamic State group has

claimed responsibility for downing the Russian plane in written statements, as well as video and audio messages posted on the Internet following the crash.

"According to our experts, a homemade explosive device equivalent to 1 kilogram of TNT went off onboard, which caused the plane to break up in the air, which explains why the fuse-

lage was scattered over such a large territory. I can certainly say that this was a terrorist act," FSB head Alexander Bortnikov said.

He said tests showed the explosives had been produced outside of Russia, but gave no further details.

All of the people on board, most of them Russian tourists, were killed when the Metrojet

Airbus 321-200 crashed over the Sinai Peninsula on Oct. 31, about 23 minutes after taking off from the Red Sea resort city of Sharm el-Sheikh. The plane was headed to St. Petersburg, where most of the passengers were from.

In Cairo, there was no immediate comment on the news from the Egyptian government. State-owned television carried the newsbreak from Moscow, but had no official comment either.

Egypt had resisted British and U.S. assertions that an explosive device was the likely cause of the Russian plane's crash. Later, government officials and the pro-government media shifted their focus away from the cause of the crash to speculating on what they called a Western conspiracy against Egypt and the crushing impact of the crash on the country's vital tourism industry.

Putin vowed to hunt down those responsible for the attack.

"There's no statute of limitations for this. We need to know all of their names," Putin said. "We're going to look for them

everywhere wherever they are hiding. We will find them in any place on Earth and punish them."

The Islamic State group said the attack was retaliation for Russia's air campaign against IS and other groups in Syria, where Moscow wants to preserve the rule of President Bashar Assad.

Putin said yesterday that Russia's air campaign in Syria "should not only be continued but should be intensified so that the criminals realize that retribution is inevitable."

He instructed the Defense Ministry and General Staff to present their suggestions on how Russia's operation in Syria could be modified.

"In this work, including the search to find and punish the criminals, we are relying on all of our friends," Putin said. "We will act in accordance with the U.N. Charter's Article 51, which gives each country the right to self-defense. Everyone who tries to aid the criminals should understand that they will be responsible for giving them shelter." AP

RUSSIA OFFERS USD50M REWARD FOR DOWNED AIRCRAFT INFO

RUSSIA'S FSB security service has offered a USD50 million reward for information leading to the arrest of those responsible for downing the passenger plane over Egypt. FSB director Alexander Bortnikov announced yesterday that a homemade explosive device

had blown apart the aircraft and that it was now clear that it was a "terrorist" act. The FSB later appealed to "Russian and international communities for cooperation in identifying the terrorists" and offered "50 million U.S. dollars" reward.

USA

Refugee quandary: Immigrant legacy vs 9/11-era fears

Calvin Woodward, Washington

THE Paris attacks are rapidly weakening U.S. support for bringing in thousands more Syrian refugees, as pressure grows in Congress and the Republican presidential campaign to reverse course and governors once open to resettlement try to shut their states' doors.

President Barack Obama held firm to current plans Monday (early yesterday, Macau time), appealing to Americans to "not close our hearts" to Syria's victims of war and terrorism and denouncing calls from Republican presidential candidates to favor Syrian Christians over Muslims in the refugee influx. His remarks, at a summit of world leaders in Turkey,



seemed aimed at heading off a wave of anti-Muslim sentiment reminiscent of the 9/11 era, as much as keeping open the pathway for refugees.

America's vision of itself as a welcoming destination for the displaced was colliding with its recent memories of devastation caused by terrorists, all part of a quandary over what to do about the masses of people escaping the brutality of the Syrian conflict, perhaps with ra-

dicals in their midst.

On Monday Texas Gov. Greg Abbott ordered his state's refugee resettlement program not to accept any more Syrians, and some other Republican governors — including two Republican presidential contenders, Govs. John Kasich of Ohio and Bobby Jindal of Louisiana — announced or suggested they were suspending cooperation with Washington on the program, at least

until assured the newcomers were being vetted effectively for security risks. New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie of New Jersey, also a presidential candidate, said not even "orphans under 5" should be let in because the government can't be trusted to check people properly.

Republican lawmakers meanwhile called for suspension of the federal Syrian refugee program and threatened to try to stop it in legislation that must pass by Dec. 11 to keep the government running. New House Speaker Paul Ryan neither endorsed nor ruled out that course.

