



ADMINISTRATIVE REVAMP GOES AHEAD

Some services under IACM management, namely those in the area of culture, recreation and sports, will now be managed by the IC and ID

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QANTAS HALTS GREYHOUND FREIGHT SERVICES

Australian airline Qantas has said in a social media post that it will no longer provide freight services for greyhounds in Asia

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FOSUN CEO ASSISTING PROBE AFTER REPORTED MISSING

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WORLD BRIEFS



FRANCE Marine Le Pen's (pictured) anti-immigration National Front was the frontrunner heading into the decisive second round of French regional elections yesterday, and now it's up to voters whether to hand the once-pariah party an unprecedented political victory.



FRANCE British street artist Banksy has taken on the migrant crisis in a new mural at a migrant camp in France. The elusive graffiti artist has depicted the late Apple guru Steve Jobs — whose biological father was from Syria — carrying a black garbage bag and an early model of the Macintosh computer.

CHILE A helicopter working for an MTV reality show crashed in western Argentina on Saturday and both people on board were killed, local authorities said.

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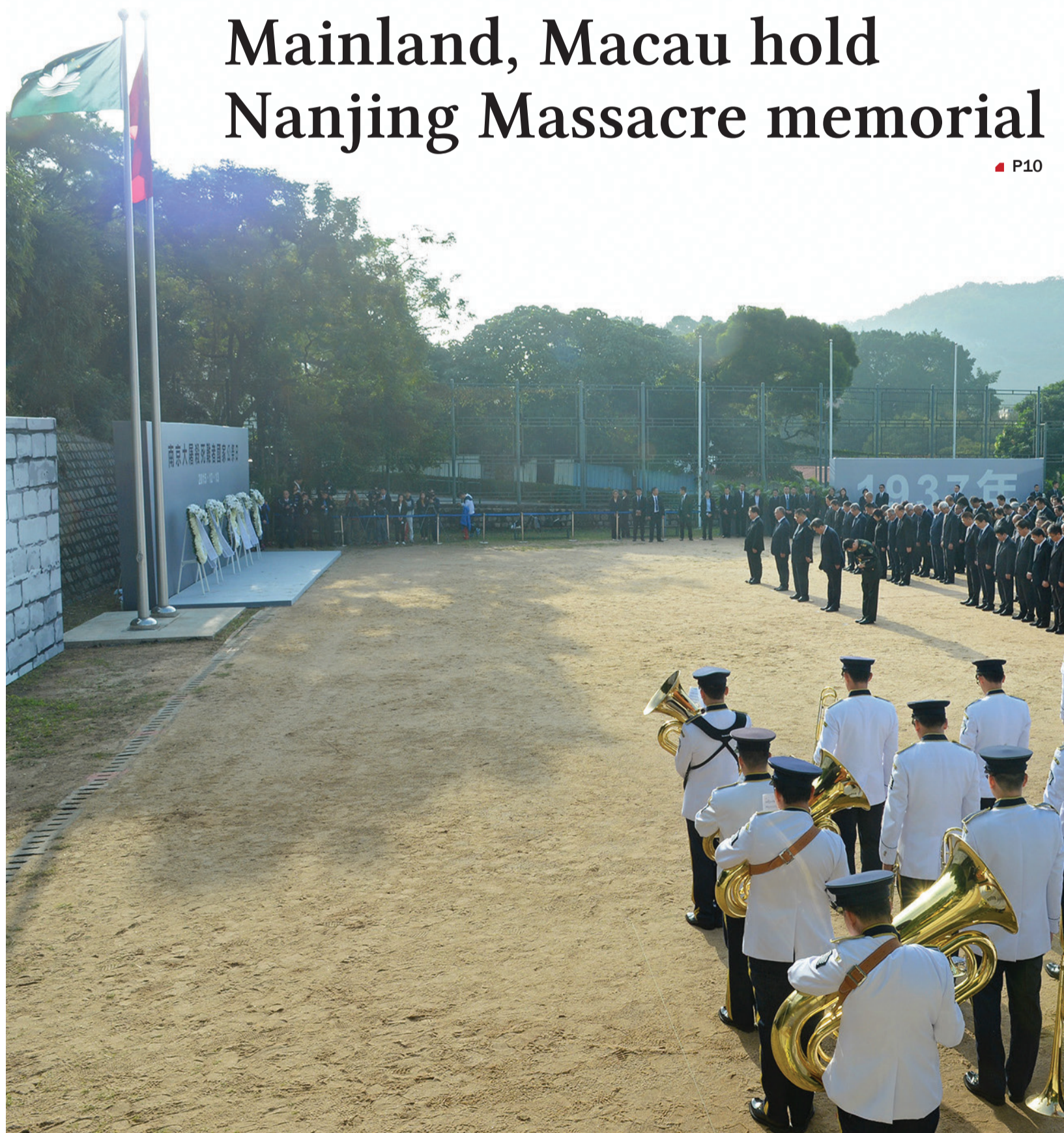
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China to loosen stringent urban residency rules . P10

Mainland, Macau hold Nanjing Massacre memorial

P10



Renato Marques

THE Executive Council (ExCo) has concluded an analysis of the administrative regulations that will change the practices of three government institutions. In a press conference held on Friday at government headquarters, ExCo spokesperson Leong Heng Teng revealed that the new powers of the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM), the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), and the Macau Sport Development Board (ID) will be published soon in the Official Gazette and will become effective from January 1.

As explained by Mr Leong, the purpose of these measures is to “implement the policy of rationalization of staff and administrative simplification.” As a result, some services previously under IACM management, namely those in the area of culture, recreation and sports, will now be managed by the IC and ID.

After the revamp, IC’s internal structure will expand to consist of eight departments and sixteen divisions. One of the highlights among other relevant changes is the creation of a new Department for Administrative and Finance Management.

New features also include the creation of the Division for Cultural Heritage Protection and the Studies and Projects Division, which will be tasked with “proposing movable and immovable property of cultural interest for [heritage] classification.” A new Planning and Development Division for the Cultural and Creative Industries will also be created. IC’s new structure will employ a total of 253 staff members. From these, 249 are coming from the IACM.

ID is the other institution to expand. The department will

ExCo concludes administrative revamp analysis



IACM's headquarters

even experience a change to its designation (Chinese title only) losing the “development” dimension to its name and becoming only “Sport Board.” Similarly, the “Sport Development Fund” will become “Sport

Fund.”

More importantly, the service headed by José Tavares will acquire several new mandates. For example, ID will be required “to ensure the application in Macau of the international

convention against doping in sport.” They will also be “defin[ing] physical activities and sport programs [suitable] for the participation of people with special needs” in order to promote sports for people with di-

sabilities.

ID’s structure will grow to five departments and eleven divisions, while its staff will grow to 68 people, 17 of whom will be coming from IACM and 29 from the extinct Macau Grand Prix Committee.

The bureau will experience the most changes in terms of number of new departments (3). The new additions will be the Centre for High-Performance Athletes Training, a new Department for Administrative and Finance Management, and the new Department of the Macau Grand Prix and Major Sports Events.

Aside from these three major departments, the Sports Medicine Center will support the Macau Committee Against Doping in Sport in order to help ID fulfill its new responsibilities.

ID president ‘confident’ in successful Grand Prix

THE ID’s president, Mr José Tavares, has expressed that he is “confident in a successful staging of the coming Macau Grand Prix.” The comment was made on the sidelines of Friday’s press conference, in which he announced the public department’s administrative revamp.

Mr Tavares explained that the new structure, created under the Department of the Macau Grand Prix and Major Sports Events, will create “important synergy” among ID current staff and the new staff coming across from the Macau Grand Prix Committee. For several years, the current team has been responsible for organizing various sporting events such as the Marathon, the Dragon Boat Regattas and the Volleyball Grand Prix. They will now benefit from the added value of 29 new staff members from the committee.

“I think it’s a challenge for the ID, but it is also a way of making decisions more easily, because if we are responsible for organizing all the sports events, our negotiating power is totally different, even with regard to the sponsors,” he said.

The bureau’s president also explained the organisation’s new responsibilities regarding doping prevention and punishment. He justified these new measures by citing China’s signing of the convention against doping in sports, which grants added responsibilities and powers to Macau. “Since we are not a full member, before we could only delegate the power to punish athletes involved in doping cases to the international federations. Now we can also apply our own preventive and punitive measures,” he added.

The president also stated that not many



José Tavares

cases of “doping” have been recorded in Macau-based sports. He recalled that, in the last few years, there have been only two doping-related cases, both of which occurred in the sport of bodybuilding.

Monetary authority rolls out monitoring system

THE Monetary Authority of Macau (AMCM) announced on Friday that it would implement a new real-time monitoring system for mainland bank cards. According to a press release, the scheme is being set up to further promote the security and

sustainable development of the MSAR’s financial system.

The monitoring system will verify the relationship between cardholder and card in the process of acquiring goods or services. In order to mitigate the possible side-effects

of illegal cross-border activities such as money laundering, AMCM has asked banks to exercise enhanced due diligence, perform ongoing monitoring and to provide further training to their staff. In addition, they will be required to regu-

larly submit information on “high-risk” merchants and suspicious transactions.

The system will be rolled out in a number of stages. The first will see the monitoring of high-risk merchants near casinos, most of which are jewelry and

watch merchants. Others will then be brought into the system’s scope during the second phase – notably bank cards such as Visa and MasterCard.

The authority says that, in view of the comparatively high turnover incurred, China Union Pay

cards and their related transactions will be included in the first stage.

The implementation of the new system will help Macau fulfill its obligations as a member of the Asia-Pacific Group on Money Laundering, the authority said on Friday.

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MANAGING EDITOR Paulo Barbosa paulo.barbosa@macaudailytimes.com
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS Eric Sauttedé, Leanda Lee, Severo Portela
CHINA & FOREIGN EDITOR Vanessa Moore vanessa@macaudailytimes.com

DESIGN EDITOR João Jorge Magalhães magalhaes@macaudailytimes.com | NEWSROOM AND CONTRIBUTORS
Albano Martins, Annabel Jackson, Aries Un, Emilie Tran, Grace Yu, Irene Sam, Jacky I.F. Cheong, Jenny Lao-Phillips, João Palla Martins, Joseph Cheung, Juliet Risdon, Renato Marques, Richard Whitfield, Robert Carroll (Hong Kong correspondent), Rodrigo de Matos (cartoonist), Ruan Du Toit Bester, Sandra Norte (designer), Viviana Seguí | ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS JML Property, MacauHR, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars | NEWS AGENCIES Associated Press, Bloomberg, Lusa News Agency, MacauHub, MacauNews, Xinhua | SECRETARY Yang Dongxiao amy@macaudailytimes.com

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ADMINISTRATOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

SECRETARY Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com

ADDRESS Av. da Praia Grande, 599, Edif. Comercial Rodrigues, 12 Floor C, MACAU SAR Telephones: +853 287 160 81/2 Fax: +853 287 160 84

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Mainland-MSAR trade up 32pct in first 10 months of 2015



According to figures from the Ministry of Commerce, trade between mainland China and Macau has increased by 32 percent year on year to reach USD3.95 billion for the first ten months of 2015. The mainland's exports to Macau rose by 34.6 percent year on year to USD3.79 billion during the January-October period. Macau's exports to the mainland totaled USD160 million, a decrease of 10 percent year on year. Mainland authorities approved 329 investment projects from Macau entities during the period, with the actual use of local capital reaching USD850 million, up 80.4 percent from the same period last year.

