



MAN ATTEMPTS SELF-IMMOLATION

A 48-year-old Macau resident reportedly tried to set himself on fire during the midnight mass service at the local cathedral

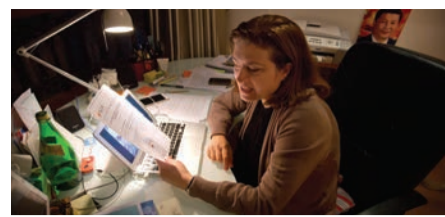
P4



DISCRETIONARY POWERS IN LAND CONCESSIONS

The Commission Against Corruption has completed an investigation into the forfeiture of idle plots of land

P5



REPORTER WHO QUESTIONED TERRORISM EXPELLED

P10 CHINA

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS



CHINA The rubber-stamp national legislature yesterday approved the country's first anti-terrorism law, amid concerns that its requirements that tech companies share information with the government could hurt business interests and further infringe upon human rights.

JAPAN A court gave the go-ahead for the restart of two nuclear reactors after its operator said in an appeal that they were safe. The Fukui District Court in western Japan lifted an April injunction that was filed by a group of residents who said that a massive earthquake exceeding the facility's quake resistance could cause a disaster similar to the Fukushima crisis following the March 2011 quake and tsunami.

More on [backpage](#)

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FINANCIAL TIMES

Japan Inc:
Spend,
spend,
spend

F1

9.3 kg of cocaine seized in major police operation

P7



Xi Jinping says local economy is resilient to challenges

P3

Advertising revenue down 30 percent

Advertising companies report that revenue has dropped nearly 30 percent from last year. This has been primarily attributed to the economic slump. The industry also says the government has tightened the enforcement of a ban on gaming advertisements. Analysts interviewed by TDM linked Macau's gaming revenue slump to external factors, primary of which is Mainland China's crackdown on corruption and illegal money flows. With reduced demand from companies, advertising firms have recently been forced to cut their prices by 15 to 20 percent.

Local orchestra performs with Boris Berezovsky



The Macau Orchestra has collaborated with Russian pianist Boris Berezovsky as part of concerts recently held in Guangzhou and Macau. The local orchestra has been collaborating with the Guangzhou Opera House in a number of concerts since 2011. This time, Boris Berezovsky and a widely acclaimed German conductor, Andreas Delfs, were invited to participate in the concert, which presented a number of classical masterpieces to the public.

New Macau Bangkok flight has not 'materialized'

Thai carrier Siam Air Transport has scheduled the commencement of two new international routes from Bangkok Don Mueang airport to Macau and Singapore, according to a report issued by Routes Online, an aviation route analyst and media company. The report says that, based on the schedule listing in the global distribution system, the airline was scheduled to launch the service on December 15, but the flights have not "materialized." Meanwhile, Siam Air Transport is scheduled to commence its Singapore route from January 1, 2016, which, like the Macau service, will ferry passengers on the company's new Boeing 737 aircraft.

Macau-US casino designer opens up on life's work

BRAD Friedmutter, the award-winning architect responsible for some of the most expensive integrated resorts and casinos in the world, recently sat down with Business Insider to offer some insights into his jet-setting lifestyle.

Friedmutter, and the Friedmutter Group, the architectural company which he founded in 1992, oversaw the design of the recently-opened Studio City resort in Macau.

However, the USD3.2 billion Studio City development is only the most recent of a long list of projects that the group has undertaken since its establishment in the early 1990s.

With offices in Nevada, California and Macau, the group has forged a name for itself



Brad Friedmutter worked on the Studio City design

with its designs for Horseshoe casinos and properties, Steve Wynn's Golden Nugget resort, and the already-iconic Cosmopolitan in Las Vegas that opened in 2010.

In an interview with Business Insider, Friedmutter told journalists that he normally works with billionaire resort owners

who approach him because of his esteemed reputation for casino design.

"They know all of the nicest things in the world. They've been to the nicest hotels, and restaurants, and places in the world," Friedmutter said. "You have to be a billionaire to be in this casino game."

"We as designers must have seen those places as well so that we understand [what they want]. It's not just taking a tour of them – you have to be there and to experience it."

In order to see these places, Friedmutter and his wife Kimberly fly around the world on a private Falcon 50 jet emblazoned with the Friedmutter Group's logo.

When speaking about the casino operators he works with, Friedmutter remarked "it's a very interesting business because they're open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. And they have to figure out how to fill those rooms and get people to come there in different seasons. It even varies during the day." **Staff reporter**

EDUCATION

UM partners with mainland schools for the teaching of Portuguese

THE University of Macau (UM) has sought academic collaboration with two mainland universities earlier this month on Portuguese-language teaching and research.

The university, which recently faced heavy criticism over the possibility that it will reduce the number of Portuguese courses, has inked several accords with the Shanghai International Studies University and Zhejiang International Studies University.

According to a press release issued by the local university yesterday, the partnership allowed both sides to increase their cooperation on student exchanges, research projects and academic conferences.

During an official visit to the two schools, representatives of the collaborating universities told the local delegation, led by the Faculty of Arts and Humanities' Dean, Hong Gang Jin, and the Department of Portuguese-



UM representatives visited two mainland schools

se's head, Maria Fernanda Costa, that the schools were considering sending their junior-year undergraduates in Portuguese studies to UM for studies.

"UM hopes to create long-term collaborative relationships with more universities in order to create a better environment for Portuguese teaching and learning, and to continue to make contributions to the development of Portuguese language education in Macao

and Mainland China," the statement reads.

Last month during the Policy Address presentation, the university's rector Wei Zhao denied the allegation that the university had decreased its efforts to promote the teaching of the Portuguese language. Wei was responding to criticism from lawmakers following the announcement that Portuguese would cease being an optional discipline in some UM courses. **AU**

NEW VICE RECTOR FOR ADMINISTRATION

THE UM has appointed the seasoned accountant Kou Mei as a new vice rector to oversee its administrative affairs. Kou was selected through an international recruitment process.

SOUTH Korean pop star, Psy (Park Jae-sang), is set to make a cameo in the third installment of the "From Vegas to Macau" film series, slated for release on February 8, 2016.

The upcoming Chinese action-comedy movie, entitled "From Vegas to Macau III", features Psy in a white tuxedo, outfitted with accessories which appear to be high-end.

A 30-second sneak-peek trailer for the film shows Psy on a casino floor slighting – or

Psy to feature in 'From Vegas to Macau III'

joking, with other gamblers.

"I've heard a lot about you," Psy tells Chow who plays a world-famous gambler in the series, "let's do it!"

According to an article on The Hollywood Reporter, little information has been released regarding the pop star's role in the film, but some have suggested that he may play a gambling 'advisor'.

Special appearances from Hong Kong's Jacky Cheung and Andy Lau are also expected for Wong Jing's third installment of the action-comedy series.

Meanwhile, Chow Yun-fat, Nick Cheung and Carina Lau will all be reprising their roles from "From Vegas to Macau II".

The previous two films in the spin-off series from Wong's "God of Gamblers" franchise



South Korean singer PSY performs during his concert "All Night Stand" in Seoul

grossed around USD85 million and USD157 million respectively at the time of their releases.

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Infant drowns in bath while parents fall asleep

A Japanese baby drowned in a bathtub in the Conrad Macao Hotel on Christmas day whilst taking a bath with his parents, who admitted to having had a few drinks before the fatal incident occurred. The parents of the child are currently under investigation by the Judiciary Police.

The tragedy occurred at approximately 10 p.m. when the Japanese couple were relaxing with their two newborn infants in a bathtub.

According to the testimony, the police authorities said that the pair involuntarily passed out for a couple of minutes during the bath and woke up to one of their babies being unconscious. Both admitted to previously consuming alcohol.

The paramedics were called to the scene, and the child was sent to the Hospital Conde S. Januario, where he was pronounced dead.

The loss has devastated the mother who was also hospitalized. The other baby was unharmed. The couple left Macau after the incident but returned to the region yesterday to assist with the police's ongoing investigation.

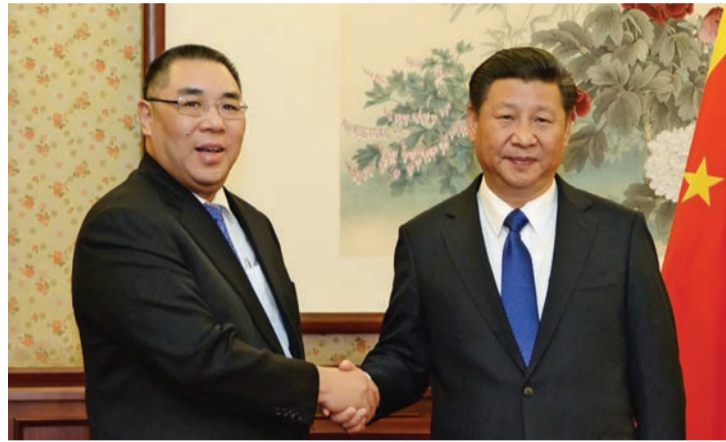
Xi highlights region stability during meeting with CE

CHINESE President Xi Jinping said that Beijing places great importance on Macau's prosperity and stability, urging the region to grasp the opportunities of development and to promote "appropriate diversification" of its economy.

President Xi made the remarks while meeting with the chief executive Chui Sai On, who was in Beijing to report his work in 2015 to the central government.

"Although Macau's economy has witnessed a consecutive slowdown due to various factors, society remains stable and it is facing new opportunities with a pressure-resistant economy," Xi said on Wednesday.

The president called on the MSAR government to unite all of society and seize opportunities to boost "appropriate diversification" of the local economy, in order to improve people's lives.



Chui Sai On (left) met with Xi Jinping in Beijing

According to Xinhua, the local "government was told to be prepared for any eventuality, maintain political stability, improve the ability of governance and promote the implementation of 'one country, two systems.'"

Stating that authorities in Macau have "worked hard on the region's long-term prosperity and achieved new developments", Xi said that the central government "fully endorses the work of Chui and

the SAR government."