Likewise, other Republican presidential candidates, already skeptical if not hostile to the refugee-welcoming plan before the attacks, stepped up their rhetoric against

it. Billionaire Donald Trump said that, rather than allowing refugees into the country, the U.S. should build "a big, beautiful safe zone" in Syria where refugees can wait out their brutal civil war. He'd been among the first to warn that the refugee crisis could represent a "Trojan horse" with terrorists infiltrating the ranks of innocent refugees.

Calls by Republican rivals Texas Sen. Ted Cruz and former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush to give preference to Christian refugees from Syria prompted a sharp rebuke from Obama. "Shameful," he said. "We don't have a religious test for our compassion."

Yet Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders expressed support for Obama's position. "We will not turn our back on refugees," the Vermont senator

said at a campaign event in Cleveland.

At the heart of the debate is the Obama administration's decision to raise the nation's annual limit of 70,000 refugees by 10,000, with most of the new slots for Syrians, in the budget year that started Oct. 1.

But indications that at least one of the attackers who killed 129 people in Paris may have crossed into France within the influx of refugees have given critics of Obama's plan a footing to demand a cutoff.

"Until we can sort out the bad guys, we must not be foolish," Republican presidential contender Ben Carson, a retired neurosurgeon, said after a Nevada campaign swing Monday. And he said of Syrians already in the U.S., "I would watch them very carefully." AP



French President Francois Hollande, left, welcomes US Secretary of State John Kerry upon arrival at the Elysee Palace



Flowers adorned with a mourning band in the colors of the French flag are seen outside the Bataclan concert hall, in Paris

Thomas Adamson, Paris

PARIS ATTACKS

France seeks EU security aid, launches new airstrikes on IS

FRANCE made an unprecedented demand for its European Union allies to support its military action against the Islamic State group as it launched new airstrikes on the militants' Syrian stronghold, days after attacks in Paris linked to the group killed at least 129 people.

France invoked a never-before-used article of the EU's Lisbon Treaty obliging members of the 28-nation bloc to give "aid and assistance by all the means in their power" to a member country that is "the victim of armed aggression on its territory."

French Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said EU partners could help "either by taking part in France's operations in Syria or Iraq, or by easing the load or providing support for France in other operations."

French military spokesman Col. Gilles Jaron said the latest airstrikes in the Islamic State group's de-facto capital of Raqqa destroyed a command post and training camp. On Monday, President Francois Hollande vowed to forge a united coalition capable of defeating the jihadists at home and abroad.

The Paris attacks on Friday, claimed by IS, have galvanized international determination to confront the militants.

Hollande has said the victims came from at least 19 nations, and the international community, led by the U.S. and Russia, must overcome their deep-seated divisions over Syria to destroy IS on its home turf.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry flew to France as a gesture of solidarity and met

Hollande and Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius yesterday.

Standing with Hollande at the Elysee Palace, Kerry said the carnage in the French capital on Friday, along with recent attacks in Egypt, Lebanon and Turkey, made it clear that more pressure must be brought to bear on the Islamic extremists.

Kerry said, "we have to step up our efforts to hit them at the core where they're planning these things and also obviously to do more on borders in terms the movement of people."

Earlier, he told U.S. Embassy staff Friday's attacks were an assault on civilization and common decency.

"This is just raw terror," he said, vowing that the campaign against IS will succeed. "We will end the scourge of Daesh," he said, referring to the group by its Arabic acronym.

Addressing lawmakers Mon-

day after France observed a minute's silence to honor the dead and the 350 wounded, Hollande said "Friday's acts of war were decided and planned in Syria."

"They were organized in Belgium and perpetrated on our soil with French complicity with one specific goal: to sow fear and to divide us," Hollande told parliament in a rare joint session convened at the Palace of Versailles.

Hollande said Syria has become "the biggest factory of terrorism the world has ever known and the international community is still too divided and too incoherent."

French and other Western intelligence agencies face an urgent challenge to track down the surviving members of the three Islamic State units who inflicted the unprecedented bloodshed in France and, perhaps more importantly, to target their distant commanders in IS-controlled parts of Syria.