TOURISM

Local hotel winners take home five out of 18 awards

FIVE professionals from Macau's hotel industry have been celebrated for their dedication to their profession at the Hotelier Awards China 2015 ceremony, where they won a total of five out of the 18 awards available.

The Hotelier Awards China, a ceremony which honors professionals within the hotel industry, saw over 300 hoteliers attend the 2015 edition last Thursday at the Four Seasons Hotel in Beijing.

Winners were determined by a judging panel through a two-round process. The process took into account facts presented in the application, interviews with the nominees, and third-party testimonials.

Donna Campbell, director of public relations at Sands Macao and its local affiliates, took home the award for "Marketing & Communications Hotelier of the Year," while Lily Chi, executive housekeeper at the Ve-



Andrew C. Rogers from the Ritz-Carlton Beijing was crowned the General Manager of the Year

netian Macao, won the "House-Keeping Hotelier of the Year" category.

Meanwhile, Galaxy Macau professionals also secured awards in two categories: Shek Ka Fai won the "Engineering Hotelier of the Year" award; and Ines Leung, the teleservices senior manager at Galaxy Hotel, was presented with an

the "The Unsung Hero" award.

The final winner from Macau was Alex Aranchikov, executive director for information technology at the Sheraton Macau Hotel, who won the category for "Information Technology Hotelier of the Year."

Richard Ekkebus of Hong Kong's Landmark Mandarin Oriental secured the award for

"Chef Hotelier of the Year."

As for the Guangdong Province, the Four Seasons Guangzhou had its director of food and beverage, Heiko Roeder, take home the award for "Food & Beverage Hotelier of the Year."

The award ceremony organizers say that they received up to 300 applications from over 100 properties from 44 different hotel brands.

"We are here to shine a light on the hospitality industry and the numerous job opportunities it will create in the years to come," said the event's co-founder, Benoit Thabaut, on the night.

From 2016, the Hotelier Awards ceremony will expand its scope into the ASEAN region to cover Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines. A consolidated event for the entire region is to be held in Macau, according to organizers, and will be double the size of this year's ceremony.

AD



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IN reaction to Australian public broadcaster ABC's investigation program last week, national carrier Qantas has said in a post on social media that it will no longer provide freight services for greyhounds in Asia.

Animals Australia, an animal rights group interviewed during the investigation, commended Qantas' recent policy change, saying that it represents "a win for the gentle dogs exported to certain death each year."

"We share your concerns about the disturbing story that appeared on [7.30] earlier in the week," reported ABC, citing Qantas' post on Twitter.

"In the past we have transported a small number of racing greyhounds to Asia," the airline added. "However in light of the story we have made the decision to no longer provide racing greyhound freight services to Asia."

The announcement comes only days after the undercover investigation revealed how the dogs are sourced and imported to Asia, in what the broadcaster termed a "death trade."

The dogs, which originate in Australia, are shipped to regions like Macau and China once they are deemed uncompetitive on Australia's racing tracks.

Concern over the welfare of greyhounds intensified last week after the ABC's 7.30 program revealed that many greyhounds imported to Macau were being euthanized once deemed unable to compete in the SAR.

In April, animal rights activists in Macau exposed the killing of more than 30 underperforming dogs each month at the Cani-

■ ■
We share your concerns about the disturbing story that appeared earlier in the week.

QANTAS' STATEMENT

drome, where as many as 800 are housed. But according the investigation last week, even those greyhounds that are capable of racing are imperiled by a track that is "too hard" and by living conditions that are "prison-like."

Once in Asia, the greyhou-

Qantas halts greyhound freight services



Entrance to the Canidrome

nds are not subject to the same protections and rights that they enjoy in Australia. The situation has prompted activists in both Macau and Australia, as well as elsewhere, to protest the treatment of greyhounds and campaign for an end to the trade.

Australia's Agriculture Minis-

ter, Barnaby Joyce, said in response to the program that the government would continue to work with the industry to find "more effective, evidence-based options" to ensure the welfare of exported dogs.

According to Animals Australia, Qantas is one of only two

commercial airlines with direct routes from Australia to Hong Kong – the main entry point for imported greyhounds. The animal rights organization says that the other airline, Cathay Pacific, has confirmed that they are not involved in the freighting of Australian greyhounds. **Staff reporter**

Authorities keep an eye on local Alipay operations



Lionel Leong

THE Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong, has pledged that local regulators will closely monitor the transactions made through the Chinese payment service Alipay, along with the company's growing operations in the region, to ensure legal monetary inflow.

It was expected that the operation of the service, which is an affiliate of Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba Group, will expand citywide after a partnership was reached with Macau Pass in July.

In the meantime, concerns also emerged over Alipay's expansion into casinos. The official told media on the sidelines of a function yesterday morning that, as yet, no casino had been found to be among those business operators accepting payments made through the service.

Earlier, Union Gaming analyst Grant Govertsen had, in his esti-

mates, already ruled out the possibility of casinos' involvement in the third-party payment service.

Currently, up to 107 stores are within the citywide network that accepts third-party transactions of no transaction higher than RMB5,000 each time, and RMB50,000 each month.

The secretary welcomed this collaboration along with others of its kind, which he thought helped to push for the development of domestic e-commerce, and to encourage the regional economy.

In a move which should theoretically alleviate fears, China UnionPay has rolled out a nationwide campaign to clamp down on the rampant abuse of its payment system, the South China Morning Post (SCMP) reported.

The new policy requires official registration for mobile "point of service" (POS) transaction devices countrywide.

As a result, all the mobile devices possessed by the licensees will have to be registered for use, while manufacturers are required to seek validation from UnionPay for the devices they produce.

The SCMP report said that the move was expected to significantly impact the region, given the MSAR's long record of illicit use of such machines. From time to time, the police would uncover rigged POS terminals among retailers, with these faulty machines able to turn offshore transactions into onshore ones on record.

A local gaming industry consultant was also cited as saying that the tightened policy would be "beneficial for the industry in the longer run," despite delivering a short-term blow to it in terms of earnings.

"This is clearly a key step towards ensuring a better regulated environment for Macau's gaming industry," the consultant told the HK newspaper. "These abuses have been going on for way too long and have to stop."

The reports also said that offenders would face authorities' sanctions if found breaching the new rules. From next year, the Macau government will allow overseas cash withdrawals from UnionPay to be double the current limited amount of RMB50,000. **AU**

ARTS

'Open Box' series to showcase 3 local debut acts

THE Macau Cultural Center (CCM) will present three brand new local productions over the month of February next year, in the return of their "Open Box" series. The original series marks the first time that the local productions have been brought to the stage.

This new edition of the series aims to bring the audience closer to the action, with mime production "Muted," physical theater "Weaving Landscape" and multimedia puppet theater "Xiao An."

"Muted," which was conceived by Route Arts Association, will be staged on February 19 and 20. The group is making a comeback after their 2013 production, titled "Who am I?"

By combining mime, physical theatre, and sound effects, the new project aims to explore the culture and feelings of those who live in silence. It is a rare opportunity to gain insight into the fascinating way that deaf people live their lives.

Physical theater piece "Weaving Landscape," is an interactive and experimental production exploring the notion that all objects in the world are created by intersections of dots and lines. The creative partners behind "Weaving Lands-



Jenny Mok

cape" are Jenny Mok, director of The Stone Commune, and visual designer Nip Man Teng.

The production will also be staged on February 19 and 20 in CCM's small auditorium.

The series will conclude with "Xiao An" on February 26 and 27. The Rolling Puppet Alternative Theater's production is an adaptation of a Chinese short story by Yan Lianke, winner of the Franz Kafka Prize in 2014.

Using puppets and multimedia, the group will create an imaginary space to display a combination of realistic theatre and puppetry. Tickets for the "Open Box" series are priced at MOP 300, while an individual performance is MOP 120.

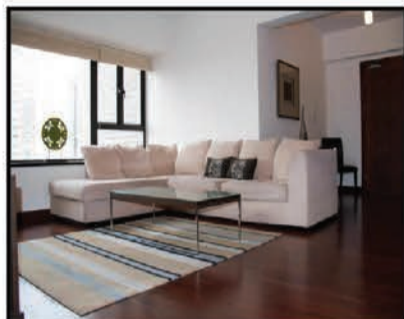
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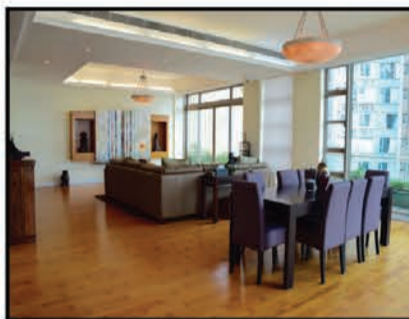
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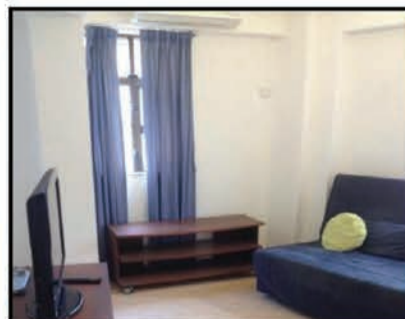
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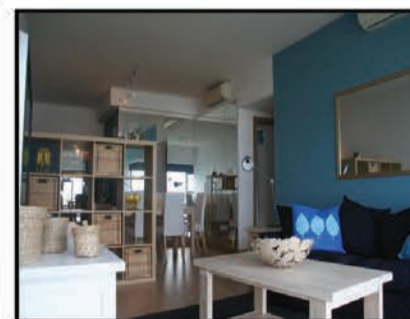
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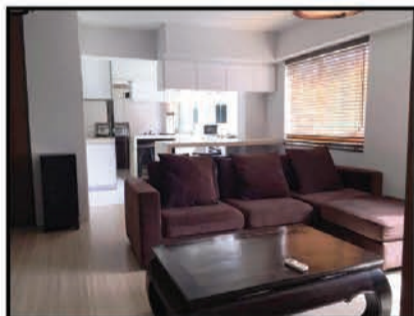
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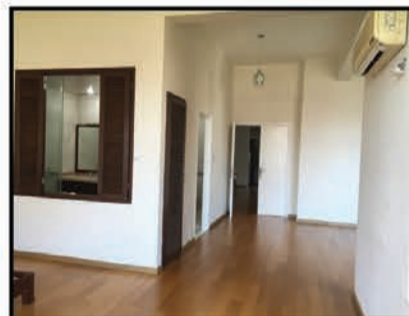
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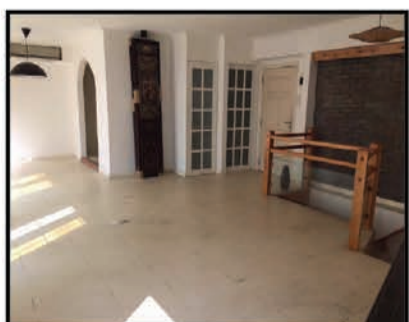
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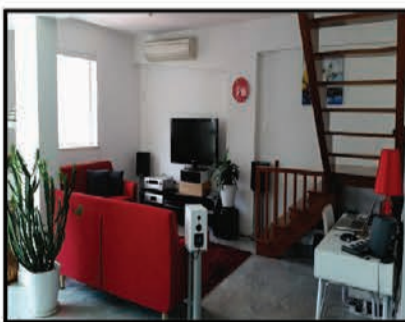