Xi recalled that he attended celebrations marking the 15th anniversary of Macau's reunification with the Mainland on December 19, 2014. During the visit, he promised to clarify the borders of the coastal areas governed by Macau. This promise was fulfilled this month by the enforcement of new administrative divisions which demarcated the maritime and land zones of the region.

According to the new map, an 85-square-kilometer sea area to the east and south of Macau will be locally administered. "Such a demarcation will play a positive role in boosting the region's economic and social development," Xi said during the meeting, which was also attended by Zhang Dejiang, the chairman of the Chinese parliament (National People's Congress or NPC). In a separate meeting with Chui on Wednesday, Premier Li Keqiang pledged continued support to the SAR government. According to Xinhua, "Li expressed his appreciation of the MSAR's efforts to vigorously adjust the region's economic structure, to improve people's quality of life, to manage to achieve a fiscal surplus and to promote the job market."

He also called on the region to play the role as a platform for commercial cooperation between China and Portuguese-speaking countries. **MDT/Xinhua**

AD



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Man attempts self-immolation at midnight mass

A 48-year-old Macau resident reportedly tried to set himself on fire during the midnight mass service at the local cathedral of Macau on Christmas Eve. His action was allegedly undertaken in protest of the government's policies.

According to TDM, the Public Security Police reported that the resident attempted to douse himself in gasoline but was stopped following an intervention by the cathedral's staff and fellow worshippers. The Bishop

for Macau, José Lai, was conducting the mass when the incident occurred.

The man was later detained by police and sent to the psychiatric clinic in Taipa for examination.

The Judiciary Police said that the man had attempted the self-immolation due to his discontent with the government's policies.

Self-immolation, which conventionally refers to the practice of setting oneself alight in an attempted suicide, has been a

common form of protest in Asia since the mid-20th century, especially in Tibet, Vietnam, and India.

The attempted suicide was linked to another incident which occurred earlier that night when an individual was believed to have intentionally set a gasoline container on fire outside a natural gas company in the Inner Harbor district.

The police added that they believe that the man now detained was responsible for causing the previous incident. **Staff reporter**



The Macau cathedral

THE Macau Government Tourist Office (MGTO) held a total of 75 workshops, courses and seminars this year as part of its training opportunities program, entitled "Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme" (QTSAS), which targeted professionals in the travel trade and the catering industry.

The workshops are held to help service providers cater to visitors from a growing range of market segments, to foster quality tourism, and to build a positive des-

TOURISM

MGTO registers over 2,300 participants in workshops



Members of the local tourism industry attend a seminar on Islamic culture

ination image.

According to a press release issued by the MGTO,

the training courses were attended by over 2,300 participants, including tour guides, personnel of travel agencies, and employees in the hospitality, retail and catering industries.

Among the workshops held was the "International Introductory Award in Hospitality Customer Service," which was made available to award-winning mer-

chants of 2014. Meanwhile, the workshops titled "Service Mentality of Frontline Staff" and "Managing Difficult Customers" were conducted to help frontline employees embrace a more positive attitude at work and to improve their service skills.

MGTO says that they will continue to target the catering industry next year, but

will add a special focus on travel agencies.

The office also says that internships were offered to tourism office personnel from Portuguese-speaking countries as part of the QTSAS program. MGTO has this year joined the Supporting Office to the Secretariat of China and the Portuguese-Speaking Countries Econo-

mic Cooperation Forum (Macao) to coordinate these internships, and to build a foundation of cooperation for future years.

According to MGTO, there were tourism office personnel from Lusophone territories such as Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau and East Timor attending the workshops between March and May 2015.

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CCAC says gov't has discretionary powers in land concessions

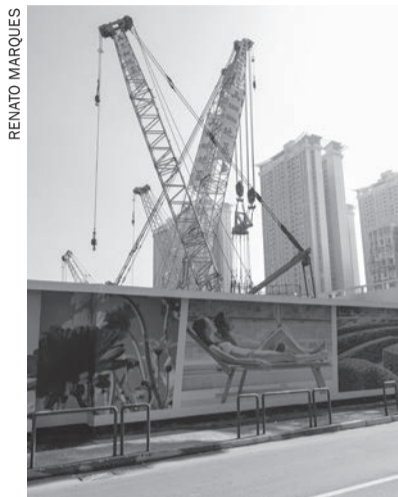
THE Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) has completed an investigation into the forfeiture of idle plots of land and has issued a report which claims that public declarations of land concession forfeitures are entirely at the discretion of the Public Administration.

The investigation, which had been undertaken at the request of the Chief Executive in June, sought to uncover where the decision making power lies in regard to recovery of unused land cases, or whenever the land concessionaire is penalized.

Such cases include the failure of a concessionaire to complete its projects within the stipulated time period, as in the case of the halted Pearl Horizon development.

The CCAC now says that it found that those decisions had not violated the current Land Law, adding there is no clear definition or criteria for when, how and if, revoked land-use concessions should be made public.

The public administration,



The Pearl Horizon construction site

according to the CCAC's interpretation, is entitled under the Land Law to respond to such cases either through the imposition of fines or through the declaration of forfeiture of the concession and recovery of the land.

Therefore, the commission says, declaring the forfeiture is not the only legal solution, and that the administration would be entitled to determine whether or not to make a declaration, based on a legal-technical analysis.

If the failure to use the land as agreed upon and within the approved time period is not wholly, or "solely attributable" to the developer, the public administration also retains the discretion to not initiate the procedure of land confiscation as per the Land Law.

The CCAC report also revealed the shortcomings of the current legal system for resolving problems concerning idle land, in a possible allusion to comments made recently by lawmakers in the Legislative Assembly.

The commission concluded that a lack of clear stipulation regarding accountability in the event that a land concessionaire does not meet its obligations,

as well as the lack of requirement for the Public Administration to disclose associated decision-making, had led them to suggest that the government should further consider the revision of existing laws.

Other recommendations in the CCAC report included increased transparency in the decision-making process regarding the forfeiture of land concessions, as well as the timely and accurate release of relevant information to the public.

It added that the fine that the Public Administration may impose on developers was too small to serve as an effective deterrent against malpractice. **Staff reporter**

Air Macau business remains profitable this year



Air Macau has introduced more carriers into its fleet in order to service increased flights to and from South Korea and Taiwan, as well as the company's newly-launched flights to Japan's Fukuoka that will commence early next year. Despite the current economic downturn, the airline's executives said that the company has "maintained their profits" as a result of their cost-lowering and product-diversifying efforts. The company also expressed its hopes for its business outlook on the sidelines of a blessing ceremony for the company's sixth carrier model Airbus A321. As of next year, the airline's fleet will consist of 17 aircrafts.

LAWMAKER DEMANDS EXPLANATION

LAWMAKER PEREIRA Coutinho has requested the government to provide an explanation as to why it failed to reclaim three idle plots of land that had not met their concessionaires' obligations. "Even if they are released with discretion, the government is still responsible for explaining to us [... why it] excluded these plots from recovery," the lawmaker asserted. Coutinho added that the Land Law upholds the public's right to know about the intentions behind any failure to reclaim land use.

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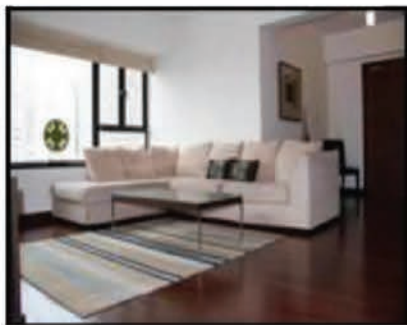
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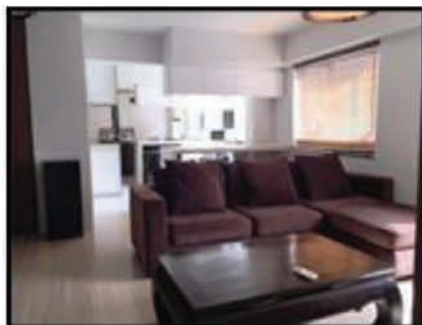


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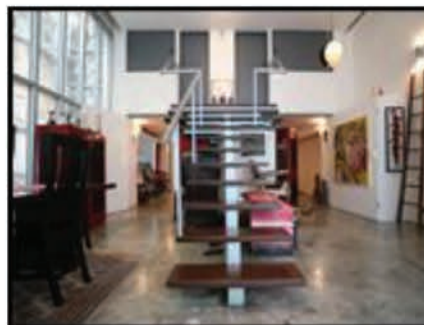
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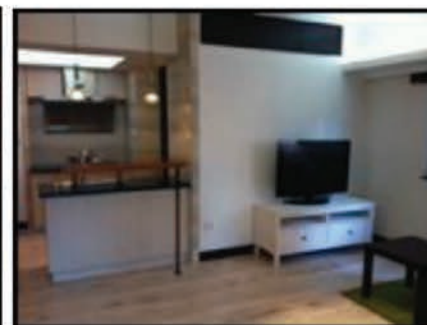
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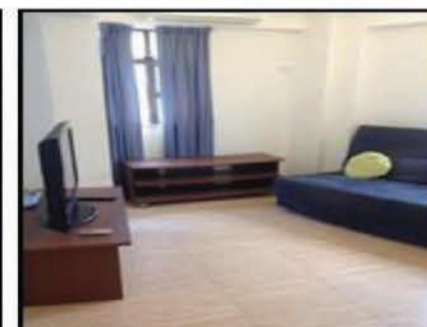
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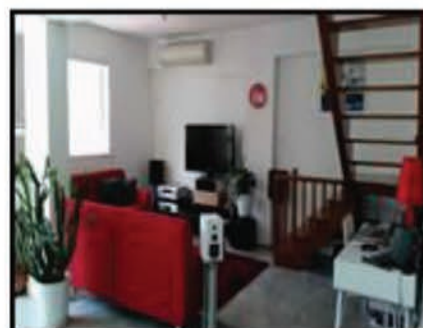
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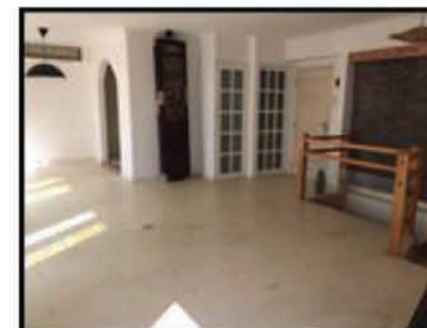
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HEALTH

Macau meets int'l standards on cancer prevention, expert says

THE president of the International Association of Cancer Registries (IACR), Roberto Zanetti, praised Macau for its improvements in the prevention and treatment of cancer, saying that the survival rates from the major types of cancer within five years are above average.