A French security official said anti-terror intelligence officials had identified Abdelhamid Abaaoud, a Belgian of Moroccan descent, as chief architect of the attacks on a rock concert, a soccer game and popular nightspots in one of Paris' trendiest districts.

The official cited chatter from IS figures that Abaaoud had recommended a concert as an ideal target for inflicting

maximum casualties, as well as electronic communications between Abaaoud and one of the Paris attackers who blew himself up.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive investigation.

Abaaoud came to public attention last year by boasting in an IS propaganda video about his pride in piling the dead bodies of "infidel" enemies into a trailer. Anti-terror agencies previously linked him to a series of abortive shooting plots this year in Belgium and France, including a planned attack on a passenger train that was thwarted by American passengers who overpowered the lone gunman.

French police have used emergency powers to conduct almost 300 searches since Sunday night that netted 127 arrests and 31 weapons.

Interior Minister Bernard

Cazeneuve said yesterday that police carried out 128 police raids overnight, as he conceded that "the majority of those who were involved in this attack were unknown to our services."

Police have seized a Kalashnikov assault rifle, three automatic pistols and a bulletproof vest from a suspected arms dealer with jihadist sympathies, and a rocket launcher and other military-grade gear from his parents' home.

But police have yet to announce the capture of anyone suspected of direct involvement in Friday's slaughter. Seven attackers died — six after detonating suicide belts and a seventh from police gunfire — but Iraqi intelligence officials told The Associated Press that its sources indicated 19 participated in the attack and five others provided hands-on logistical support. **AP**

This is just raw terror. We will end the scourge of Daesh [IS]

JOHN KERRY

UN EXPERT: ATTACKS MAY BE CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY

A UNITED Nations human rights expert says the attacks in Paris "may constitute a crime against humanity." Karima Bennouna, a professor at the University of California-Davis School of Law appointed by the U.N. as an expert on cultural rights issues, said in a statement yesterday that the claims of responsibility from the Islamic State demonstrate a "hate-

ful worldview motivating this violence." She says the attacks "viciously and deliberately targeted sites of arts and leisure where people come together to enjoy their cultural rights." Bennouna says an attacker's cry of "Allahu Akbar," or "God is great," "grossly misuses a religious pronouncement sacred to hundreds of millions of Muslim believers around the world."

what's ON



AFA AUTUMN SALON 2015
TIME: 10pm-7pm (Closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: November 28, 2015
VENUE: Casa Garden Orient Foundation
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6064

INK WASH OF THE FORBIDDEN CITY
– PAINTINGS BY CHARLES CHAUDELOT
TIME: 10am-7pm
 (no admittance after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: June 19, 2016
VENUE: Macau Museum of Art,
 Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
ADMISSION: MOP5
 (Free on Sundays and public holidays)
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

NOTABLE COUPLE – ARTEFACTS FROM SUN WAN, DR. SUN YAT-SEN'S SECOND DAUGHTER, AND HER HUSBAND, TAI ENSAI
TIME: 10am-6pm (Ticket booth closes 5:30pm; Closed on Mondays; Open on public holidays)
UNTIL: January 10, 2016
VENUE: Exhibition Gallery, 3rd floor, Macau Museum, No. 112 Praceta do Museu de Macau
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 7911

THE ART OF LINGNAN SCHOOL
– CHINESE PAINTINGS BY LAI MING
TIME: 10am-7pm
 (No admission after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: December 6, 2015
VENUE: Macau Museum of Art,
 Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
ADMISSION: MOP5
 (Free on Sundays and public holidays)
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

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

Offbeat

SAUDI ARABIA CRACKS CASE OF SMUGGLED BEER DISGUISED AS PEPSI



Customs officials in Saudi Arabia say they've cracked a case — and then some — of smugglers trying to bring illicit cans of beer through the kingdom by disguising them as Pepsi.

In a statement, customs officials say they intercepted 48,000 cans of beer moving through the al-Batha border crossing with the United Arab Emirates.

In video posted last week on Twitter, the customs officials show an officer using a box cutter to open a wrapped 24-pack of the fake Pepsi only to find the green-and-white Heineken cans beneath it.