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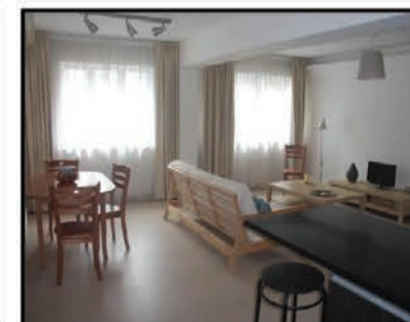
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THE Chief Executive (CE) said yesterday that the government is treating the case involving the "Pearl Horizon" housing complex as highly important. He stressed that the government must abide by the law, and that all solutions for the case must strictly follow the existing legal framework.

Chui Sai On noted that the concessionaire company has already announced its intention to proceed to the courts, and that the MSAR will face the process with the predefined proposals and the legal justifications already presented.

The statement came during yesterday's morning charity walk, in which the CE participated.

Chui Sai On said that authorities were giving high attention to both the case and the rights of the buyers investing in the building under construction. In addition to creating a group that includes the Secretariats for Administration and Justice, for Economy and Finance and for Transport and Public Works, he instructed a legal team to study this case as well.

The CE also revealed that, in the resolution of this case, independent views from the Public Prosecution Office (MP) and from the Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) had come

CE: Pearl Horizon case to follow legal procedures



The Pearl Horizon construction site

to light. These opinions included the feasibility of the case to be set as one of public interest, and it was in light of all these opinions and pieces of advice that the government came to the current decision.

"The MSAR is a place where the rule of law is an essential value, and rigorous law enforcement is the basic principle for its governance." The high offi-

cial recalled, "The government tried all possibilities within the law, but that overlap the law merely by an incident," he added.

Regarding the fact that Polytec, the land concessionary, was to appeal the decision, the CE added that "using legal methods and institutions for resolving disputes is also a crucial value for Macau, corresponding

to the principles of equality and justice." He recalled that the authority also has experience in resolving legal cases, and he therefore believes that the government's decisions and its legal justifications will prevail.

Also speaking on the sidelines of the same charity walk, the Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, said that the administration is currently focusing on improving issues

related to housing and transport. He said that, in the future, Macau will also strengthen its work in the area of environmental protection.

Mr Rosário welcomed all constructive criticism and suggestions, stressing that the government works towards a single goal, which is in the best interests of the Macau SAR's development.

Questioned about his priorities, the secretary said he plans to focus on housing and traffic issues, but acknowledged that these are very difficult jobs. Mr Rosário revealed that although the road network was unchanged, during the first eleven months of this year there was a monthly increase of about 620 vehicles, which demonstrates that traffic is not an easy issue to address.

Regarding another of his priorities, the Secretary revealed his hope that in the next two years the government can improve its work in environmental protection.

Using legal methods and institutions for resolving disputes is also a crucial value for Macau.

CHUI SAI ON

AD

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Beijing devises an organ to bolster local economy

The head of the Chinese Liaison Office in Macau, Li Gang, said that the central government has set up an ad hoc body aimed at supporting the region's economic development. The official declined to offer details on the policies, which are expected to be introduced later. His remarks came on the sidelines of a charitable walk yesterday morning. Li also revealed the nitty-gritty of the scheme, clarifying that the region's marine sovereignty would come in the following days. Earlier, the city's leader had confirmed that the mainland authorities would give a decision by the end of the year.

Local authorities put out fire on mainland vessels

Marine authorities responded to a fire involving four fishing vessels off the Coloane wharf yesterday morning. The flames, which were extinguished quickly, injured no-one. It was said that the mainland authorities will initiate a follow-up inquiry to determine the cause of the blaze that occurred on the mainland vessels. The incident required local authorities to deploy four speedboats, a patrol ship and 12 rescuers.

Report on CCAC agent's death to be withheld from public



The Commission Against Corruption chief commissioner, Cheong Weng Chon, said that the result of the investigation into a deceased agent would not be made public in order to show respect to the family. He told media yesterday that the probe has come to an end and the related report has already been submitted to the Chief Executive. He also promised to revert to the late staffer's wife, who filed a letter to the Legislative Assembly president earlier seeking assistance over the matter. The bereaved widow suspected that her husband had suffered unbearable pressure from his superiors that led him to the fatal decision.

Billionaire Guo assisting probe after reported missing

CHINESE billionaire Guo Guangchang, who leads Fosun International Holdings Ltd., is assisting judiciary authorities with a probe, according to Shanghai Stock Exchange filing by a company he controls.

Guo had gone missing on Thursday, spurring speculation in the Chinese media that he was helping with a government investigation into former Shanghai vice mayor Ai Baojun, according to people familiar with the situation who asked not to be identified.

The billionaire's global empire spans everything from insurance and holiday resorts such as Club Mediterranee SA to entertainment through dozens of deals over the past three years. Reports that he couldn't be reached reverberated through markets, halting shares of many companies linked to his conglomerate. Guo also has connections to Macau and Portugal, where he has investments in the Tranquilidade and Espirito-Santo Saúde insurance companies among others, as well as interests in the Portu-



Guo Guangchang, chairman and chief executive officer of Fosun Group, speaks during an interview in New York, U.S., on Thursday, April 23, 2015

guese electrical company REN.

Shanghai Fosun Pharmaceutical (Group) Co., which is linked to Guo's conglomerate, plans to resume trading of its shares in Shanghai on Dec. 14 after its suspension on Friday, the company said in the filing. Guo can continue to participate in the company's major decisions "via appropriate means," according to the filing. The company is developing drugs, consolidating businesses in China and targeting acquisitions overseas.

Fosun International Ltd., the

Hong Kong-listed unit that also stopped trading Friday and will resume today, has USD2 billion of acquisitions announced this year that haven't been completed. The company is competing for Anglo-German banking group BHF Kleinwort Benson Group and agreed to acquire Israeli insurer Phoenix Holdings Ltd. in June. The company is in the process of acquiring German private bank Hauck & Aufhaeuser Privatbankiers KGaA and is among investors offering to take Chinese movie studio Bona Film Group

Ltd. private.

Fosun's stock tumbled 16 percent to USD1.30 in over-the-counter trading in New York Friday, following a retreat of 11 percent on Thursday. About 166,000 shares traded hands, which is more than 22 times the daily average volume of the past three months.

Guo's conglomerate spent USD5.7 billion over two years acquiring insurance assets, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. The insurance businesses, such as Portugal's Cia de Seguros Fidelidade Mundial SA and Bermuda-based Ironshore Inc., provide low-cost funding for acquisitions in other industries.

In August, he said that his company aimed to grow its private banking business to manage more than USD100 billion. In October, the company completed a USD1.5 billion rights offering, with some of the money tagged for mergers and acquisitions in banking and insurance.

Sohu.com reported on Friday that Guo is helping with the investigation into Ai. **MDT/Agencies**

MSAR, Taiwan ditch double taxation in aviation industry

Aries Un

MACAU and Taiwan authorities have reached a permanent bi-partisan agreement to shun double taxation for the aviation industry across both regions. Representatives from both sides inked the pact last week at the Macau Cultural Centre in an effort to convert a similar memorandum signed by both sides' guilds in 1998 into what they described as a "long-term and constitutional agreement."

The memorandum that is currently enforced requires an annual renewal after it was first granted in November 2005. "This new

agreement is signed by both authorities' representatives to make it official and offer systematic safeguards," said Ding Pi Lien, deputy director-general at the Department of International Fiscal Affairs in Taiwan's Ministry of Finance.

She added that the move has been made to keep both sides abreast of the new global trends in similar agreements, and to continue providing financial benefits to both sides. In February last year, the MSAR and Taiwan signed their first government-level agreement which loosened restrictions on flights between the two regions, which also

addressed the flights' carrying capacity.

According to the Taiwanese government, after almost one year of talks, both parties reached a consensus for the new pact in November this year.

Currently, a total of 93 flights from Taiwan's three airlines – EVA Air, TransAsia Airways and Tigerair Taiwan – fly into Macau weekly, while Air Macau dispatches 35 flights across the strait.

"There has been good interaction between Macau and Taiwan," said Leong Kit Chi, who heads the region's economic and cultural delegation in Taiwan and officiated at the two aforementioned agreements. "The two agreements have made progress for the tourism and aviation industries of both sides. They serve as a great leap forward from what we had in the past."

COOPERATION

Brazil visit to foster Pan-Pearl River regional cooperation

PAN-PEARL River Delta authorities (PPRD) will travel to Brazil to boost links between Portuguese-speaking countries and the regional group, the Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong, said on Friday.

The secretary disclosed the details of the trip as he led the official delegation for the 2015 Pan-Pearl River Delta Regional Cooperation Chief Executive Joint Conference in Fujian.

He said that the visit to Brazil is expected to help authorities gain a better grasp of green economy issues and technologies. Part of the visit will involve a summary of measures taken to protect the Amazon basin and a demonstra-



People walk at a shopping district in Sao Paulo, Brazil

tion of how Brazil's regional states were able to coordinate such preservation efforts.