When visiting the territory recently, Mr Zanetti met this week with the head of the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention of Macau, Dr Lam Chong, and representatives of the Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Unit in order to exchange information and views on the current developments internationally and in Macau regarding the prevention and treatment of cancer.

During the meeting, representatives of the Macau health services provided Zanetti with the current data which included Macau's position regarding these diseases.

According to Dr Zanetti, colon and breast cancers have become the main concerns

in the territory, which places Macau among developed countries in terms of the tendency for cancers.

Nevertheless, the IACR president has noted that in the territory there is still a prevalence of cancers of the liver and stomach which is characteristic of developing countries.

Participants in the meeting also discussed among other topics, the pros and cons of colon cancer screening, breast and cervical cancer.

The cancer registry is a system used in several regions of the world for the purpose of monitoring the epidemiological status of cancer. The International Agency for Research on Cancer and the International Association of Cancer Registries are responsible for the publication of a five-year report, "Cancer Incidence in Five Continents" (CI5) that includes qualitative data on cancers over five consecutive years. Macau has been included for the first time in the latest publication. **RM**

CRIME

Judiciary Police seize 9.3 kg of cocaine in historic operation



PJ agents escort a drug trafficking suspect outside an inn in the Barra neighborhood



Agents show the evidence of the crime

THE Judiciary Police have apprehended a Turkish national and two Hong Kong residents yesterday morning in a guesthouse located on the Praça Ponte e Horta. The arrest is allegedly in relation to the second major drug trafficking case to have emerged since the region's establishment.

According to the authorities, the Turkish suspect, aged 45, entered the region from Brazil through Dubai and Taiwan, carrying the seized cocaine weighing 9.3 kilograms to the value of HKD25 million on the black market.

"He arrived in Macau at

around 10 p.m. last night and checked into this hotel right away," said Wong Chi Hong, the authorities' spokesman.

The investigators raided the suspect's room and discovered the other two suspects, a 34 year-old man and a 42 year-old woman from the neighboring HKSAR. At the time of the raid, they were in the midst of exchanging the cocaine, which was delivered hand-held and brought into the territory wrapped in bed sheets.

The Turkish suspect was employed by an unknown syndicate from overseas for

USD5,000 to bring the drugs into the territory. It has been said that he has made more than one visit to the region but it remains unconfirmed whether or not his previous visits were for the express purpose of drug smuggling.

The other two suspects also admitted to the police authorities to being hired for over HKD10,000 to come to the region to receive the contraband. The case requires a joint investigation with the Hong Kong authorities to identify further details of the smuggling operation. **AU**

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

HK Airport Authority to consider extending passenger levy

THE Airport Authority for Hong Kong has said that it will consider extending the period in which the increased passenger levy is applied if the third runway project for Hong Kong airport exceeds cost estimations.

A proposal released by the Airport Authority in September indicated that the passenger levy would be increased to HKD90 and HKD160 for economy short-haul and economy long-haul flights respectively, for the period spanning from 2016 to 2031, after a previous proposal was criticized for introducing too high a tax for ordinary passengers.

However the South China Morning Post reported last week that the Authority's chief executive, Fred Lam, had suggested that the passenger levies could be extended past 2031 should the runway project encounter unforeseen difficulties or exceed budgetary expectations.

The revision, which is scheduled for implementation in the second quarter of next year, is designed to help finance the construction of the third runway at the international airport.

The Airport Authority said that the new passenger levy could cover around 8 percent of the cost of the project. This is a considerable decrease from a pre-



Customers stand in line at a check-in counter at Terminal 2 of the HK airport

The new passenger levy could cover around 8pct of the cost of the project

vious proposal that sought to cover as much as 29 percent of the cost through the charges, according to an article on EJ Insight.

As per the comments on the SCMP, Lam is said to have assured parties that the Airport Authority would

closely monitor the project's implementation to prevent costs from exceeding estimates.

According to a recent report compiled by HSBC which addressed the new runway's anticipated finances, an unexpected event such as a SARS outbreak could force the authority to seek additional funding elsewhere.

The HSBC report suggested that an adverse event could mean the authority would need to find a supplementary HKD 3 billion in addition to the planned HKD 69 billion already borrowed.

Lam told the SCMP that the current financial plan

would be capable of funding the third runway, but in extreme circumstances, the authority would not rule out extending the raised passenger levy past 2031.

"Our preference is to go to the market to seek funding," said the authority's chief executive when asked about alternatives, should the cost exceed estimates.

Lam added that the authority's strong financial position would enable it to secure a private loan on favorable terms.

"We have no plans to ask for government money to fund the third runway project," the chief executive clarified. **Staff reporter**

8th US death due to Takata air bag explosion identified

A boy who was driving a car that crashed near Pittsburgh has been tentatively identified by the government as the eighth death in the U.S. due to an explosive air bag inflator made by auto parts maker Takata, according to federal transportation officials and a state police report.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration officials also announced an expansion in the recall of vehicles with Takata airbags, already the largest and most complex recall in the agency's history. The latest findings could result in the recall of several hundred thousand additional vehicles, officials said.

The appointment of an independent monitor to oversee the company's compliance with a government consent order on the recalls was also announced.

NHTSA learned of the latest death last week after a lawyer for the victim's family contacted the agency, NHTSA spokesman Gordon Trowbridge told reporters in a conference call. The car involved was a used 2001 Honda Accord under recall that was owned by a relative of the victim, he said. The victim died at a hospital several days after the crash. Trowbridge declined to provide further information about the death, but a Pennsylvania State Police report says a 13-year-old boy was driving the car in Mercer County, Pennsylvania, when it ran off the road, went down an embankment and struck a fallen tree. The report doesn't explain why the boy, who was alone, was driving the car.

"The agency has now tentatively concluded that this was likely a rupture-related fatality," Trowbridge said. The agency plans to examine the vehicle to confirm that conclusion, he said.

A woman in Malaysia was also killed by a rupturing Takata air bag last year, the only known fatality outside the U.S., bringing the global number of deaths to nine. More than 100 other people have been injured by the Takata inflators, which can explode with too much force, sending shrapnel into drivers and passengers.

In the U.S., about 23 million Takata air bag inflators have been recalled on 19 million vehicles sold by 12 auto and truck makers. Many of the air bag deaths and injuries involved low-speed crashes that otherwise would likely have been survivable, Trowbridge said. **AP**

corporate bits

ST. REGIS ANNOUNCES FESTIVE DINNERS



The St. Regis Macao has announced a new festive menu at The Manor restaurant to celebrate Christmas and the New Year.

The Manor offered visitors special Christmas Eve and Christmas Day set dinners at around MOP 1,225 per person, last week. While the New Year's Eve set offering is priced at MOP 1,231 and includes 9 courses.

Amongst the culinary selection available are hand-picked Russian crabs, tom kha Boston lobster soup, and roasted duck breast with tamarind and cauliflower.

The dinner is concluded with "The Manor New Year Dessert" and a selection of fine coffees, teas, and mignardises – tiny pastries and sweets traditionally served with after-dinner drinks.

CAESARS THWARTS SEVERAL LAWSUITS



Caesars Entertainment Operating Co. has managed to thwart a series of New York lawsuits that threaten to pull the parent company into bankruptcy, Bloomberg reports.

The operating unit managed to persuade a Chicago judge in an appeals court to halt the lawsuits; arguing that they constituted a threat to the

survival of its parent company, and subsequently both entities' ability to repay debts in the long run.

The operating company is fundamentally a bundle of debt-ridden assets assembled together by the company's parent Caesars Entertainment to try to salvage other, less debt-burdened, parts of the group. The parent company, Caesars

Entertainment Corporation, found itself facing lawsuits from creditors who claimed that the company violated U.S. federal law when it abandoned a pledge to repay the USD 7 billion debt its subsidiary had accumulated.

According to the Bloomberg report, should Caesars Entertainment Corp. lose the lawsuits against it, the company may be forced to file for bankruptcy too.

Around a year ago, when the company moved to re-organize its debt-ridden assets, a professor at the University of Nevada told The Guardian that the group is "a Nevada version of 'too big to fail'."

Caesars Entertainment employs a total of 68,000 people worldwide across more than 50 casino-resorts.

Embraer delivers first E195 aircraft to Tianjin Airlines



Two planes fly past each other above Tianjin, north China

BRAZILIAN aeronautical company Embraer delivered two E195 jet aircraft to Tianjin Airlines, a company that became the first customer of this aircraft model in China, Embraer said in a statement.

Embraer also said, according to the statement issued in São José dos Campos, that these two E195s, with a maximum capacity of 124 passengers, were part of a contract that Tianjin Airlines signed in 2014, during the visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Brazil, for the purchase of 20 E195 jets and 20 E190-E2 jets.

Guan Dongyuan, senior vice

president of Embraer and chairman of Embraer China, noted at the time that Tianjin Airlines was not only the company's biggest customer in the Asia/Pacific region but also the manager of the first Embraer authorised service centre in China.

Tianjin Airlines currently operates the largest fleet of E190 jets in China, with 45 aircraft.