Drinking or possessing alcohol is a criminal offense in the ultra-conservative Sunni kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	Non-Daily Portuguese News
14:58	Q & A on the policy report for 2016
18:10	Trail of Lies (Repeated)
19:00	TDM Interview (Repeat)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Montra do Lilau
21:40	Survivors of the Great Migration
22:10	Trail of Lies
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Action
00:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

cinema

CINETEATRO

12 Nov - 18 Nov

RETURN OF THE CUCKOO

ROOM 1

2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Patrick Kong

Starring: Chi Lam Cheung, Chairmaine Sheh

Language: Cantonese (Chinese/English)

Duration: 86min



007 - SPECTRE

ROOM 2

2.00, 4.45, 9.30 pm

Director: Sam Mendes

Starring: Daniel Craig, Christoph Waltz, Léa Seydoux

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 148min

SHE REMEMBERS, HE FORGETS

ROOM 2

7.30 pm

Director: Wong Say Ping

Starring: Miriam Yeung, Jan Lamb

Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)

Duration: 110min

OUR TIMES

ROOM 3

4.15, 7.00 pm

Director: Ding Sheng

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

Language: Mandarin (English/Cantonese)

Duration: 134min

GO AWAY MR. TUMOR

ROOM 3

4.45, 9.30 pm

Director: Hang Yan

Starring: Fay Bai, Daniel Wu

Language: Mandarin (Cantonese/English)

Duration: 86min

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



2000 HOLLYWOOD MEETS WALES IN 'WEDDING OF YEAR'

The film world has celebrated the celebrity wedding of the year in New York, as Hollywood leading man Michael Douglas married Welsh actress Catherine Zeta Jones.

The lavish ceremony took place in New York's Plaza Hotel and cost an estimated £1.5 million.

Crowds of well-wishers and photographers lined the street outside and guests waved before walking into the Plaza ballroom where the ceremony was to be held.

Catherine Zeta Jones, 31, exchanged vows with Michael Douglas, 56, in a ceremony shrouded in secrecy due to a reputed £1m exclusive deal with OK! Magazine.

Security was so tight guests had to show their hologrammed invitations before being allowed in and private photographs were banned.

The Welsh dragon fluttered alongside the American stars and stripes above the hotel entrance, and the wedding feast featured Welsh lamb.

Even the wedding ring came from a family jeweller in Aberystwyth.

The best man was Cameron Douglas, Michael Douglas's 21-year-old son from his first marriage.

Also taking a starring role was Dylan, the couple's three-month-old son, who spent most of the ceremony asleep.

A party of 30 family and friends were flown to the US from the Welsh valleys, including Miss Zeta Jones's mother, Pat, and her father, Dai, a retired sweet salesman.

Her grandmother, from whom she gets the name Zeta, was also flown to New York although the 85-year-old is still recovering from two recent operations.

The family rubbed shoulders with the groom's father, veteran actor Kirk Douglas, 83, as well as film stars Sir Sean Connery, Jack Nicholson, Sharon Stone, Sir Michael Caine, Christopher Reeve and Danny DeVito.

As he arrived, Mr Douglas senior gave his blessing to the marriage, remarking, "I'd marry her myself, but my wife won't let me."

Catherine Zeta Jones was born on a housing estate in the Welsh seaside town of Mumbles.

She first hit the headlines as a TV star in the ITV drama *The Darling Buds of May*, before heading to America to star in films such as *The Mask of Zorro*.

Her new husband, Michael Douglas, is one of Hollywood's most bankable stars, from one of its oldest acting dynasties. He has starred in hit films such as *Romancing the Stone* and *Wall Street*.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Despite the high security, photographers from Hello! Magazine gatecrashed the wedding and took surreptitious pictures.

Immediately after the wedding the couple were granted a court injunction banning the publication of the unauthorised photos but this was lifted on appeal.

Catherine Zeta Jones and Michael Douglas then sued the magazine. After a three-year legal battle, they won a partial victory when a judge ruled Hello! had breached their commercial confidence, although he said it did not breach their privacy.

They were awarded damages of £14,600, and at a later hearing were also awarded more than 75% of the £4m they spent suing the magazine.

In the same court case, OK! Magazine won damages of more than £1m, but this was overturned on appeal, and the magazine ordered to pay back damages, costs and interests amounting to nearly £2m. This ruling has in turn been challenged, and the two rival magazines remain locked in a legal battle through the courts.

In April 2003 Catherine Zeta Jones gave birth to her second child, a daughter, Carys.