Furthermore, the government's intention to turn Macau into a service platform between mainland China and Portuguese-speaking countries was reiterated by the secretary, who announced that the

SAR is planning to set up representative trade offices in Beijing, as well as in Portugal and Brazil.

The PPRD is an association that covers nine Chinese provinces and two regions – less formally known as the "9+2". It consists of: Guangdong, Guangxi, Hainan, Yunnan, Guizhou, Sichuan, Hunan, Jiangxi and Fujian, plus the Hong Kong and Macau SARs.

Cooperation at this level is intended to provide a platform for strong regional ties and economic collaboration in the "9+2", which encompasses some 400 million people.

Leong noted that existing bilateral cooperation between Macau and other PPRD authorities had

brought great success over the last ten years. Now the SAR looks to expand its collaboration with Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in the meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) industry.

The secretary added that he regarded three major tasks as essential to advancing intra-PPRD cooperation next year. Leong emphasized: strengthening tourism cooperation in the region; promoting Macau's bridging role between the mainland and Portuguese-speaking countries; and synergizing the authorities in their contribution to the "Belt and Road" initiative.

Malaysia cargo firm says it owns 3 jets left idle at airport



One of the three abandoned planes with tail number, TF-ARM, is seen taxied on the tarmac of Kuala Lumpur International Airport

A new Malaysian air cargo company said Friday it is the owner of three jumbo jets parked for more than a year at the country's main airport and that it was shocked by authorities' claim that the owner could not be traced.

Malaysia's airport operator last Monday took the unusual step of posting photos in two major newspapers of the three Boeing 747-200s. The notice warns owners that the airport has the right to sell or dispose of the planes unless they are collected within 14 days.

Swift Air Cargo said it legally bought the planes in June and that it has since been in communication with Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad, which has demand more documentation on the purchase.

"We are dumbfounded and perplexed by Malaysia Airport's move. Swift is the owner and we definitely have not forgotten the planes," said Swift's lawyer, Syed Amir Syakib Arslan.

In a brief statement, Malaysia Airports said the claim of ownership could not be satisfactorily verified at this point and that it has asked the owner for more information. It said the newspaper notice was a normal legal process for debt recovery.

Syed Amir said Swift has given the airport operator the sale and purchase agreement, a legal declaration from the previous Hong Kong owner of the planes on the sale as well as other original supporting documents to show ownership of the plane.

He said Swift is only liable for parking charges since June and not responsible for previous dues but that it was willing to sit down and negotiate with the airport operator.

"We were waiting for yet another meeting to present more documentation and information as requested when instead Malaysia Airports announced to the world that the owner of the planes was missing," he said.

Such a move could jeopardize the reputation of Swift, which is waiting for a permit from the government to start operations, he added. **AP**

China eases yuan grip to allow biggest weekly drop since August

Fion Li

THE yuan recorded its biggest weekly drop since an August devaluation on speculation China's central bank is taking advantage of a stronger dollar to allow a decline before the U.S. raises interest rates.

The yuan dropped 0.27 percent on Friday to close at 6.4553 versus the greenback in Shanghai, China Foreign Exchange Trade System prices show. That takes its five-day retreat to 0.83 percent, the most since the week of the currency's Aug. 11 devaluation. The dollar has risen against 10 of the world's 16 major exchange rates since Dec. 4, with odds slanted toward the Federal Reserve Open Market Committee tightening monetary policy next week.

The People's Bank of China cut the yuan's daily reference rate by 0.8 percent last week, the most since it devalued the currency in August and made the fixing mechanism more market-oriented. The central bank has periodically been seen propping up the yuan in Shanghai and Hong Kong by selling dollars. There isn't any basis for long-term depreciation, Wang Yungui, a director at the State Administration of Foreign Exchange, said at a regular briefing in Bei-



jing on Thursday.

"We haven't seen any decisive intervention this [last] week and investors take that as the PBOC allowing a weaker currency," said Tommy Xie, a Singapore-based economist at Oversea-Chinese Banking Corp. "That said, they may come back in after next week's FOMC meeting as there'll be a better picture on the U.S. interest-rate outlook."

The PBOC has lowered its daily yuan fixing on seven of nine trading days since winning reserve-currency status at the International Monetary Fund on Nov.

30. The onshore spot rate is allowed to trade a maximum 2 percent on either side of the reference rate.

In Hong Kong's offshore market, the yuan declined 0.11 percent to 6.5347 a dollar as of 6:11 p.m. local time Friday, extending last week's drop to 1.35 percent, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. The offshore currency's spread to the onshore rate widened to an average 805 pips this week, from 447 pips in the previous five days.

China's foreign-exchange reserves fell USD87 billion in November, more than

the \$33 billion forecast and a sign the central bank was supporting the yuan. The stockpile slumped by a record \$94 billion in August.

The PBOC on Friday released guidelines on free trade zones in the provinces of Guangdong and Fujian as well as Tianjin city, granting companies registered in the area up to \$10 million in capital-account convertibility quotas. In the Guangdong zone, individuals can borrow yuan funds from Hong Kong and Macau for property purchases within the area, the central bank said. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

AIR SUPPLY ROCKS THE VENETIAN MACAO



International rock group Air Supply returned to The Venetian Macao on Saturday night

with Air Supply Live in Concert. The duo last performed in Macau in 2012 and once again

they brought their unique rock tunes and ballads to The Venetian Theatre. The Macau concert is part of their worldwide tour to mark their 40th anniversary.

Singer-songwriter and guitarist Graham Russell and lead vocalist Russell Hitchcock drew applause from The Venetian Theatre crowd as they took to the stage as they played their most recognizable songs. They performed all of their classic hits including "I Adore You," "Goodbye" and "Sweet Dreams".

Air Supply has sold millions of records and their fans spans several generations and cultures. Saturday's concert marked the fourth time the duo has played at The Venetian Macao and Sands Macao, having performed back in 2007, 2008 and 2012.

ANDY HUI'S 'COME ON' WORLD TOUR 2015 HITS STUDIO CITY

Andy Hui made a stop in Macau's Studio City where he staged a show for his legion of fans for his "Come On" World Tour 2015, Saturday night. Touching down at the Studio City's Event Center, Hui delivered recent hits and classics. He also welcomed celebrity guests Janice Vidal and William So on-stage for a special surprise performance.

"I am a 30-year veteran of this industry and have appeared at many different venues around the world. The much talked about Event Center definitely lives up to its hype and is one of the most impressive venues I have ever performed at," said Hui.

Recognized both for his on-screen performances and musi-



cal talent, Andy Hui has received numerous accolades with his extensive list of Cantonese and Mandarin hits throughout his career. Released in 2014,

his latest album "New Heaven" has gained great popularity among fans and topped music charts in Hong Kong and around Asia.

Party to loosen stringent urban hukou rules

CHINA will loosen its stringent regulations on urban residency to allow more people to enjoy public services such as housing, education and health care beginning next year.

Chinese citizens have for decades been limited in public services they can access by their household registration, known as a hukou. The problem is especially acute for the millions of migrant workers who are often forced to either leave their children in the countryside or place them in unregistered and often sub-standard schools in the city.

While various cities have implemented incremental reforms, the move announced Saturday will relax the rules on a national basis and reduce opportunities for corruption and irregularities.

Migrants can apply for a residency permit if they have lived in the city they are applying in for a certain time and have a stable job, place to live or are studying, a statement posted on the Cabinet's official website said. Permits will enable them to access benefits in-



Chinese examinees wait outside an exam site to attend the 2015 China National Civil Service Examination in Harbin

cluding basic health care and children to have nine years of compulsory education.

While all cities must follow the new policy, cities can enact their own regulations

according to "local conditions," the Cabinet said. This is likely to mean that big ci-

ties like Beijing will continue to be encouraged to control their population and have more stringent criteria for residency.

The reforms will take effect from Jan. 1.

"The move is to improve basic public services in urban areas and provide conveniences for residential permit card holders," the Cabinet said.

Following three decades of financial reforms, the world's most populous country became predominantly urban in 2011, and officials are encouraging the trend as part of a transition toward a more services-based economy. Of the country's 1.3 billion people, 55.6 percent now live in cities.

The reform reflects President Xi Jinping's campaign to allow more citizens to take part in what is termed the "Chinese Dream" of middle-class prosperity and household security. State broadcaster CCTV reported on the reform on yesterday's noon-time news under the heading of "underscoring the importance of people as the foundation and advancing fairness and justice."

Along with creating a generation of "left-behind" children, the hukou system is blamed for restricting the prospects of educated young people from the countryside who are sometimes forced to the margins in major cities such as Beijing. AP

Mainland, Macau hold Nanjing Massacre memorial

CHINA held a memorial for Nanjing Massacre victims in the eastern city of Nanjing yesterday. A similar ceremony was also held in Macau, attended by Chui Sai On, Edmund Ho and Li Gang.

Li Jianguo, a member of the Party's Central Committee Political Bureau and vice chairman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee, addressed the event at the Memorial Hall for the Victims of the Nanjing Massacre.

"When we recall that day, one of the darkest and most painful scenes in our history rises once again before our eyes," Li said.

Japanese troops captured Nanjing, then China's capital, on Dec. 13, 1937 and started a campaign of slaughter lasting more than a month. According to Chinese sources, more than 300,000 unarmed soldiers and civilians were murdered and over 20,000 women were raped.

In February 2014, Chi-



Pupils attend a candle vigil yesterday at the Memorial Hall for the Victims of the Nanjing Massacre in Nanjing, capital of east China's Jiangsu Province

na's top legislature designated Dec. 13 as National Memorial Day for Nanjing Massacre Victims.

Though China-Japan relations have been strained lately, Li said substantial progress has been made since the two sides normalized relations in 1972.

They should "continuously push forward good-neighborly and friendly cooperation and make a joint contribution to world peace and human progress," he added.

The Nanjing Massacre is seen in China as the nadir

of an era in which it was bullied and humiliated by foreign powers.

"We are now marching on a path of building a prosperous society and realizing the dream of national rejuvenation with pride. The era of humiliation is well and truly over," said Li.

State Councilor Wang Yong was also at the ceremony, along with survivors of the massacre, Chinese WWII veterans, foreigners who helped China during the war, and people from Taiwan, HK and Macau. MDT/Agencies

HONG KONG

Gov't says it would cost USD9.8b to cancel rail project

Cathy Kit Ching Chan

HONG Kong will face a HK\$75.6 billion (USD9.8 billion) bill if an express railway linking the city to mainland China is abandoned, the Transport and Housing Bureau said in a document to lawmakers on Friday.

The government will need to complete the remainder of the delayed project, including the terminus and surrounding roads, if construction stops due to pressure from some lawmakers, according to the report.