Embraer Aviação Comercial has an 80-percent share in the Chinese regional aviation market and to date has delivered 130 aircraft, of a total of 188 firm orders, 21 of which are pending approval from the Chinese government. **MDT/Macauhub**

Chinese bank grants loan to East Timor



Dili, the capital of East Timor

THE Export Import Bank (ExIm) of China has granted a soft loan of USD50 million to East Timor for expansion and modernization of the Dili sewage system, the Timorese Ministry of Finance said.

In a statement, the Ministry of Finance also said the contract was signed on 18th December by Finance Minister Santana Cardoso and the Chinese ambassador to East Timor, Liu Hongyang, representing the state bank.

The loan granted by the Chinese bank has a 2 percent interest rate over 20 years, a grace period of five years and a maturity of 20 years, and its conditions are quite favorable, as it includes a donation equivalent to 27.76 percent of its value.

At the signing ceremony, the minister said the loan would significantly help to improve urban development and quality of life in Dili. **MDT/Macauhub**

ADVERTORIAL

SANDS CHINA NEWS

Sands China Continues Support of Local Suppliers

More than 200 new local suppliers invited to cooperate with the company

Sands China's local supplier support programme continues to gain momentum, with several positive results following August's Sands China Local Supplier Open Day at The Venetian Macao.

As of October 31, Sands China has invited 212 new local suppliers for bidding, including 170 small and micro companies, six "Made in Macao" companies and three dozen Macao young entrepreneurs' companies. Sands China and the Macao Chamber of Commerce had previously collaborated to identify these three types of local companies in particular to support.

Sands China has met with or contacted more than 75 per cent of this new batch of local suppliers to date. In consideration of their resources, capabilities, and status as first-time vendors of the company, Sands China is beginning the initial phase of business with preliminary purchases from 40 of the new suppliers. The potential purchase amount is estimated to total nearly MOP 10 million by the end of December.

Building on the success of the first few months of the programme, Sands China continues to seek additional business with new local suppliers, with an aim to increase the number of suppliers and the procurement amounts in due course.

Several of the new suppliers have stood out for their service and product quality, with Sands China pleased to cooperate further with them. With Sands China's local supplier support programme as a long-term initiative, the company is focused on cooperating with even more local companies of all three categories.

A small and micro enterprise is defined as any business which has over 50 per cent of its share capital held by Macao residents, and employs no more than 15 people who are working in the Macao Special Administrative Region. A "made in Macao" company refers to any business which holds an industrial license or a temporary industrial license, has over 50 per cent of its share capital held by Macao residents, and holds a certificate of origin issued by the Macao Economic Services Bureau or the Industrial Association of Macao. A Macao young entrepreneur must have over 50 per cent of his or her company's share capital held by Macao residents in the case of businesses run by entrepreneur-legal persons. In the case of a natural person, the applicant must be aged 21-44 at the time of application; in the case of a legal person, the shareholder with over 50 per cent of the share capital must be aged 21-44 at the time of application.

Sands China Ltd. and the Macao Chamber of Commerce jointly announced the launch of Sands China's local supplier support programme at a press conference in July. The programme is in line with the Macao government's initiative to "buy local" and demonstrates Sands China's commitment to supporting local enterprises as part of the company's corporate social responsibility efforts. It is part of Sands China's supplier relationship management strategy, which guides the company's long-standing effort to support local suppliers, whom it views as its strategic partners.

Besides providing information to prospective suppliers on nearly 200 purchase items for local companies, August's Sands China Local Supplier Open Day featured a business matching session with booths to connect potential suppliers with Sands China procurement representatives. The event also offered an opportunity for them to learn about Sands China's purchasing process, the supplier registration process, the purchase categories, and other relevant information from Sands China's procurement team.



Sands China's local supplier support programme has achieved positive results following August's Sands China Local Supplier Open Day (pictured), with the company having invited over 200 new local suppliers for bidding.

Didi Tang, Beijing

CHINA said Saturday that it will not renew press credentials for a French journalist, effectively expelling her following a harsh media campaign against her for questioning the official line equating ethnic violence in China's western Muslim region with global terrorism.

Expecting the move, Ursula Gauthier, a longtime journalist for the French news magazine L'Obs, said late Friday night that she was prepared to leave China.

Once she departs on Dec. 31, she will become the first foreign journalist forced to leave China since 2012, when American Melissa Chan, then working for Al Jazeera in Beijing, was expelled.

"They want a public apology for things that I have not written," Gauthier said. "They are accusing me of writing things that I have not written."

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang said that Gauthier was no longer "suitable" to be allowed to work in China because she had supported "terrorism and cruel acts" that killed civilians and refused to apologize for her words.

"China has always protected the legal rights of foreign media and foreign correspondents to report within the country, but China does not tolerate the freedom to embolden terrorism," Lu said in a statement.

Gauthier on Saturday called the accusations "absurd," and said that emboldening terrorism is morally and legally wrong. She said that she should be prosecuted if that were the case.

"All this is rhetoric," Gauthier said. "It's only meant to deter foreign correspondents in the future in Beijing."

In a statement Friday, the French foreign ministry said: "We regret that the visa of Madame Ursula Gauthier was not renewed. France recalls the importance of the role journalists play throughout the world."

The Foreign Correspondents' Club of China said the accusation that Gauthier supports ter-

French reporter who questioned terrorism expelled



Ursula Gauthier

rorism "is a particularly egregious personal and professional affront with no basis in fact." It said it was "appalled" by the decision, and expressed concerns that Beijing was using the accreditation and visa process to threaten foreign journalists.

"The FCCC views this matter as a most serious development and a grave threat to the ability of foreign correspondents to work in China," it said in a statement.

The fallout began with Gauthier's Nov. 18 article, shortly after the attacks in Paris. She wrote that Beijing's proclaimed solidarity with Paris is not wi-

thout ulterior motives, as Beijing seeks international support for its assertion that the ethnic violence in its Muslim region of Xinjiang is part of global terrorism.

Gauthier wrote that some of the violent attacks in Xinjiang involving members of the minority Uighur community appeared to be homegrown, with no evidence of foreign ties — an observation that has been made by numerous foreign experts on security and on Xinjiang's ethnic policies and practices.

Advocacy groups have argued that the violence is more likely

to be a response to Beijing's suppressive policies in Xinjiang.

Beijing blames the violence on terrorism with foreign ties. Amid a counterterrorism campaign, a Xinjiang court last year sentenced a Uighur (pronounced WEE-gur) scholar critical of China's ethnic policies in Xinjiang to life in prison. This month, a Beijing court convicted a prominent lawyer of fanning ethnic hatred based on his comments that Beijing should rethink its Xinjiang policies.

In her article, Gauthier focused on a deadly mine attack in a remote region of Xinjiang,

which she described as more likely an act by Uighurs against mine workers of the majority Han ethnic group over what the Uighurs perceived as mistreatment, injustice and exploitation. The article quickly drew stern criticism from state media and China's government.

The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs criticized Western

“They want a public apology for things that I have not written.”

URSULA GAUTHIER

media for using double standards in reporting on the violence.

"Why is terrorism in other countries called terrorist actions, but it turns out to be ethnic and religious issues in China?" ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said at a regular news briefing on Dec. 2.

By then, state media had launched an abusive and intimidating campaign against Gauthier, accusing her of having deep prejudice against China and having hurt the feelings of the Chinese people.

On Friday, Gauthier said that the Foreign Ministry demanded her to apologize for "hurting Chinese people's feelings with wrong and hateful actions and words," and to publicly state that she recognizes that there have been terrorist attacks in and outside Xinjiang.

She said she was also asked to distance herself from any support group that presents her case as infringement of press freedom in China. AP

Mine boss drowns himself after deadly collapse



A trapped miner is rescued from a collapsed gypsum mine in Pingyi County, east China's Shandong Province

THE owner of a Chinese gypsum mine drowned yesterday after jumping into a well in an apparent suicide during rescue efforts for 17 workers still trapped two days after the mine collapsed and killed one person, state media said.

Quoting a morning briefing by the rescue command center, state media said Ma Congbo, president of Yurong Commerce and Trade Ltd. Co., was assisting with rescue efforts on yesterday morning when he jumped into a mine well and drowned.

Since the mine collapse on Friday, rescuers have pulled 11 workers to safety and recovered one body. Another 17 miners are yet to be found.

Gypsum is a soft sulfate mineral that is widely used in construction. Chinese authorities have typically meted out harsh punishments, including jail sentences, to company management and local work safety officials following major work safety disasters. Still, lack of regulatory oversight prevails, and cost-conscious management fails to pay enough heed to work safety.

The mine collapse came just days after a landslide from a man-made pileup of construction waste in the southern city of Shenzhen killed one person and left another 75 missing and presumed dead.

Authorities have ruled that the landslide was not a geological disaster but a work safety incident, adding to China's list of major man-made disasters in recent years.

In a rare move, Shenzhen's top officials, including its party chief and mayor, bowed deeply at a press conference as an apology. AP

Japan says armed ship infiltrates waters near disputed islands



In this photo provided by Japan Coast Guard, an armed Chinese coast guard ship sails in the water near islands, known as the Senkaku in Japanese and the Diaoyu in Chinese

JAPANESE authorities said that for the first time Saturday, an armed Chinese coast guard vessel entered its territorial waters off islands claimed by both countries that are a flashpoint of disputes between the neighbors.

Japan's coast guard said the ship, armed with what appeared to be four gun turrets, was one of three Chinese coast guard vessels spotted inside Japanese waters in the East China Sea. It was the only one that was armed.

Chinese vessels regularly sail around the disputed islands, known as the Senkaku in Japanese and the Diaoyu in Chinese. But Japanese coast guard official Nanako Uehara said it was the first time an armed Chinese vessel had been sighted in Japan's waters.

The three vessels have since left the area. The armed ship also was spotted Tuesday in the area, but Japanese officials said it didn't infiltrate Japan's waters at that time.

The latest development could trigger concerns in Japan that China may be escalating its activities in the disputed parts of the East China Sea.