Also in 2003, she won an Oscar for her performance in the musical movie *Chicago*.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Hey there - slow down! You're moving way too fast for the day's pokey energy...

Taurus April 20-May 20 You need to see things a little differently today - so make sure that you're really listening and even seeking out new opinions.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 You can't just sit back and expect everything to start making sense on its own - you've got to try new things!

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 People are looking for fights today - and at least one may deliberately misinterpret something you say in order to get riled up.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 You need to pay careful attention today - someone is trying to signal you, but they are doing so in a roundabout fashion.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You can achieve almost anything today - your personal energy is perfectly primed, and your ambitions are exactly in line with your destiny.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 You are having some very strange emotions floating through your heart today - but you can take the pressure! Just let them pass by as you deal with life as it really is.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Your social graces are hyperactive today - you may make new friends just with a gaze and a smile.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 It's time to put something away for retirement - or for the proverbial rainy day. Even if you feel totally strapped, your energy is just right for rearranging priorities to think long-term.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You get some good news today - or you create it yourself! Your terrific personal energy helps you to rack up some new accomplishment that people are sure to be talking about for some time to come.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 A new rule or authority figure comes into play today - and you need to just accept it for the time being.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 You need to deal with your new friends today - maybe the ones you don't yet know you have! Someone (or a group) is looking out for your best interests, so seek them out and thank them!

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzles categorized by difficulty: Easy, Easy+, Medium, and Hard. Each category contains a 9x9 grid with some numbers pre-filled.

WEATHER

Weather forecast table with columns for MIN, MAX, and CONDITION. Rows include CHINA (Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, etc.) and WORLD (Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, etc.).

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Mozart's '... kleine Nachtmusik'; 5- Ph.D. hurdles; 10- Misfortunes; 14- One of a matching pair; 15- Composure; 16- Internet writing system that popularized 'pwn3d' and 'n00b'; 17- Grasp; 18- Favorable bias; 20- Ahead of time; 22- Arranged in zones; 23- Rubbed out; 25- Third Gospel; 26- Lines of descent; 27- And not; 28- Gilbert of 'Roseanne'; 32- Resistance units; 33- Lush; 35- Type of gun; 36- Vientiane native; 37- Hwy.; 38- Make lace; 39- Part of MIT; 41- ... Dame; 43- Type of ranch; 44- Woodland animal; 45- Unspecified quantity; 46- Kaput; 48- Ratio words; 50- Scanty; 51- Fruit ice; 54- One on track?; 55- Deputy; 57- ... a -Sketch; 61- '... She Lovely?'; 62- Rate; 63- Lab fluids; 64- Sneaky guy?; 65- Campaign tactic; 66- Puts into words;

DOWN: 1- Biblical verb ending; 2- ... Jima; 3- Zip; 4- Makes beloved; 5- Persecute; 6- Author Dahl; 7- Breezy; 8- D-Day craft; 9- An instance of seizing; 10- Ailment; 11- 'Star Wars' princess; 12- Riga resident; 13- Eye sore; 19- Fine; 21- Nile biter; 23- Flammable gas; 24- Full of crevices; 25- One in second, say; 26- Not hollow; 27- Bonkers; 29- Bring into harmony; 30- Person with a paper, perhaps; 31- Chipped in; 34- Maine college town; 40- Testimonial; 41- Chats; 42- Kind of set; 43- Deviate; 47- Abu Dhabi's fed.; 49- Harden; 50- Craze; 51- Fall prey to a banana peel, say; 52- Seine tributary; 53- Hire; 54- Appraise; 56- 'Miss Saigon' setting; 58- Green or black, e.g.; 59- Weep; 60- Contains;



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222
Water Supply - Report 1990 992
PJ (Open line) 993
Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333
Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944
S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
IACM 28 387 333
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BELGIUM called off yesterday's soccer match against Spain less than 24 hours before kickoff after the government raised the security threat level amid an investigation related to the Paris attacks.

The Belgian football federation said the decision was taken late Monday after the government recommended that the game not be played.

"After consulting with the relevant bodies and the Spanish national team, the (Belgian FA) decided to cancel the match," the federation said in a statement. "Right at the end of the evening, the (federation) was contacted by the government which recommended that the Belgium-Spain match should not go ahead tomorrow night.