The paper was submitted to the city's legislators after a cost blowout led to inquiries and calls from some lawmakers to scrap the project, which connects the southern Chinese cities of Guangzhou and Shenzhen. If builders' contracts lapsed, the cost of a new tender process to restart the project would likely to cost an additional HK\$33 billion, according to the paper.

If the city's legislators don't approve a new funding request by February, contractor MTR Corp. may issue a suspension notice and the delay will cost HK\$233 million a month, the government estimates. A contract lapse



after six months of suspension would cost a total of HK\$4.8 billion, the document said.

The rail project's economic return is forecast at 4 percent, down from a 6 percent estimate in 2009, the government paper said. The government cited higher construction costs and slower economic and population growth in the Pearl River Delta region as reasons for the decline. Bloomberg

Louise Watt, Beijing

Beijing's efforts on climate deal partly due to its pollution

CHINA'S push for a global climate pact was partly because of its own increasingly pressing need to solve serious environmental problems, observers said yesterday.

China, the world's biggest source of climate-changing gases, was blamed for obstructing the last high-level climate talks in Copenhagen in 2009. This time around, it sent strong political signals it wanted a deal ahead of and during the Paris negotiations that ended Saturday with the agreement to keep global temperatures from rising another degree Celsius (1.8 Fahrenheit) between now and 2100.

"Environmental issues have become much more important to the Chinese public and therefore to the Chinese government," said Dimitri de Boer, head of China Carbon Forum, a Beijing-based nonprofit organization.

Since 2009, the public has gone from not knowing much or caring about environmental issues "and mainly being focused on wanting to make some money, to now being very concerned with environmental issues and taking that on par with wanting to make money," he said.

China's cities are among the world's dirtiest after three decades of explosive economic growth that led to construction of hundreds of coal-fired power plants and an increase in car ownership.

China was reminded of its severe environmental challenges during the Paris conference when the capital, Beijing, issued its first red alert for pollution under a two-year system because of heavy smog. The city ordered limits on vehicles, factories and construction sites



Commuters wear masks for protection inside a bus on a polluted day in Beijing

and told schools to close.

China pushed for a deal because of its own problems and because the effects of climate change are becoming clearer each year, said Jiang Kejun, senior researcher at the Energy Research Institute under the National Development and Reform Commission, China's top economic planning agency.

The message on climate change "is very clear — we must do something — and in the meantime the domestic policymaking process is getting more environment-oriented," Jiang said. The air pollution in Beijing is putting pressure on policymakers and China is moving toward a low-carbon eco-

nomy anyway, he said.

To build momentum for a deal, China and the United States, the world's two biggest carbon emitters, last year set a 2030 deadline for emissions to stop rising. This June, Beijing promised to cut carbon emissions per unit of economic output by 65 percent from 2005 levels.

In September, Chinese President Xi Jinping pledged USD3.1 billion to help developing countries combat climate change.

"That's huge," said de Boer. "They may well be a developing country, but they are also clearly ready to start supporting the least-developed countries in terms of their climate mitiga-

tion and adaptation efforts."

Xi attended the opening ceremony of the Paris conference two weeks ago along with other leaders — and made a last-ditch effort in phone talks with President Barack Obama on Friday to get a global deal, according to China's official Xinhua News Agency. He told Obama that their countries needed to work together to ensure an agreement was reached "in the interest of the international community," Xinhua said.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said that China's push for a successful conclusion to the Paris negotiations "fully shows that China is dealing with climate change issues as a

responsible big country."

Beijing came under criticism for obstructing the 2009 Cope-

Environmental issues have become much more important to the Chinese public and therefore to the Chinese government

DIMITRI DE BOER
HEAD, CHINA CARBON FORUM

nagen talks when some participants complained China and India stymied global emissions reduction efforts, possibly for fear they might hamper economic growth.

Now, the world's second-largest economy has emerged as a leader in curbing greenhouse gas emissions by investing in solar, wind and hydro power and even reducing its coal consumption last year as it attempts to clean up its polluted cities.

It is also already nurturing more self-sustaining growth as it refocuses its economy away from energy-hungry heavy industry to consumer spending and technology and making energy efficiency gains. AP

Rights lawyer to stand trial for social media posts

ONE of China's most prominent human rights lawyers is due to stand trial today for comments on social media that were critical of the ruling Communist Party in a case that international rights groups say is political persecution.

Pu Zhiqiang, who took on cases relating to civil rights and freedom of speech, has been detained for more than a year and a half. He has been indicted on charges of inciting ethnic hatred and picking quarrels to stir up trouble.

Since coming to power in 2013, President Xi Jinping has spearheaded crackdowns on civil activists, rights lawyers and



Dissident artist Ai Weiwei, left, poses with his lawyer Pu Zhiqiang before Pu leaves for the courthouse in Beijing, Friday, July 20

online freedom. Critics say these are aimed at snuffing out any potential threats to the party's grip

on power. The charges against Pu relate to a number of posts on China's Twitter-like

Sina Weibo that questioned the ruling Communist Party's policies toward the Tibetan and

Uighur ethnic minorities in the Tibet and Xinjiang regions, and mocked political figures.

Rights groups have said he faces up to eight years in prison.

Patrick Poon, China researcher at Amnesty International, called Pu's trial "an act of political persecution."

"He is being punished solely for standing up to the Chinese government in his courageous defense of human rights," he said.

Pu was detained by police in early May 2014 after attending an event to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square crackdown in which hundreds,

possibly thousands, were killed, and which is a taboo subject in China. Pu participated in the protests as a student.

Amnesty International says there have been "repeated procedural irregularities" in his prosecution, including a prolonged pre-trial detention, denial of adequate medical care and prosecutors refusing to disclose evidence against him to his defense lawyers.

Pu's clients included artist Ai Weiwei and he pushed hard for the eventual abolishment of the labor camp system, which allowed police to lock up people for up to four years without a trial. AP

Natalie Obiko Pearson
and Anurag Kotoky

INDIA selected Japan to help build its first high-speed rail link in a coup for Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and a defeat for China, which also had bid for the signature project.

The USD15 billion deal clinches three years of negotiations and reflects the deepening relationship between India and Japan stemming from the personal relationship between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Abe. Shared investment objectives and a mutual apprehension about China's expansionism are pushing the two nations closer together.

"No friend will matter more in realizing India's economic dreams than Japan," Modi said Saturday at a joint news conference with Abe in New Delhi. The project "will launch a revolution in Indian railways and speed up India's journey into the future."

The proposed 505-kilometer railway will link India's financial capital of Mumbai with Ahmedabad, a major economic and industrial hub in Modi's home state of Gujarat. Japan is offering about \$12 billion of the 980 billion-rupee (\$14.6 billion) cost, Modi said. The 50-year loan will carry an interest rate of 0.1 percent and a 10-year grace period, according to a copy of the agreement.

The deal comes after Japan lost out to China on a \$5 billion rail deal in Indonesia in October. Along with the rail agreement, Modi and Abe signed accords on nuclear energy cooperation and defense equipment and technology transfers.

"Japan didn't want to lose this deal," Purnendra Jain, a professor of politics and foreign policy at the University of Adelaide's Centre for Asian Studies, said by e-mail. "It's also a statement for Modi that India is modernizing."

The loan requires that a Japanese company or a Japanese-Indian joint venture be appointed as the primary contractor on the project. Components to be manufactured in India include rolling stock, equipment and machinery. The two nations also agreed to explore cooperating on other high-speed rail projects in India.

China was pushing hard for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad project after signing an agreement with Modi in May to cooperate on railways. For the Indonesian project, China Development Bank provided three quarters of the required \$5.5 billion funding.

Ahead of the announcement, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Hua Chunying was asked if China might lose because its loans were too costly.

"All countries have the right to make their own decisions



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, right, poses with his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe for photographers before their meeting, in New Delhi, India, on Saturday

INDIA

Japan tops China in race to build first high-speed rail

about who they want to cooperate with," she told reporters in Beijing, adding that China expected to cooperate on other railway projects with India in the future.

Despite losing the contract, China still dominates trade with both nations. Japan's trade with India is about 5 percent of its commerce with China, and less than a quarter of India-China trade.

Yet Abe's government has outpaced China in investment pledges to India, promising to funnel about 3.5 trillion yen (\$29 billion) in infrastructure loans, financing and public and private investment into India - the most of any country except for the United Arab Emirates. Modi's government has set up an office to promote investment from Japan, and the two leaders vowed last year to double direct investment in five years.

Abe announced that Japan will make 1.5 trillion yen in financing and export insurance available to Japanese companies seeking to enter the Indian market through the Japan Bank for International Cooperation and Nippon Export and Investment Insurance.

Japan is also set to provide 400 billion yen in official de-

velopment assistance this financial year and another 200 billion yen in the following to support infrastructure projects in India, including roads in its northeast region, India Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar said. One northeastern state, Arunachal Pradesh, is claimed by both India and China.

"In just about every area outside of defense, Indo-Japanese

■ **The deal comes after Japan lost out to China on a \$5 billion rail deal in Indonesia in October**

cooperation has been unprecedented," said Sasha Riser-Kositsky, a Washington-based associate for Eurasia Group. "In terms of putting up cold hard cash for the signature programs of the Modi government, it's the Japanese companies and government. They have the ins-

titutional mechanisms for long-term concessional infrastructure financing."

Jaishankar told reporters in Delhi that the pact for nuclear energy could aid the participation of companies like General Electric Co. and Westinghouse Electric Co., which have Japanese partners, in India. Technical and legal details still need to be worked out, and a final agreement would also have to be approved by Japan's Diet.

"The key part has been done," Jaishankar said. "The fact that we've concluded these negotiations is a very, very big step."

The nations signed two defense agreements for the transfer of military equipment and technology, as well as share classified intelligence. Under Abe, Japan has shifted away from 70 years of post-war pacifism, and the country recently lifted a decades-old ban on arms exports. The two leaders agreed to further discuss a potential deal for Japan US-2 amphibious aircraft, according to the joint statement.

Japan also will become a regular member of the India-U.S. Malabar naval exercises, which will "help create stronger capabilities to deal with maritime challenges in the Indo-Pacific

region," the joint statement said. India and Japan share apprehensions about China's expansionism in regional waters.

Modi and Abe discussed developments in the South China Sea and urged "All states to avoid unilateral actions that could lead to tensions in the region." China has been building facilities on artificial islands in the South China Sea, where it claims sovereignty.

The two leaders agreed to push for more cooperation with other regional powers, saying trilateral discussions with the U.S. and Australia contribute to a more "stable and transparent" architecture in the Indo-Pacific region. India and Japan agreed to hold a second joint meeting with Australia next year, according to fact sheet provided by Japanese officials to reporters.