Last month, a Chinese navy ship took its time traversing the waters. Japan earlier this year protested China's unilateral exploration of undersea oil and gas deposits in the East China Sea, posting photos online of Chinese drilling equipment.

Relations between the two countries also have been strained over wartime history, though there have been signs of improvement recently. **AP**

Head of state-owned China Telecom probed



In this Feb. 27, 2014 file photo, then Chairman of China Unicom Ltd. Chang Xiaobing speaks at a press conference to announce the company's 2013 earnings in Hong Kong

THE head of a Chinese telecommunications giant has been placed under investigation on suspicion of corruption, the ruling Communist Party announced yesterday, as Beijing expands its anti-corruption campaign to more state sectors.

The party's disciplinary arm, the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, said on its website that Chang Xiaobing, chair of China Telecom, was suspected of having "severely violated disciplines."

The commission did

not provide any details on Chang's possible infractions, but the vague term typically means corruption.

Chang formerly was the chairman of China Unicom, another major state-owned telecommunications company. He was named the head of China Telecom in August.

Chinese President Xi Jinping launched the anti-graft campaign after he took office in early 2013. The drive has since expanded, with Xi warning that prevalent corruption threatens the party's rule. **AP**

AP PHOTO



Protesters with signs demand better education policies as Taiwan's 2016 presidential election candidates arrive for their first televised policy debate in Taipei

Taiwan presidential front-runner: Can't 'be bound' to Beijing

Johnson Lai, Taipei

THE front-runner in Taiwan's presidential race said yesterday that she would seek stable relations with mainland China, but did not rule out revisiting the island's official stance on independence, leaving open questions about how China would respond to her probable victory in next month's elections.

Tsai Ing-wen, the opposition leader who has firmly held onto a sizeable lead in polls, used her platform during the first debate to warn against the political rapprochement and deepening economic ties with the mainland brought by the ruling Nationalist Party, or KMT, since the 2008 elections.

"We cannot simply be bound to China," Tsai said. "That's what worries us most about the past eight years — the sense that that's the only choice we have. That's not good for our economy or our security."

Against the backdrop of a sputtering economy and rising anti-mainland sentiment, the Jan. 16 elections have been framed by both the KMT and the opposition

Democratic Progressive Party as a referendum on President Ma Ying-jeou's China policy.

Ma backed — with varying degrees of success — several trade pacts with the mainland during his two terms and held a historic summit in November with Chinese President Xi Jinping. It was the first such meeting since the

■ Tsai and her main opponent, KMT chairman Eric Chu, offered contrasting visions of how to revitalize Taiwan

Chinese Communist Party defeated the KMT in China's civil war and established the People's Republic of China in 1949.

The upcoming election is being closely watched by Washington and Beijing, which considers Taiwan a breakaway province and has threatened to take the island by force if it declares independence. Xi has delivered

hard-line messages to Taiwanese leaders in private meetings, while China's military conducted exercises near Taiwan earlier this year in a show of force.

Yesterday, Tsai and her main opponent, KMT chairman Eric Chu, offered contrasting visions of how to revitalize Taiwan, which is becoming increasingly crowded out by the world's No. 2 economy on the world stage. Still, both distanced themselves from the deeply unpopular Ma.

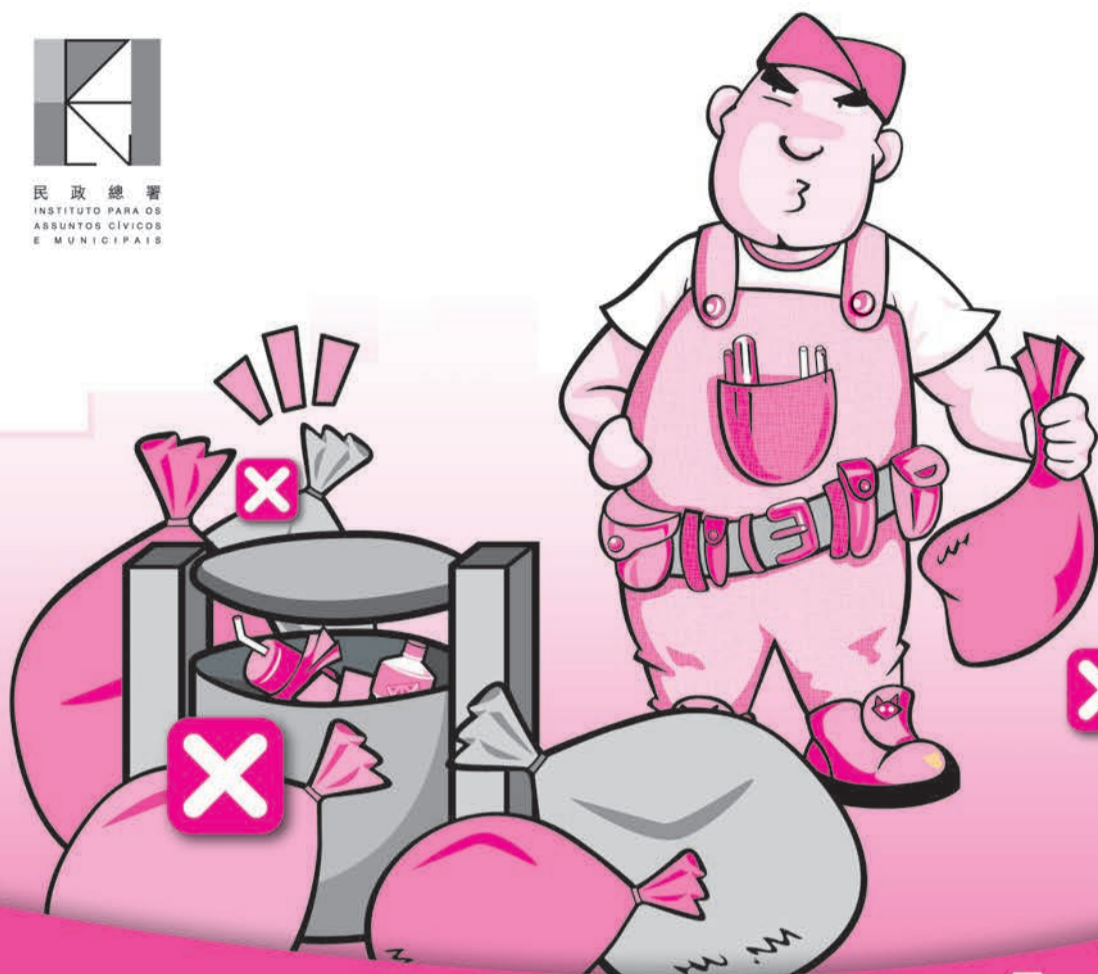
Chu, the mayor of Taipei, apologized for the incumbent party's performance, but attacked Tsai as a destabilizing force whose victory would only undercut an economy that unexpectedly shrank in the third quarter. He described forging ties with China as a matter of economic reality.

"When I talk to our fruit farmers, our fishermen, our small businesses, they say the No. 1 thing they fear is Tsai Ing-wen," Chu said, while repeatedly criticizing Tsai's stance on the independence issue as vague.

"A basic requirement is good, stable cross-strait relations," he said. "It's not just about security." **AP**



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Jim Gomez, Manila

TERRORISM

14 killed in Muslim rebel attacks in southern Philippines

CHRISTMAS attacks by Muslim rebels in Christian villages in the southern Philippines left at least 14 people dead and may have been partly influenced by the notoriety of the Islamic State group, officials said Saturday.

The dead included nine Christian villagers separately gunned down by Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighter insurgents and at least five rebels killed by government forces in clashes in three provinces on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, said regional military spokeswoman Capt. Joan Petinglay.

About 200 rebels took part in at least eight attacks on Thursday and Friday, Petinglay said by phone. She said the military learned about the impending attacks and secured towns and villages and warned villagers not to venture out, preventing a larger number of casualties.

“We learned that the BIFF had plans to attack civilians and our detachments so we went on heightened alert even before Christmas,” Petinglay said. “That prevented the rebels from attacking villages and inflicting more casualties.”

Despite warnings from the military, five farmers went to their farms Thursday to spray insecticide on their crops in Maguindanao province and were captured and gunned down by the rebels, she said.



Soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines march

In a nearby village in Esperanza town in Sultan Kudarat province, rebels fleeing from army troops took a family hostage on Thursday, freeing a mother and her child but killing three men.

A village official was also gunned down by the militants late Thursday in a village in North Cotabato province.

Villagers in one area hid in a Roman Catholic church after word of the rebel assaults spread, Petinglay said.

At least four rebels died in a clash when they assaulted a military outpost in Esperanza town on Thursday, sparking a gunbattle, the military said.

One other wounded rebel was reported to have died in a village clinic, according to Petinglay.

Two homemade bombs were left by the militants in a jungle trail where pursuing army

troops would pass, but the soldiers found the explosives, she said.

The hard-line rebels broke off from the larger Moro Islamic Liberation Front several years ago when they opposed the latter's decision to hold peace talks with the Philippine government, opting to continue to fight for a separate homeland in the south for minority Muslims in the predominantly Catholic Philippines.

A Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighter spokesman said last year that his group supports Islamic State militants in Syria and Iraq.

Government peace talks negotiator Miriam Coronel-Ferrer said the breakaway rebels may have carried out the attacks to ride on the restiveness fostered by the Islamic State group and to exploit delays in the enforcement of a peace deal signed by the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front last year. **AP**

INDONESIA

Police arrest 2 more suspected militants

Ali Kotarumalos, Jakarta

INDONESIAN police said they have arrested two more suspected militants including a member of China's ethnic Uighur minority who was allegedly preparing to be a suicide bomber.

National Police spokesman Maj. Gen. Anton Charliyan says the suspects were captured in two places Wednesday in Bekasi, a West Java town bordering eastern Jakarta.

The arrests of Arif Hidayatullah, alias Abu Mush'ab, and Alli, a Uighur who used a fake identity card, came as security has been stepped up after officials described a credible threat of attacks, especially against minority Christians, during the year-end holidays.