FEARBALL

Belgium calls off Spain game after raised security alert



Belgian police guard a street in Brussels

France played England at Wembley Stadium in London

"It is in the context of a new elevated terrorist alert and the current pursuit of a suspect."

France has identified a Belgian man as the mastermind of the Paris attacks that killed 129 peo-

ple on Friday. His current whereabouts are unknown. A major police operation took place in the Brussels neighborhood of Molenbeek on Monday, although it failed to yield any arrests related to the attacks.

The Ministry of the Interior's Crisis Center had raised the threat level earlier Monday, re-

commending the cancellation of the match on its website.

"We deeply regret that such a friendly match between two motivated teams had to be cancelled so late and we understand the disappointment of numerous fans," the federation statement added. "However, taking into account these exceptional circum-

stances, we couldn't take any risk in the matter of the security of our players and supporters."

France played England at Wembley Stadium in London today (Macau time) after the countries decided to go ahead with that game. (The match wasn't finished by press time.)

The game in Brussels was set to pit the No. 1-ranked team in the world — Belgium — against the two-time defending European

champion Spain in a warm-up match ahead of next year's Euro 2016 tournament.

Before the cancellation, the Spain players had said they weren't worried about the security situation.

"If we're going it's because it's safe, we're calm," Spain defender Marc Bartra said.

Belgium is also set to host the Davis Cup final against Britain in Ghent later this month. **AP**

DEL BOSQUE: SPANISH PLAYERS WANTED TO PLAY FRIENDLY

SPAIN COACH Vicente Del Bosque says his players were keen to play the friendly against Belgium and were disappointed with its cancellation because of security concerns. Belgium called off the game after the local government raised the security threat level amid an investigation related to last week's Paris attacks.

Del Bosque said the players were

"calm and wanted to play," but understood the reasons for the cancellation. He said nobody involved in the match liked it, but nothing could be done because "it was a matter of security."

There were high expectations for the friendly, which featured FIFA's top-ranked team — Belgium — and two-time defending European champion, Spain.

MACAU HAS FOLLOWERS

Bangkok's botched half-marathon offers T-shirt apology

THEY ran an extra 4 miles on their half-marathon. And now all they're getting is a lousy T-shirt.

The peace offering came after runners vented anger on social media following Sunday's Standard Chartered Bangkok Half-Marathon, which was mistakenly extended by almost 7 kilometers. An error by race officials along the route meant participants ran 27.6 kilometers, rather than the usual 21 kilometers.

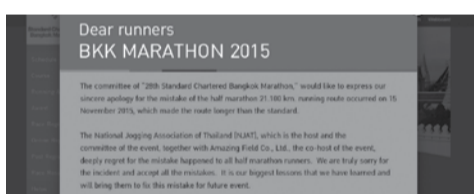
Some 6,000 runners took part in the race and everyone — even those who couldn't finish it — will get a special jersey to

wear like a badge of pride, said Songkram Kraison, vice president of the Jogging Association of Thailand, one of the event's two organizers.

"The T-shirt will say, 'Finisher of 27.6 km,'" Songkram told The Associated Press. "The shirts are meant to apologize and also to honor runners who ran in the longer version of the half-marathon."

The Jogging Association of Thailand's website posted a statement yesterday saying it will send the shirts by mail within 45 days.

The race looped through Bangkok's



An apologetic pop-window when accessing the organizers' website

historic district, past the Grand Palace, monuments and Buddhist temples, with half-marathon participants sharing the route with full-marathon runners until a specified turn-off. That's where the error

occurred, according to organizers, who said officials stationed along the route accidentally directed half-marathon runners to make a U-turn at the wrong spot, which added the extra miles.

"We deeply regret this unfortunate mistake," the Jogging Association of Thailand said in an apology letter posted in Thai and English on websites and Facebook pages connected with the event. "We admit our mistake and would like to apologize."