"I cannot think of a strategic partnership that can exercise a more profound influence on shaping the course of Asia and our interlinked ocean regions more than ours," Modi said. "In a world of intense international engagements, few visits are truly historic or change the course of a relationship. Your visit, Mr. Prime Minister, is one." **Bloomberg**

NORTH KOREA

Girl band favored by Kim Jong Un cancels Beijing concerts

AP PHOTO



In this Oct. 11 file photo, members of North Korea's Moranbong band sing and dance during a joint performance with the State Merited Chorus in Pyongyang

Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

AN all-female band formed by North Korean leader Kim Jong Un canceled its concerts in Beijing and abruptly left the Chinese capital due to unspecified communication issues, possibly further cooling relations between the traditional allies.

The Moranbong Band had been scheduled to hold three concerts in Beijing beginning Saturday night in what was viewed as a visit to cultivate ties between the countries.

The performance "cannot be staged as scheduled due to communication issues at the working level," the official Xinhua News Agency said, citing a news release from unnamed "relevant departments."

Band members arrived at Beijing's airport in North Korean Embassy vehicles on Saturday afternoon, and

departed aboard a North Korean Air Koryo jet shortly after 4 p.m. following a lengthy delay, Chinese news website sina.com reported.

A staff member at the National Theater, where the band was to give the invitation-only performances, said the concerts had been canceled, but did not give a reason. An accompanying North Korean musical troupe, the State Merited Chorus, also pulled out because of the communication issues, Xinhua said.

Calls to the International Department of the Communist Party's Central Committee, which organizes exchanges with foreign political parties, rang unanswered yesterday and there was no statement available online.

Although North Korea is well known for its unpredictability, the sudden cancellation of the concerts could hurt relations between Beijing and Pyongyang. Ties

between the sides have been noticeably cooler since Kim assumed power in 2011.

The news release quoted by Xinhua said China attaches high importance to cultural exchanges with North Korea, and was "ready to continue to work with it to promote the bilateral exchanges and cooperation in culture and all other areas."

The band's abrupt departures might have been related to stories circulated by the South Korean media about a rumored past relationship between the married Kim and a female member of the band, which also made rounds on Chinese social media, said Yang Moo-jin, a North Korea expert at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul.

North Korea has built a cult of personality around the Kim family, which has ruled for three generations, and sees any outside criticism or mockery of its leader

as an attack on its sovereignty.

"There are few things the North takes more seriously than an attack on the dignity of its supreme leadership, and it might have decided to bring the female members of the band back quickly to cut off such reports," Yang said.

While China continues to provide crucial economic support and diplomatic cover for Kim's impoverished communist regime, the North Korean leader appears to have used defiance of Beijing to shore up perceptions of his own power and independence of action.

Relations appeared to be on the mend following a well-publicized visit to Pyongyang by high-ranking Chinese official Liu Yunshan in October. However, Kim's unwillingness to visit China and his government's refusal to restart denuclearization talks have frustrated the Chinese leadership. **AP**

MYANMAR

After election win, Suu Kyi gets to work cleaning up

AP PHOTO



Following her party's landmark election win, Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi vowed to give her desperately poor country a much-needed face-lift. Wearing plastic gloves, the septuagenarian got to it early yesterday, walking along the edge of an old, pot-holed road in her constituency, Kawhmu, picking up discarded water bottles, plastic bags and instant coffee wrappers. Villagers rushed to help, filling up their own big sacks with garbage. Myanmar emerged from a half-century of brutal military rule in 2011, but years of mismanagement, combined with international sanctions and isolation, had turned it into one of the world's poorest and most neglected nations. The infrastructure is in shambles and public services, including trash collection and recycling, is virtually nonexistent. After the National League for Democracy Party's Nov. 8 election victory, Suu Kyi, 70, told winning lawmakers to start by cleaning up their own constituencies. The party's garbage-collection campaign, she said, was aimed at improving public health, respecting the environment and attracting tourists.

PAKISTAN

Bomb in market kills 12 in tribal region

AP PHOTO



A bomb explosion in a market yesterday killed 12 people and injured over 30 others in Pakistan's Kurram tribal region near the Afghan border, an official said. The bomb exploded as the market in the town of Parachinar was crowded with shoppers buying warm clothes in preparation for winter, said Mahtab Hussain, a local government official. Hussain said some of the most seriously injured were airlifted to hospitals in other cities. He predicted the death toll might rise due to the severity of some of the injuries. The nature of the explosion is being investigated but officials believe it was a planted bomb that was detonated by remote control, Hussain said. Parachinar is the main town in the Kurram tribal region, which has been a scene of violence from Islamic militants and sectarian conflict between Sunni and Shiite Muslims. Suicide attacks and planted bomb explosions have killed scores in the Kurram region. Pakistan's military has carried out regular operations in the region to eliminate militants and control sectarian strife.

Karl Ritter, Seth Borenstein
and Sylvie Corbet, Le Bourget

COP 21

Historic pact to slow global warming is celebrated in Paris

NEARLY 200 nations adopted the first global pact to fight climate change on Saturday, calling on the world to collectively cut and then eliminate greenhouse gas pollution but imposing no sanctions on countries that don't.

The "Paris agreement" aims to keep global temperatures from rising another degree Celsius (1.8 Fahrenheit) between now and 2100, a key demand of poor countries ravaged by rising sea levels and other effects of climate change.

Loud applause erupted in the conference hall after French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius gavelled the agreement. Some delegates wept, others embraced.

"It's a victory for all of the planet and for future generations," U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said, adding that the pact will "prevent the worst most devastating consequences of climate change from ever happening."

Brazilian Environment Minister Izabella Teixeira added: "Today, we've proven that it's possible for every country to come together, hand in hand, to do its part to fight climate change."

In the pact, the countries pledge to limit the amount of greenhouse gases emitted by human activity to the levels that trees, soil and oceans can absorb naturally, beginning at some point between 2050 and 2100.

In practical terms, achieving that goal means the world would have to stop emitting greenhouse gases — most of which come from the burning of oil, coal and gas for energy — altogether in the next half-century, scientists said. That's because the less we pollute, the less pollution nature absorbs.

Achieving such a reduction in emissions would involve a complete transformation of how people get energy, and many activists worry that despite the pledges, countries are not ready to make such profound, costly changes.

The deal now needs to be ratified by individual governments — at least 55 countries representing at least 55 percent of global emissions — before taking effect. It is the first pact to ask all countries to join the fight against global warming, representing a sea change in U.N. talks that previously required only wealthy nations to reduce their emissions.

"History will remember this day," U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said. "The Paris agreement on climate change is a monumental success for the planet and its people."

Speaking from Washington, President Barack Obama said the climate agreement offers

AP PHOTO



French foreign minister and President of the COP21 Laurent Fabius, center, applauds while United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, left, and French President Francois Hollande applaud after the final conference of the COP21, in Le Bourget, north of Paris

"the best chance to save the one planet we have."

The deal commits countries to keeping the rise in global temperatures by the year 2100 compared with pre-industrial times "well below" 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit), and says they will "endeavor to limit" them even more, to 1.5 degrees Celsius. The world has already warmed by about 1 degree Celsius since pre-industrial times.

Ben Strauss, a sea level researcher at Climate Central, said limiting warming to 1.5 degrees instead of 2 degrees could potentially cut in half the projected 280 million people whose houses will eventually be submerged by rising seas.

More than 180 countries have ready presented plans to limit greenhouse gas emissions — a breakthrough in itself after years of stalemate. But those pledges are not enough to achieve the goals in the accord, meaning countries will need to cut much more to meet the goal.

"We've agreed to what we ought to be doing, but no one yet has agreed to go do it," said Dennis Clare, a negotiator for the Federated States of Micronesia. "It's a whole lot of pomp, given the circumstances."

The agreement sets a goal of getting global greenhouse gas emissions to start falling "as soon as possible"; they have been generally rising since the industrial revolution.

It says wealthy nations should continue to provide financial support for poor nations to

cope with climate change and encourages other countries to pitch in on a voluntary basis. That reflects Western attempts to expand the donor base to include advanced developing countries such as China.

In a victory for small island nations, the agreement includes a section highlighting the losses they expect to incur from climate-related disasters that it's too late to adapt to. However, a footnote specifies that it

“[The agreement offers] the best chance to save the one planet we have.”

BARACK OBAMA

"does not involve or provide any basis for any liability or compensation" — a key U.S. demand because it would let the Obama administration sign on to the deal without going through the Republican-led Senate.

The adoption of the agreement was held up for nearly two hours as the United States pressed successfully to change the wording on emissions targets from saying developed countries "shall" commit to reducing emissions to they "should." Experts said that means the deal probably won't need U.S. congressional approval.

Nicaragua said it would not support the pact. Its envoy, Paul Oquist, said the agreement does not go far enough to cut global warming and help the poor countries affected by it.

Nicaragua is one of eight participating countries that haven't submitted emissions targets, after Venezuelan envoy Claudia Salerno said her country — which had been holding out — liked the agreement and had submitted its pledge.

Thousands of protesters demonstrated across Paris, saying the accord is too weak to save the planet. People held hands beneath the Eiffel Tower and stretched a two-kilometer-long banner from the Arc de Triomphe to the business district La Defense.

Kumi Naidoo of Greenpeace said the accord is a good start but isn't enough.

"Today the human race has joined in a common cause, but it's what happens after this conference that really matters," he said. "This deal alone won't dig us out the hole we're in, but it makes the sides less steep."

The accord does represent a breakthrough in climate negotiations. The U.N. has been working for more than two decades to persuade governments to work together to reduce the man-made emissions that scientists say are warming the planet.

The previous emissions treaty, the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, included only rich countries and the U.S. never signed on. The last climate summit, in Copenhagen

in 2009, ended in failure when countries couldn't agree on a binding emissions pact.

The talks were initially scheduled to end Friday but ran over as Western powers, tiny Pacific island nations and everyone in between haggled over wording.

The main dispute centered over how to anchor the climate targets in a binding international pact, with China and other major developing countries insisting on different rules for rich and poor nations. The agreement struck a middle ground, removing a strict firewall between rich and poor nations and saying that expectations on countries to take climate action should grow as their capabilities evolve. It does not require them to do so.

Some scientists who had criticized earlier drafts as unrealistic praised the final pact for including language that essentially means the world will have to all but stop polluting with greenhouse gases by 2070 to reach the 2-degree goal, or by 2050 to reach the 1.5-degree goal.