The government has deployed 150,000 security personnel to safeguard churches, airports and other public places across

this predominantly Muslim nation.

At the same time 1,300 security personnel are hunting Indonesia's most wanted militant, Abu Wardah Santoso, who has pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group. The leader of the East Indonesia Mujahidin is hiding in Central Sulawesi.

More than 800 Indonesians are believed to have joined IS in Syria or Iraq.

“Learning from history, we have to be alert against terrorism,” Charliyan said. “Threats from terrorists could not be ignored.”

Hidayatullah, an employee at a private auto company, was nabbed Wednesday morning while on way to his office. Evidence police said they confiscated included a list of militants who are in prisons and others who are fighting with IS in Syria.

Police say he confessed he was ordered by Bahrunnaim, another

militant who is now in Syria, to act as a coordinator or facilitator for Indonesians wanting to join IS.

Alli came to Jakarta two months ago and is known as a bomb maker.

Charliyan said police found homemade bombs in a car and confiscated explosive materials in their houses.

“We even discovered a vest prepared for the suicide bombing and a map of a government building they planned to attack,” he added.

Top security officials have warned that they have received intensive intelligence about the possibility of radical attacks especially at airports and strategic areas.

National police chief Gen. Badrodin Haiti said “there are many possible threats and vulnerabilities, ranging from conventional crimes to terrorism and radicalism.”

Over the weekend authorities arrested nine suspected Muslim militants in Tasikmalaya, another West Java town, Central and East Java. Authorities alleged they planned to attack government officials and minority Shiite Muslims.

ENVIRONMENT

Plan to clean New Delhi's air may fizzle as auto rules eased

Ashok Sharma, New Delhi

THE Indian capital, gasping and choking under record-high air pollution, announced a grand plan to clean its air. But that plan seems to be fizzling before it starts.

Arvind Kejriwal, the top elected official of the Indian capital, had said last month that private cars will be allowed on New Delhi's roads only on alternate days from Jan. 1-15, depending on whether their license plates end in an even or an odd number.

On Thursday, he announced a list of people exempted from that rule: top politicians, judges, police and prison officials, women and sick people. He also left out two-wheeled vehicles like motorbikes and scooters.

The effects of pollution in New Delhi are palpable: gray, overladen skies, difficulty in breathing and the smell of vehicle exhaust that pervades the air.

On Thursday, the Indian environment monitoring index showed record levels of PM2.5, the tiny, inhalable particles that are of particular concern because with diameters no greater than 2.5 micrometers, they're small enough to penetrate deep into the lungs causing the maximum damage.

The average PM2.5 levels for New Delhi Thursday were over 293, almost 5 times higher than the Indian norm of 60 and some 15 times over the WHO standard of 20.

Plans to clean up the city's near intolerable pollution levels had included shutting down one of the oldest and least efficient power plant, a temporary ban on the sale of large



Cars and autorickshaws move through the central Connaught Place area in New Delhi, India

diesel vehicles and a stiff toll for pollution-sweeping trucks entering the Indian capital.

The Supreme Court earlier this month also banned trucks from entering the city if they're over 10 years old or are just transiting through. In addition, all taxis in the area, including private ride-hailing services such as Uber, have to switch to compressed natural gas by March 31.

But it was the plan to reduce the cars on the sprawling capital's roads that was the most dramatic.

Last year, the World Health Organization named New Delhi the world's most polluted city, with 12 other Indian cities ranking among the worst 20. Air pollution contributes to more than 600,000 deaths each year in India.

The watering down of the plan has disappointed many who cheered when Kejriwal first announced his grand scheme. **AP**

Sonia Perez D., Rabinal

JUAN Chen Chen lit up as he recalled a childhood spent romping in the Guatemalan countryside, playing soccer and spinning tops while his parents harvested maize and squash.

But his voice turned somber and his eyes wandered blankly to focus on a nonexistent horizon as he described the events of March 1980, when the army came to town. Chen managed to hide, but others weren't so lucky.

"I saw when they put a bullet in my father's head," he said. "My father was left lying there, and the dogs began to eat his brains. (...) It was the soldiers who were providing security for the dam." He and his surviving family members fled to the mountains of the Central American nation.

Chen's tale is among hundreds of oral histories being collected by the USC Shoah Foundation, founded by American director Steven Spielberg. When completed, it will be the most comprehensive repository of eyewitness accounts from Guatemala's 1960-1996 civil conflict in which some 245,000 people were killed or disappeared, most of them by soldiers and paramilitary gangs.

It's the Shoah Foundation's first time working in Latin America after gathering 52,000 accounts from the Nazi Holocaust, genocides in Armenia (1915-23) and Rwanda (1994) and the 1937 Nanking Massacre in China.

The foundation based at the University of Southern California has already recorded 100 testimonies from the conflict and plans to gather at least 500 in cooperation with the Forensic Anthropology Foundation of Guatemala. The remaining oral histories will be collected in 2016 with the aim of completing the project the following year.

Spielberg's Shoah Foundation documents Guatemala genocide



Juan Chen Chen, a survivor of the Rio Negro massacre, speaks during an interview to the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation FAFG in Rabinal, Guatemala

Fredy Peccerelli, director of the Forensic Anthropology Foundation, said the goal is to tell the stories "that nobody wants to know about, without either political or ideological filters," and paint a retrospective portrait of life before, during and after the war.

Toward that end, workers are fanning out into the countryside to interview people such as Chen, an indigenous Achi man who survived the massacres in Rio Negro, Baja Verapaz department, about 110 miles (175 kilometers) north of Guatemala City.

"We are farmers," Chen told interviewer Yeni de Leon, re-

calling how he met his arranged bride, Margarita, on their wedding day. He was 17, she 15. "We always lived well. There was no violence until then."

But the army suddenly showed up asking about people who supposedly had stolen equipment from government workers who were building the Chixoy dam. There was an argument and the soldiers killed seven community leaders, touching off years of terror in the tiny town. Activists say the government sought to force residents out of the area to avoid conflicts over the construction and caused thousands of deaths.

Chen said he was forced to join

patrols, but still was thrown behind bars and tortured.

"Look at my hands, here I have a scar. Look at my leg, that's where they stuck the knife in," the 58-year-old said, weeping. "They accused us of being guerrillas. ... It wasn't true."

Chen says he now wants justice, noting that some of the people who tortured him live nearby.

But justice for civil-war abuses has been hard to come by in Guatemala. Many military figures accused of ordering or carrying out mass killings still walk free decades later.

Several attempts to prosecute former dictator Efraim Rios

■ Around 245,000 people were killed or disappeared during Guatemala's 1960-1996 civil conflict

Montt and his then-intelligence chief for the killing of 1,771 indigenous Ixil people by security forces under his 1982-83 government have balked. A new genocide prosecution is set to begin in January, but it cannot result in any punishment for Rios Montt because he has been deemed unfit to stand trial for health reasons.

According to a report by Recovery of Historic Memory, at least 422 massacres occurred nationwide during the conflict. Human rights organizations say northern Guatemala and indigenous communities in particular suffered the brunt of the killings.

Fernando Osorio, 70, also survived the Rio Negro massacre and spent two years in the mountains, surviving by eating whatever he could find. Perched on a chair in his dirt-floor adobe home, he recounted in halting Spanish the horrors he witnessed.

"My children were still little," said Osorio. "They grabbed them like cats and smashed them against a pine tree." AP

Death toll at least 8 in Texas storms that spawned tornadoes

TORNADOES swept through the Dallas area, leaving substantial damage and at least eight people dead either from the storm or related traffic accidents, in the latest of a succession of freakish winter weather events across the country.

The Texas tornadoes that touched down after dark on Saturday followed days of tumultuous weather in the Southeast including unusual winter tornadoes that left 18 people dead there over the Christmas

holiday period.

National Weather Service Meteorologist Anthony Bain in Fort Worth said several tornadoes touched down in the Dallas area, although the full extent of damage would not be known until daylight Sunday.

The storms left homes had roofs blown away, vehicles mangled or turned upside down, churches damaged, power lines down, natural gas lines burst, trees toppled and debris strewn across

neighborhoods. The damage stretched over about a 40-mile (64-kilometer)-long area from 20 miles (32 kilometers) south of Dallas to northeast of the city.

Joe Harn, police spokesman for Garland, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) northeast of Dallas, said five people were killed in vehicle accidents during the massive storm, but it's unclear if all were in the same vehicle or how they died.

Three other people died

in Collin County, about 45 miles (72 kilometers) northeast of Dallas, according to sheriff's deputy Chris Havey, although the circumstances were not immediately clear.

The Red Cross said it was setting up shelters for people whose homes were damaged by the storm.

"I think everyone understands now the gravity of what happened," Anita Foster, spokeswoman for American Red Cross of North Texas, said on WFAA television. AP



People run as weather sirens sound as a severe storm passes over downtown Dallas on Saturday

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what's ON



THE MAGNIFICENT PALACE – IMPERIAL ARCHITECTURE OF THE FORBIDDEN CITY
TIME: 10am-7pm (No admission after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: March 13, 2016
VENUE: Macau Museum of Art, Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
ADMISSION: MOP5 (Free on Sundays and public holidays)
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 7588

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

FORMER HOME OF REVOLUTIONARY LEADER YE TING
TIME: 10am-6pm daily (Except Wednesdays, open 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

Offbeat

RULING UPHOLDS RULE ALLOWING MORE HAWAII BIGEYE TUNA FISHING



A federal judge has ruled longline fishermen in Hawaii may continue catching more bigeye tuna, or ahi, than the maximum set by international regulators.

U.S. District Judge Leslie Kobayashi last week issued the ruling rejecting environmental groups' claims that the extra fishing is illegal.

The opinion came just in time for the year-end holidays when Hawaii consumers crowd stores to buy ahi sashimi for Christmas and New Year's celebrations. A ruling adverse to the fishermen had the potential to shut down or curtail the Hawaii fishery for the rest of the calendar year.