The T-shirt is meant to "express our admiration for your spirit in bravely overcoming the obstacles," the letter said. **AP**

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opinion

Made in Macao

Jenny Lao-Phillips



CELEBRATION OF FOODS

It was quite surprising to hear the sound of a small explosion somewhere in Macau on Black Friday. At once, I realized, being Macau, it must be the fireworks. What are we celebrating again? Being used to identify information on certain events, I consulted the mighty Facebook, and found my answer immediately - opening of the Macao Food Festival. Well, that deserves some fireworks. How often can we find various kinds of cuisines gathered in one place, while having the opportunity to taste food from different restaurants just steps away from each other? Wait a minute, this is Macau, isn't every day a food festival?

I recall when the Food Festival was first celebrated fifteen years ago that it was quite an exciting event for local citizens. I went to the Sai Wan Lake Square almost every day, one day with classmates, another day with friends, and then with family, and we saw the same faces patronizing the Food Festival there quite often. There seemed to be so much food we wanted to try, but we couldn't try it all in one day. What's more, everything was relatively inexpensive, allowing students like us to enjoy what we normally couldn't afford. But then years later, the excitement was gone.

So, to be more objective, I ran a quick survey with students and friends, and there seems to be quite a few reasons why the Food Festival does not appeal to local citizens as much as it previously did.

Firstly, access to the Nam Van Lake Square during the days of the Food Festival is a nightmare. Aside from walking, there seems to be no other way of getting to the location without attending in a bad mood. There are many buses that take us to the Macao Tower, and there is a shuttle bus dedicated to the Food Festival, but not only is it difficult to board one of these forms of public transportation, it takes more time to get there using these means than to walk. Not to mention the difficulty for drivers to find parking spaces. And then, when we get there, even walking around the venue is a traffic jam.

Moreover, the choices at the Food Festival are seen as quite a disappointment. Fifteen years ago, there were new things to try; we were able to try samples from some small food and beverage outlets with which we weren't previously familiar. But after several years, the selection is still the same. There are a large number of food booths from the same food chains offering similar food, but at a higher price than what they charge at their restaurants. Even those that do not belong to the food corporations, were the same as the year before that, and the year before that, just increasing in cost.

Fifteen years ago, some of these small restaurants were not well-known, and the Food Festival served as a good platform for them to promote themselves. Ten years later, these SMEs don't really need the Food Festival for promotional purposes anymore. I was shocked to find the food sold at the festival more expensive than in their own shops.

Of course, there are new offerings. Every year the organizers invite participants from nearby countries to provide their local cuisine. But I don't believe this is attractive for local citizens who quite often travel to those countries for vacation. Isn't it better to try local Korean, Japanese or Thai cuisine in Korea, Japan or Thailand than at the Food Festival in Macao?

Perhaps I should give the Food Festival this year the benefit of the doubt and try taking a stroll around the venue. Who knows? Maybe after five years I may find some new restaurants or new dishes that make my trip worth the while. However, I would prefer walking around town, buying street food and local delicacies from lesser-known traditional small shops, enjoying my own version of the food festival in Macau.

THE BUZZ US: POLICE STOP GOOGLE SELF-DRIVING CAR FOR GOING TOO SLOWLY

A car built by Google that drives itself around city streets had a brush with the law for driving too slowly.

A police officer in the tech giant's Silicon Valley hometown pulled over the prototype car Thursday because it was going a traffic-tying 24 mph in a 35 mph zone. The officer spoke with the person in the driver's seat but issued no citation, according to the Mountain View Police Department.

Though the car was driving itself, state law requires a person to be able to intervene when the technology is tested on public roads.

The officer wanted to "learn more about how the car was choosing speeds along certain roadways and to educate the operators about impeding traffic," according to a department blog post.

The bubble-shaped prototype has two seats. Its top speed is 25 mph.

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

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

KOREAS North Korea yesterday sent back a South Korean man it held for about six weeks for entering the country illegally, South Korean officials said. The 48-year-old, who was sent by the North through the border village of Panmunjom, is currently being investigated by South Korean officials over why he entered the North without government permission, said an official from Seoul's Unification Ministry, who didn't want to be named, citing office rules.

INDIA'S Supreme Court orders a state government to remove a wood-burning crematorium from near the Taj Mahal to protect the monument from pollution damage.

AUSTRALIA-DENMARK The European Broadcasting Union says Australia has been invited to submit an entry to next year's Eurovision Song Contest, taking place in Stockholm. Spokesman Jon Ola Sand says in a statement the glitzy song fest "has the potential to evolve organically into a truly global event," adding Australian attendance "is an exciting step in that direction." Australia competed in the 60th edition in Vienna in May as a one-off celebration because of its "long tradition of broadcasting the show."