That's because when emissions fall, nature compensates by absorbing less carbon dioxide — and can even release old pollution once there's less of it in the air, said Princeton University's Michael Oppenheimer. Forests, oceans and soil currently absorb about half the world's man-made carbon dioxide emissions.

"It means that in the end, you have to phase out carbon dioxide," said John Schellnhuber, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany.

In addition to the cuts in emissions, the goal could be reached in part by increasing how much carbon dioxide is sucked out of the air by planting forests or with futuristic technology, Oppenheimer said, but added such technology would be expensive.

French President Francois Hollande welcomed the world to a "low carbon age," saying France is ready to cut emissions even further and increase aid to poor countries that are affected. He challenged all nations to do more.

"The 12th of December, 2015, will remain a great date for the planet," Hollande declared. "In Paris, there have been many revolutions over the centuries. Today it is the most beautiful and the most peaceful revolution that has just been accomplished — a revolution for climate change." AP

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what's ON



THE EXHIBITION OF CHAN IU PUI
TIME: 10am-7pm (December 11-17)
10am-3pm (December 18)

VENUE: UNESCO Centre of Macao, Alameda Dr.
Carlos d'Assumpção
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2872 7066
ADMISSION: free

NIGHT'S STARTING POINT- RAE SOLO EXHIBITION
TIME: 10am-7pm (closed on public holidays)
UNTIL: January 3, 2015

VENUE: Flugent Art Gallery, Macau, Rua de S. Paulo
54-58B, Mei Tai Grand Garden, A
ADMISSION: free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2872 3428

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on public holidays)

VENUE: 76, Rua Almirante Costa Cabral
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8399 6699

'SCAPE'- DRAWINGS BY RUI RASQUINHO

TIME: 12pm-8pm (closed on Tuesdays)
UNTIL: December 31, 2015

ADMISSION: Free
VENUE: Signum Living Store, Rua do Almirante
Sérgio, no. 285, R/C, Macau
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2896 8925

EXHIBITION - THE JOURNEY OF A MASTER: JÚLIO
POMAR AND FRIENDS

TIME: 2pm-8pm (Tuesdays to Sundays)
3pm-8pm (Mondays; Open on public
holidays)

UNTIL: January 15, 2016
VENUE: Albergue SCM, Calçada da Igreja de São
Lázaro No.8, Macau Gallery A2
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2852 2550 / 2852 3205

MACAU X LEGO® EXHIBITION

TIME: 9am-6pm
UNTIL: December 28, 2015
VENUE: Ritz Building, Largo do Senado, N° 9, Edif.
Ritz
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2833 3000

Offbeat

ISRAEL'S '1ST CANINE' QUARANTINED
FOR BITING HANUKKAH GUESTS

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin
Netanyahu and his wife Sarah

Israel's first canine is in the doghouse after biting two guests at the Prime Minister's Hanukkah candle lighting ceremony.

Benjamin Netanyahu posted a family portrait - including his wife, two sons and dog Kaiya - on Facebook Friday morning.

"Last night our whole family lit the fifth Hanukkah candle before we were sadly forced to send Kaiya to quarantine, as required by law," he wrote.

Kaiya sunk her teeth into parliamentarian Sharron Haskel and the husband of deputy foreign minister Tzipi Hotovely, both of ruling Likud, on Wednesday. Neither was seriously hurt. Israeli cities may quarantine biting dogs for 10 days.

Heskel laughed off the incident, tweeting: "As someone who was once a snake wrangler, a small bite from a dog doesn't excite me."

Netanyahu adopted the dog in July. AP

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
14:55	Trail of Lies (Repeat)
	Contraponto (Repeated)
20:00	Soap Oepra
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Sports
21:40	Trail of Lies
22:10	TDM News
23:00	UEFA Champions League 2015/2016 Magazine Programme
23:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:10	RTPi Live

cinema

CINETEATRO

10 DEC - 16 DEC



POINT BREAK

ROOM 1
(2D) 2.30, 4.30, 9.30 pm
(3D) 7.30 pm

Director: Ericson Core
Starring: Teresa Palmer, Luke Bracey, Édgar Ramírez
Language: English (Cantonese)
Duration: 113min

KEEPER OF DARKNESS

ROOM 2
2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Nick Cheung
Starring: Nick Cheung, Kuo Tsai Chieh, Louis Chueng
Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)
Duration: 105min



INITIATION LOVE

ROOM 3
2.30, 4.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Yukihiro Tsutsumi
Starring: Shota Matsuda, Atsuko Maeda
Language: Japanese (English and Cantonese)
Duration: 110min

THE CROW'S EGG

ROOM 3

7.30 pm

Director: M. Manikandan
Starring: Ramesh, J. Vignesh, Iyshaarya Rajesh
Language: Tamil (Cantonese/English)
Duration: 91min

MACAU TOWER

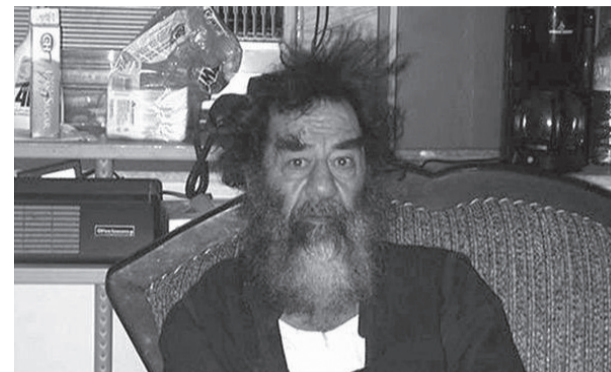
26 Nov - 16 Dec

KEEPER OF DARKNESS

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: Nick Cheung
Starring: Nick Cheung, Kuo Tsai Chieh, Louis Chueng
Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)
Duration: 105min

this day in history

2003 SADDAM HUSSEIN
CAPTURED

The ousted President of Iraq, Saddam Hussein, is under arrest after he was captured by US soldiers. "Ladies and gentlemen, we got him," US administrator Paul Bremer told journalists in Baghdad. "The tyrant is a prisoner."

Saddam Hussein was found hidden in a tiny bunker at a farmhouse about 15 km south of his home town, Tikrit. A US military spokesman, Major-General Raymond Odierno, said the operation was launched soon after a tip-off from a member of Saddam Hussein's own extended family.

"Over the last 10 days we brought in about five to 10 members of these families, and finally got the ultimate information from one of these individuals," he said. There was a USD25m reward offered by the US authorities for information leading to his capture.

A similar reward was claimed for revealing the whereabouts of Saddam Hussein's sons, Uday and Qusay, who were killed in a raid by US forces in the northern city of Mosul in July.

Saddam Hussein was found in a "spider hole" or cellar just big enough for a person to lie down in, and 1.8m to 2.5m deep. The entrance was topped with a polystyrene lid and covered with a rug, bricks and dirt. Saddam had been breathing through an air vent and extractor fan.

The former Iraqi dictator was armed with a pistol, but Major-General Odierno said he gave himself up without resistance. He seemed "disoriented" and "bewildered", the Major-General said, and was arrested at 2030 local time (1730 GMT).

Two unidentified people said to be "close allies" of Saddam Hussein were also arrested. Weapons and more than \$750,000 in cash was confiscated. Video footage was released by the US military showing a disheveled Saddam with a long black and grey beard undergoing a medical examination.

The former president had not been seen since US forces entered Baghdad in April. Despite one of the most intensive manhunts in history, he has evaded capture for eight months.

As the news spread throughout Iraq, people began celebrating in the streets of Baghdad and the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk by sounding their horns and firing into the air.

Saddam's stronghold towns of Tikrit and Fallujah, however, were sombre and quiet.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Saddam Hussein was transferred to the Iraqi authorities on 30 June 2004 following the handover of sovereignty to Prime Minister Iyad Allawi's interim government. His trial opened in Baghdad the next day.

Saddam Hussein was defiant. He challenged the legality of the proceedings, which he said were brought about by the "invasion forces".

In July 2005, the tribunal laid the first charges against Saddam Hussein and seven other former regime members for crimes against humanity against Shi'ites in the town of Dujail in 1982.

The case was chosen by prosecutors because they believed it would be the easiest to compile and prosecute.

Saddam Hussein pleaded not guilty when his trial opened in Baghdad on 19 October, 2005.

His co-defendants included Barzan al-Tikriti, Saddam Hussein's half-brother and former head of Iraq's intelligence service and Awad Hamed al-Bandar, former Revolutionary Court chief judge. All three were sentenced to death by an Iraqi court on 5 November 2006 after a year-long trial.

The former president was executed on 30 December 2006 after Iraq's highest court rejected an appeal.

The Iraqi government filmed the event to prove that Saddam Hussein was dead. It stopped short of showing the actual hanging.

Unofficial footage taken on a mobile phone revealed that he was taunted by his Shia executioners right up until the moment of his death. More camera-phone pictures emerged a week later showing his body with a severe neck wound - shocking images that exacerbated tensions between Sunni and Shia Muslims.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 This is not a good time to sit around waiting for things to happen...

Taurus April 20-May 20 You may find that something isn't quite what it appears to be today...

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Your partners - in business, in love or in other parts of life - are calling in favors...

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Take care of your own needs first - otherwise, you will never get around to them!

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Small-minded people really get under your skin today...

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Roll the dice - take a risk today. You need to believe in yourself...

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Explore new territory today - whether it's online, out in the world or even in the middle of your most intimate relationship...

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Trust your gut today - even if it's telling you some pretty weird things. Your energy needs all the help it can get...

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 You're feeling quite jolly today - and it's easy to share this feeling with those around you...

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Your sense of discipline and rigor makes today more focused - but also more fun, if you can believe it!

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You find new ways to use your talents and energy today, so make sure that you're reaching but into new fields...

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 You are in conflict with your boss - or someone else who's responsible for a project you care about...



SUDOKU

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

Medium and Hard Sudoku puzzles. Medium puzzle has 2, 7, 9, 9, 4, 7, 6, 1, 7, 6, 4, 9, 2, 1, 3, 8, 9, 4, 2, 5, 6, 8, 5, 6, 8, 8, 1, 5, 8, 5, 8, 7. Hard puzzle has 9, 3, 4, 8, 7, 2, 1, 7, 4, 9, 2, 1, 5, 3, 2, 6, 5, 3, 4, 7, 1.