Michael Tosatto, the Pacific Islands regional administrator for the National Marine Fisheries Service, said Thursday the agency is happy the judge found the rules lawful.

"I think we're just pleased that the fishery remains on a stable footing without the need for further action," Tosatto said.

An international commission that regulates commercial fishing between Indonesia and Hawaii set a limit of about 3,500 metric tons for Hawaii longline fishermen this year. The Hawaii fishery reached the limit — set by the 26-member nation Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission — in August.

But the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service created a rule allowing additional catch limits for three U.S. Pacific territories. It then allowed the territories to allocate up to half of their catch limit to Hawaii-based longline fishing vessels.

Environmentalists sued, arguing the arrangement undermines international agreements aimed at eliminating bigeye overfishing.

Kobayashi's ruling referred to the practice as "quota shifting." She concluded that it wasn't arbitrary and capricious. She said setting up the system didn't exceed the fisheries service's authority.

A staff attorney for one of the plaintiff groups expressed disappointment in the decision.

Bigeye tuna is being overfished in the Pacific, said Catherine Kilduff of the Center for Biological Diversity. Although bigeye tuna fishing is being managed internationally, the rules aren't adequate to protect the fish, she said.

"We were really relying on the U.S. government to make the right decision," said Kilduff.

Bigeye is one of two tuna varieties known as ahi. The other is yellowfin. It's popular for sushi and fish steaks.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
17:30	Trail of Lies (Repeat)
18:20	Contraponto (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Oepra
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Sports
22:10	Trail of Lies
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:05	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:40	RTPi Live

cinema



CINETEATRO

17 DEC - 30 DEC



STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS

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

Director: J.J. Abrams

Starring: Teresa Palmer, Luke Bracey, Édgar Ramírez

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 135min

POINT BREAK

ROOM 2
 (3D) 7.30 pm

Director: Ericson Core

Starring: Teresa Palmer, Luke Bracey, Édgar Ramírez

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 113min

IP MAN 3

ROOM 2
 5.45, 9.30, 11.30 pm

Director: Wilson Yip Wai Shun

Starring: Donnie Yen, Lynn Xiong, Max Zhang

Language: Cantonese (English and Cantonese)

Duration: 110min

LOVE THE COOPERS

ROOM 3
 2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Jessie Nelson

Starring: Aalan Arkin, John Goodman, Ed Helms, Diane Keaton

Language: Cantonese (English and Cantonese)

Duration: 105min

YO-KAI WATCH THE MOVIE

ROOM 3
 2.15, 5.50 pm

Director: Shigeharu Takahashi

Language: Cantonese (English and Cantonese)

Duration: 91min

THE LITTLE PRINCE

ROOM 3
 (2D) 2.00, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Mark Osborne

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 108min

MACAU TOWER

17 DEC - 6 JAN

STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: J.J. Abrams

Starring: Teresa Palmer, Luke Bracey, Édgar Ramírez

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 135min

this day in history



2003 BRITAIN GIVES GO-AHEAD FOR 'SKY MARSHALS'

Armed undercover "sky marshals" will be placed on some British passenger planes in the United States, the British Government has announced.

Home Secretary David Blunkett and Transport Secretary Alistair Darling said the move was a "responsible and prudent step" in response to the heightened state of alert in the US and would be deployed "where appropriate".

Last week America raised the national alert to code orange, the second-highest level, after reports that a French airliner would be hijacked and used as a missile against a US city.

The plan, which is part of a general tightening of airport and airline security in the wake of the September 11 attacks, is opposed by the British Airline Pilots Association (Balpa).

Balpa general secretary Jim McAuslan said: "We do not want guns on planes. It is dangerous to have guns on planes and there are other things you can do, like investing in security measures on the ground."

He said the union would be advising its members not to fly if they were "not comfortable with arrangements". British Airways and Virgin Atlantic have declined to comment.

The announcement follows a number of security scares involving airports in recent days. Last Wednesday six Air France flights between Paris and Los Angeles were cancelled amid fears of a terrorist attack.

Today's announcement follows a similar move by the Australian Government two days ago. It said it would place sky marshals on Qantas flights to Singapore. The Israeli airline El-Al, famous for its strict security, has been using armed marshals for more than 30 years. The German airline Lufthansa also has them on some of its flights.

In a separate warning yesterday, the British Government said it believed terrorists could be in the final stages of planning an attack in Saudi Arabia. British nationals have already been warned against all but essential travel to the kingdom following attacks in Riyadh in May and November this year.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The following day the Bush administration ordered all foreign airlines to deploy armed sky marshals on flights to the US deemed by Washington to be a risk, or face having their flights banned from US air space.

Some EU countries - in particular Italy, Portugal, Denmark, Sweden and Finland - strongly opposed the use of sky marshals, preferring to cancel flights that the US felt were a threat and to concentrate on tightening security at ground level.

After talks in Brussels with EU officials in January 2004, the US softened its stance insisting there was no "blanket policy" to stop airlines without marshals entering America.

In December 2005 a US sky marshal shot dead a man who claimed to have a bomb on board an American Airlines plane. It was the first time since 9/11 that a passenger had been shot by an air marshal.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Try to pitch in when you see something that's not working out at the office or at home — you don't need to wait for the distress signal before snapping into action. Your initiative earns kudos.

Taurus April 20-May 20 You need to get out there and enjoy the nightlife — or daytime — of your city, town or village. A concert would be perfect for your energy, even if it's just the lull of a low-key jukebox.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Don't let anything accumulate in your inbox for long today — you need to answer messages as soon as you get them, or you risk losing out on great opportunities. Make it fast!

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Your ability to communicate is heightened today, so reach out to an old family member or make a new friend — use that social energy before it dissipates! It's a good time to build bridges.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 How does your budget look? If you don't have one to check on, now is a great time for you to draw one up — with the help of a smart friend, of course. You may be surprised by what you find.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You find yourself on the receiving end of some serious praise — or maybe an award of some kind. You know you deserve it, but it's hard to take this in the right way. You can make it work!

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 You're facing far too many details today — you need to make sure that you can cover them all, or maybe get them covered by someone else. Things don't have to get too crazy, right?

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Your secrets are starting to come out — but only the ones that you want to make public! Your strategic release of information should come as a surprise to at least one key player.

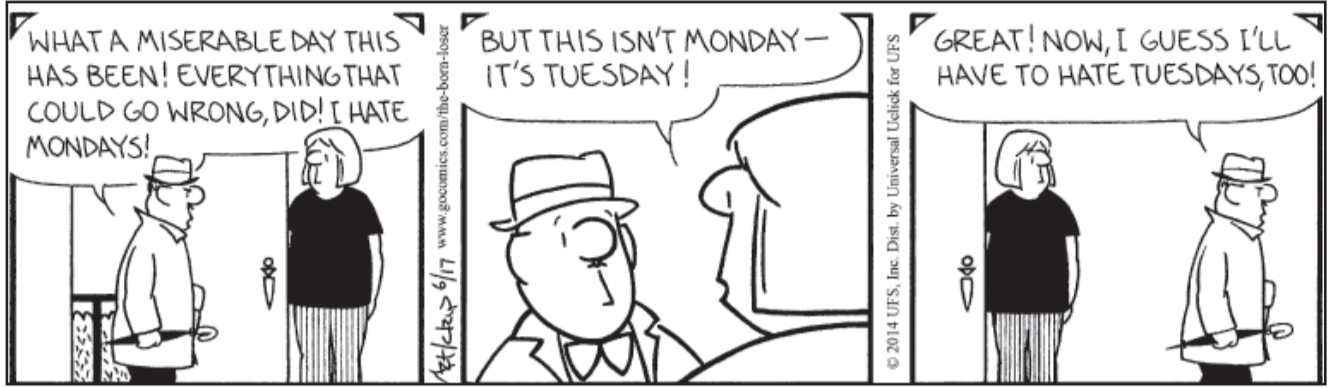
Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 This is not the time to rush ahead — you have to cover all the details of your new work or home situation first. One step at a time gets it all done, whereas impulsive behavior moves you backward

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You need to spend some time online or in a good, old-fashioned library today — the information you need isn't going to come to you! Ask questions and follow up leads until you know it all.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You feel a little closer to normal today, and better able to see things through a prism of responsibility rather than freaked-out worry or wild fantasy. It may not be as fun, but it's closer to the truth.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 You need to get to work on a new project — and today is perfect for picking out new things to do. You may find that your energy is better spent on intense and focused tasks than diffuse brainstorming.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

6 2 | | 5 7 | | |
| | 4 | | | | |
8 | | | 2 | | 6 |
| | 4 | | 6 5 | |
9 6 | 8 | 3 2 | |
4 5 | 7 | | | |
5 | 2 | | 3 | | |
8 | | | 4 | | | |
| 2 3 | | | 1 8 |

Easy+

| | 8 6 | | 1 |
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6 7 | 4 | | 2 |
7 | 3 | 5 | | |
6 4 | | | | 3 7 |
| 5 8 | 2 | | |
7 | | 9 | 2 1 | |
5 | 1 | | 6 | | |
4 | 2 8 | | | |

Medium

5 8 | | | 9 |
| | 3 8 | 7 |
| 4 | | 3 5 |
3 9 | 8 | | 8 |
2 | 6 3 | | 8 |
| | 4 | 3 2 | |
6 1 | | 5 | | |
5 7 2 | | | |
8 | | 7 4 | | |

Hard

6 | 2 | | | |
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| | | 1 5 4 | |
2 | 3 | | | |
8 | | | | 6 |
1 | 4 | | | |
4 3 | | | | |
| 7 | | | 2 |

WEATHER

MIN MAX CONDITION

CHINA

Beijing -7 2 cloudy/clear
Harbin -27 -16 cloudy/clear
Tianjin -4 3 overcast/clear
Urumqi -9 0 cloudy/clear
Xi'an -3 7 clear/cloudy
Lhasa -5 7 cloudy/clear
Chengdu 2 12 overcast
Chongqing 7 11 cloudy/overcast
Kunming 3 15 cloudy
Nanjing 2 7 cloudy
Shanghai 5 9 cloudy
Wuhan 2 10 cloudy
Hangzhou 5 9 overcast/cloudy
Taipei 16 19 moderate rain
Guangzhou 11 18 overcast/cloudy
Hong Kong 15 19 cloudy