GREECE A strong earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of at least 6.1 hit the western Greek island of Lefkada yesterday, killing two people and causing extensive damage to infrastructure and buildings on Lefkada and nearby islands.

RUSSIA-SYRIA Russia's defense minister says Russian warplanes have fired cruise missiles on militant positions in Syria's Idlib and Aleppo provinces. Sergei Shoigu also told a briefing conducted for President Vladimir Putin yesterday that bombers hit Islamic State positions in Raqqa and Der-ez-Zor.

GERMANY'S top security official has downplayed possible links between arrests near the western city of Aachen and the investigation of the Paris attacks. Police said SWAT teams arrested a man and two women in the town of Alsdorf yesterday after authorities received a tip from the public that the man might be Salah Abdeslam, a key suspect sought in the attacks. Police later arrested two more persons in the town. Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere told reporters in Berlin that it wasn't clear how the people might be linked to the Paris attacks, if at all, "but sadly it's not the man that everyone hoped it would be."

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Hong Kong's Jean Jacques Kilama, second left, celebrates with teammates after drawing with China at the 2018 World Cup Asian qualifying match in Hong Kong

BASIC DRAW

China World Cup hopes damaged in Hong Kong

CHINA'S hopes of reaching the 2018 World Cup were dealt a huge blow yesterday as it was held to a 0-0 draw in Hong Kong in a tense Group C encounter.

The result means that China, looking to add to its only appearance at the tournament in 2002, is now seven points behind group leaders Qatar and three adrift of Hong Kong in second with two games remaining in the second round of qualification.

Only the eight group winners and four best second-place teams will progress to the last stage of Asia's road to Russia.

China hit the woodwork twice and had a goal controversially disallowed but just could not find a way past a resolute Hong Kong backline. Now the world's most populous nation, currently in third place in the group, has to win its remaining two games in a bid to become one of the four best runners-up. That result enabled Qatar to confirm top spot and a place in the final stage with a 3-0 win, a sixth successive victory, over Bhutan.

For the first time, Hong Kong and mainland fans have used separate entrances, HK Football Association Chief Executive Mark Sutcliffe told BBC News.

They were also segregated - standard practice for football matches in most parts of the world, but a novelty in Hong Kong.

"Fans from both sides will be clearly separated, even using different washrooms. There are very few opportunities for them to clash inside the stadium," the association's chairman Brian Leung told journalists ahead of the match.

Mongkok Stadium can hold around 6,000 spectators but mainland Chinese fans were allocated only 500 tickets, according to officials.

Tickets reserved for local fans sold out quickly, with the website of an online ticket seller reportedly crashing under the weight of high demand.

Elsewhere, Asia's major powers all recorded comfortable victories, AP reported yesterday.

A first-half Tim Cahill hat-trick helped Australia to a 4-0 win over Bangladesh in Dhaka.

Despite arriving in Bangladesh the day before the game due to security concerns, it was an easy win for the Socceroos against a team it defeated 5-0 in Perth in September.

Cahill opened the scoring after just six minutes

and the former Everton star completed his three-goal haul 31 minutes later. There was still time before the break for Mile Jedinak of Crystal Palace to add a fourth.

Australia now has 15 points from six games in Group B.

South Korea made it six wins out of six. Two goals each for Son Heung-min of Tottenham Hotspur and Swansea City's Ki Sung-yeung, helped the Taeguk Warriors to a 5-0 win over Laos while Japan won 2-0 in Cambodia.

Despite missing captain Andranik Teymourian and three other players reportedly due to visa issues, Iran thrashed Guam 6-0.

Media reports in Tehran said some players and staff were unable to enter Guam, but Carlos Queiroz's Iran squad had few difficulties on the field.

Mehdi Taremi opened the scoring after 12 minutes and Iran, aiming to reach a fifth World Cup, dominated throughout the game to move three points ahead of Oman in the group.

Elsewhere, North Korea defeated Bahrain 2-0, Saudi Arabia thrashed Timor Leste 10-0, Syria won 2-1 in Singapore and Iraq won 2-0 in Taiwan. **MDT/Agencies**