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Agitated; 8- Pancakelike bread of India; 15- One of the Furies; 16- Lived; 17- Associate; 18- Untangle; 19- Echo, for one; 20- Lacks; 22- Opposite of post-; 23- Witnessed; 24- It comes from the heart; 25- Canonized Fr. women; 26- Superlative suffix; 27- Tapestry; 28- Unfolds; 29- Philosophy of Zeno; 31- Evening affair; 32- Biblical pronoun; 33- Identical; 34- Angel of death; 37- Powerless; 41- Paddock; 42- "Til do us part"; 43- Allow; 44- Criticize with scathing severity; 45- Unordered; 46- Festive occasion; 47- City official; 48- Light purple; 49- Change; 50- Pesticide; 52- Assign; 54- Noisiest; 55- Make uncomfortably hot; 56- Understanding; 57- Spirit;

DOWN: 1- Burdens; 2- Most proximate; 3- Go along with; 4- The devil; 5- Look after; 6- Before, in verse; 7- Charger; 8- Pie coverings; 9- Reddish brown; 10- Mgr.'s helper; 11- Slender metal fastener; 12- Power plug transformer; 13- Worldly; 14- Do-nothing state; 21- Composer Khachaturian; 24- Disney mermaid; 25- Sales pitch; 27- Felt sore; 28- Pizazz; 30- Pisa place; 31- Saline; 33- View of the sea; 34- Friendly; 35- Indeterminate number; 36- Computer information; 37- For Jolly Good Fellow; 38- High spirits; 39- Containing element #34; 40- Surprise; 42- Erase; 45- Center; 46- Sphere; 48- Legal claim; 49- Auto loan figs.; 51- Alphabet trio; 53- Ballet step;

Friday's solution crossword grid with filled-in letters. Words include: LEI, NAVY, UPBEAT, ETS, EVOE, MERINO, SRO, AIDS, PAAANGA, SALT, LAKECITY, EDDA, TASER, BTU, REECH, MEASLES, ORCHESTRATE, RIATA, ION, USHER, UNDERWRITER, MEANDER, SNIEERS, SSR, FALS, HEARTED, AMELIA, NOEL, ALD, MODERN, IRMA, TIL, INDEED, CASE, ENE.

Large crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-57 indicating starting positions for clues.

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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MASERATI
Ghibli

RENATO MARQUES



Lorenzo Campese

Renato Marques

Lorenzo Campese won the CIK FIA Asia-Pacific KZ Championship, which was held on the weekend at the Macau Karting Circuit in Coloane.

The Italian racer was the best of the 24 drivers racing in the main category. In total, the competitors represented 10 countries and territories. The international competition

attracted a strong Australian contingent to compete against Asia's best, alongside some great European and American talent. All competitors showed their best skills throughout the weekend, right up until the final race, which was held yesterday afternoon.

Events unfolded as expected in yesterday's race. Soon the favorites started to show their skills with the two drivers from

Camplese Wins Macau International Karting GP

Italy's Parolin Racing Kart Factory team taking the lead. Lorenzo Camplese and Francesco Celenta were clearly on top, followed by the very fast but inconsistent Dutchman, Marijn Kremers.

Kremers was, in fact, the fastest man on track and the only driver able to complete a lap at the Coloane Karting Circuit in less than 47 seconds (46.980s). However, his inconsistency, along with penal-

ties over his car's front fairing position upon completion of the race, relegated him to sixth position overall after having finished third.

Frenchman Hubert Petit was the driver to benefit from Kremers's penalty; after a great race that saw him finish fourth, he was elevated to third on the podium.

Two Australians, Darren Burke and Tom Williamson, finished in the top five.

The best of the Asians was Sulaiman Noor Senna from Indonesia, who finished tenth overall.

Among the Hong Kong and Macau racers, Jacky Chan from HK performed the best, finishing in 12th position, six places ahead of the sole Macau representative, João Afonso. Afonso might have finished in a better position had he not been involved in a crash in the final lap.

FINAL RESULTS – TOP 10

Pos	Name	Team/Kart	Gap	Best Lap
1	Camplese, Lorenzo	Parolin / TM Racing		47.048
2	Celenta, Francesco	Parolin / TM Racing	6.372	47.243
3	Petit, Hubert	TB Kart / Modena Engines	6.754	47.290
4	Burke, Darren	CRG / Maxter	9.392	47.376
5	Fife, Joshua	CRG / TM Racing	9.540	47.182
6	Kremers, Marijn	Ricciardo Kart / Parilla	15.327	46.980
7	Morse, Zane	CRG / Maxter	18.376	47.451
8	Patrizi, Hayden	Ricciardo Kart / TM Racing	21.183	47.685
9	Gwilliam, Simon	CRG / Maxter	24.601	47.847
10	Senna, Sulaiman Noor	CRG / Maxter	27.883	47.934

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opinion

Insight
 Paulo Barbosa



GET SOME WORK DONE

1. Next month's administrative revamp comes late, but it's better late than never. The Times recently described a case where the management of a public infrastructure project shifted several times in three years, causing delays and losses to private investors.

During his Policy Address presentation, the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture announced plans to transform the lakeside precinct that faces the government headquarters into an entertainment area, with cafés and outdoor areas that are so lacking in Macau.

In 2012, six bars were operating there (eight had previously closed) and paying rent to the Finance Services Bureau (DSF). The department decided to evict all the bars (mostly tasteless karaoke venues, one must say), despite the owners' appeals. Previously, the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) took over management on June 1, and those bar owners complained of being "kicked around like a football" between DSF and IACM.

This Nam Van saga continued when Raymond Tam – who was the head of IACM before the controversial case regarding permanent graves in the cemetery of S. Miguel Arcanjo – stated that the place was "designed to be a cultural and leisure district that will consist of an open theater, drama stage, café and the largest center in the city for book and magazine retailers."

But almost nothing happened there during the next three years, except for the renovation works recently concluded by the IACM, before the area changed hands again – this time to be managed by the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC). "The transfer of infrastructure management to the IC is scheduled. The use to be given to them and the opening date will be announced by the receiving service [IC]," the IACM replied to the Times last month in a bureaucratic fashion.

The lesson to be learnt here is that the constant shift of departments brings losses and inefficiency costs. The fact that, for many years, IACM was responsible for facilities like the Arts Museum, the Handover Gifts Museum and the Cultural Center, among others, reveals a lack of logic.

With the revamp announced on Friday by the Executive Council (see page 2), certain areas in the fields of culture, recreation and sports that are currently managed by IACM will be transferred to IC and the Sport Development Board in a redistribution that would make sense. However, inconsistencies persist. For example, questions remain over whether or not IC is the most suitable institution to manage the Nam Van outdoor area.

2. Hands up for the Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário, who went to the Legislative Assembly last week with a pragmatic speech.

During the presentation of the Policy Address for the areas that he supervises, the secretary said that old habits must die: "We do not have the habit of planning. It's true! But I think there is time to start and to experiment."

Mr Rosário has perhaps the most difficult task in the government, which is to give order to the flawed infrastructure development plan.

"We are creating a new culture – slowly, but we will," he added. Let's hope that the secretary, who is an engineer with managerial skills, will be able to use those skills to improve the local transport and infrastructure situation. What he said indicates that he is committed to solving some of the issues (although obviously, as he noted, he can't solve everything) that plague the region. This time I'm optimistic. I believe that he'll get some work done if he's allowed to do his job.

THE BUZZ CHARITY WALK RAISES MOP16.5 MILLION

Around 40,000 people attended yesterday's annual "Walk for a Million" charity event, which was organized by the Macau Daily News Readers' Charitable Association. Celebrating its 32nd year, the charity walk raised a total of MOP16.5 million. According to the organizers, this is a record amount and a "surprise" given that they were expecting a contraction due to the local economic slump this year.



Station	Air quality
Roadside	45-65 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	45-65 Moderate
Ambient	40-60 Moderate

Lawyer seeks speedy trial for billionaire in UN case



Ng Lap Seng, center, leaves federal court with attorney Benjamin Brafman, right, following his release on bail in connection with a U.N. bribery scheme, Monday, Oct. 26

Larry Neumeister, New York

A Chinese billionaire arrested in a United Nations bribery scandal needs a speedy trial because his businesses are being damaged, his lawyer told a judge last week.

Attorney Benjamin Brafman demanded an immediate trial for Ng Lap Seng.

Ng, 67, arrested in September, has worn an electronic bracelet and been guarded around-the-clock by private security at a luxury Manhattan apartment since his release over a month ago on \$50 million bail.

The real estate developer's businesses "are starting to suffer substantial setbacks," Brafman told U.S. District Judge Vernon S. Broderick in Manhattan. "It's not fair."

"We'll proceed to trial as quickly as we can," the judge responded. "I think there is still some discovery that needs to be produced to your client."

Prosecutors said it was likely they would bring additional charges in the case, which so far has resulted in the arrests of Ng, a former president of the U.N. General Assembly and a Dominican Republic diplomat, along with three others.

In some federal court cases, trials can occur in less than three months. But they more often take months longer to begin, especially in cases involving multiple defendants and thousands of pages of evidence.

Prosecutors said Ng provided much of more than \$1 million in bribes that John Ashe, a former U.N.

ambassador from Antigua and Barbuda who served as General Assembly president until a year ago, was accused of accepting in return for promoting a U.N. conference center in Macau. Ashe's defense lawyer has said his client will be vindicated.

Ng was first arrested in September on charges that he failed to properly report cash when he entered the country on private planes. The charges were boosted when he was charged in the U.N. scandal announced weeks later. Ng has pleaded not guilty.

Broderick told prosecutors to let him know next month when they will be ready for trial.

"We are moving as expeditiously as we can," said Assistant U.S. Attorney Janis Echenberg. AP

WORLD BRIEFS

RUSSIA A fire swept through a Russian home for people with mental illnesses, killing 23 patients and injuring another 23, many of whom were unable to walk, the emergency services said yesterday. The remaining 24 patients were safely evacuated, including some who had to be carried out of the building, and the four medical personnel working at the home were unhurt, they said.

SWITZERLAND Two Syrians arrested in a vehicle containing traces of explosives have not been clearly linked to four men with suspected ties to the Islamic State group who are wanted by Swiss authorities, the Geneva prosecutor said Saturday.



SAUDI ARABIA Women across Saudi Arabia marked a historic milestone on Saturday, both voting and running as candidates in government elections for the first time. At least five women won seats on local municipal councils according to initial results released yesterday.

GAMBIA's president has declared the tiny West African country an Islamic republic, saying he decided this because Islam is the religion of the majority of its citizens and to break from the nation's colonial past.

SYRIA Rebels entrenched in an eastern suburb of Damascus fired volleys of mortar shells that slammed into neighborhoods of the Syrian capital yesterday, killing one child and wounding at least three people, Syria's state-run news agency and residents said.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Xinhua/Cheong Kam Ka



People watch a show during the 2015 Macau Light Festival at the Ruins of St. Paul's. The lights festival opened last week, with 11 culture heritage sites being illuminated.