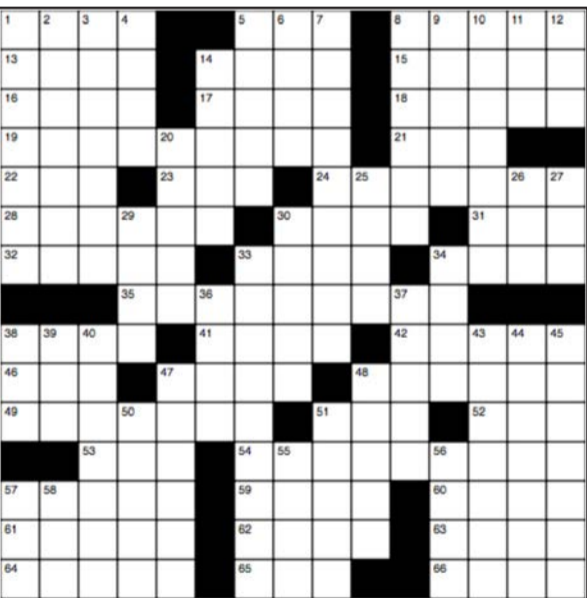
WORLD

Moscow -10 -5 snow
Frankfurt 0 10 overcast
Paris 4 11 overcast/cloudy
London 9 14 drizzle/overcast
New York 5 19 drizzle

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Bull; 5- Slip up; 8- Fountain treats; 13- Lively dance; 14- Fireplace opening; 15- Iota preceder; 16- ___ delighted!; 17- Portnoy's creator; 18- Chair designer Charles; 19- Written history of a person's life; 21- "Exodus" role; 22- Put ___ fight; 23- Fail to tell the truth; 24- Wounded; 28- Underground passage; 30- French airport; 31- Bruins legend; 32- ___ Park, CO; 33- Talk big; 34- "What I Am" singer Brickell; 35- Helper; 38- Antlered animal; 41- Sunburn soother; 42- Paddled; 46- Heart chart, for short; 47- Actor Ken; 48- Zero; 49- Eternal; 51- Long-leaved lettuce; 52- CD-___; 53- ___ Aviv; 54- Bizarre; 57- King of Troy; 59- River to the Ubangi; 60- Parent's sister; 61- ___ la vista; 62- Fornicary residents; 63- Speed contest; 64- Fiend; 65- Mil. officers; 66- Robert of "The Sopranos";

DOWN: 1- Testimonial; 2- Legendary king of Thebes; 3- Reverberating loudly; 4- Designer Cassini; 5- Get hitched quick; 6- Batting Babe; 7- Restore moisture; 8- Passionate; 9- Butler's love; 10- A deified mortal; 11- Chowd down; 12- Airline to Oslo; 14- Fragile; 20- Like non-oyster months; 25- Pond organism; 26- "___ tu" (Verdi aria); 27- Rap's Dr. ___; 29- Close by; 30- Director Welles; 33- Able to speak two languages; 34- Coup d'___; 36- Room in a casa; 37- Gallows loop; 38- Narc's org.; 39- Supplement, with "out"; 40- Conceit; 43- Finback; 44- Proclaim; 45- Greek goddess of agriculture; 47- Person in the petroleum industry; 48- Short letters; 50- Cool!; 51- Young male horses; 55- 1996 Tony-winning musical; 56- Wraparound dress; 57- Third degree?; 58- Actress Charlotte;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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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
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IACM 28 387 333
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Rob Harris, Stoke

ARSENAL and Manchester United were embarrassed and Chelsea drew on another erratic day in the Premier League. And despite losing at Liverpool, Leicester's surprise lead was maintained on Saturday.

Man United manager Louis van Gaal might not stick around in England to see if Leicester can win the league for the first time.

Losing 2-0 at Stoke on Boxing Day condemned United to a fourth consecutive defeat in all competitions for the first time since 1961, and pushed the team down to sixth place.

Van Gaal lamented his players' inability to handle the pressure, and partly blamed the windy conditions at Stoke. Then the manager conceded he might be at fault and suggested he could resign.

"I do my utmost best to find solutions to cope with the pressure," Van Gaal said. "But in the end my players have to do that by themselves."

It was a hapless first-half performance, and Van Gaal questioned why his players "don't dare to play football."

Memphis Depay's diving backward header allowed Bojan Krkic to put Stoke in front, and Marko Arnautovic powered in a second goal from outside the penalty area.

Wayne Rooney was forced to start a league game on the bench for the first time in two years, and United provided a greater threat only with its captain on the field in the second half. But a combination of poor finishing and Jack Butland's saves prevented United from leaving Stoke with anything.

Van Gaal's comments and demeanor suggest his stay at Old Trafford is reaching an endgame after barely 18 months in charge.

"I can also quit by myself," Van Gaal said when asked about receiving assurances about his job security, before adding: "It is not always ... the club has to fire or sack me."

Asked if he would be in charge at Old Trafford on Monday



Man United manager Louis van Gaal

EPL

Van Gaal could quit United; Arsenal routed by Southampton

when United plays Chelsea, Van Gaal said: "You will have to wait and see. But I think so."

On a rare day when every Premier League team was in action, there was a bigger humbling for Arsenal, which missed the chance to go top after being thrashed 4-0 by Southampton.

Cuco Martina's half-volley put Southampton in front and Shane Long scored twice either side of Jose Fonte's header as the hosts rose to 12th place.

"We lost too many challenges, they were sharper than us, and we were a bit unlucky as well," Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger said.

Arsenal stayed two points behind Leicester, which lost 1-0 at Liverpool after conceding from Christian Benteke.

Manchester City quickly recovered from losing at Arsenal

on Monday to thump struggling Sunderland 4-1 to stay third. There were four different City scorers: Raheem Sterling, Yaya Toure, Wilfried Bony, and Ke-

Guus Hiddink's first match in charge ended in a 2-2 draw at home to high-flying Watford

vin de Bruyne.

A change of manager at Chelsea produced no quick-fix. Guus Hiddink's first match in charge ended in a 2-2 draw at

home to high-flying Watford after Oscar missed a second-half penalty that could have secured back-to-back wins.

Watford came from behind after conceding from Diego Costa's volley to take the lead at Stamford Bridge. Troy Deeney leveled from the spot and Odion Ighalo put the visitors in front before Costa equalized with his second.

While Chelsea remains two points above the relegation zone — and 13 points from fourth place — Watford is behind United only on goal difference in seventh place.

Tottenham remained fourth after a 3-0 victory over Norwich engineered by Harry Kane's double — the first from the penalty spot — and Tom Carroll's strike. Kane has 27 goals in 2015, surpassing Teddy Sherin-

gham's previous club record of 26 in a calendar year, 22 years ago.

Crystal Palace is two points behind Tottenham in fifth place after a 0-0 draw at Bournemouth that extended the London club's unbeaten run to four games.

Aston Villa remains bottom and Remi Garde is still searching for a first win as manager after a 1-1 draw against West Ham.

Newcastle dropped into the relegation zone after Tom Cleverley gave Everton a 1-0 win at St. James' Park.

Swansea climbed out of the bottom three by beating West Bromwich Albion 1-0, with Ki Sung-yueng's first goal of the season ending a four-month spell without a home win in south Wales. **AP**

World Sailing to probe Israeli visa refusal in Malaysia

WORLD Sailing said yesterday it will investigate reports that two Israeli windsurfers and their coach have been refused visas to compete at the Youth Sailing World Championships in Langkawi, Malaysia, saying all international sailors should be allowed to compete.

Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaludin earlier told the Malay Mail Online website that the visa decision was "guided by the existing policy of the Malaysian government" which does not have diplomatic relations with Israel.

The Israel Sailing Association said windsurfers Yoav Omer and Noy

Drihan and coach Meir Yaniv would not attend the event that begins Sunday because they had not received visas. Amir Gill, chairman of the Israel association, also told local media that Malaysia had placed "unacceptable" demands by forbidding athletes from carrying their country's flag or wearing

any symbol on their attire and surfboards that showed their country of origin.

World Sailing president Carlo Croce said in a statement that a member of its executive was en route to Malaysia "to investigate this issue and is seeking clarification from the Malaysian Organizing Authority."

"World Sailing expects the organizing authority of its events to allow sailors from all nations to compete on an equal basis," Croce added in the statement. "This expectation is made clear in the bid process and is set out in the contractual documentation governing our events."

"As with all diplomatic

issues this is quite a delicate matter. World Sailing is aware of the current commentary in the public arena, and have reason to believe that some of the comments may not be accurate or possibly based on misunderstandings."

The youth sailing worlds have been held for 44 years. The Malaysian event, which runs to Jan. 3, is expected to attract about 300 under-19 competitors. **AP**

opinion

Rear Window

Severo Portela



THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING

As the low-budget season comes to its end, we guess it is the appropriate time to try pinpointing the trends that made 2015 different enough to be remembered as a changing year. And forget about that little detail of the GDP contracting for the fifth straight quarter taking the MSAR into a technical recession... it is not a trend, it is a bend, a downwards budgetary bend.

We have to highlight a propensity to handle things differently from the long established notions in the political arena, meaning the Legislative Assembly floor, although we could extend it to the nebula of civic associations and to the general commentary. Exceptions are not welcome. From the moment Chief Executive Chui Sai On gave room and rope to his second team of Secretaries, public policies have been open to scrutiny like never before. This all probably as a consequence of a growing public discontent regarding the basic quality of life and the vacuum of democracy at home and across the Pearl River Delta.

But in spite of invitations to speak about the issues, the virtual contenders and sparring-partners, resort to the same antics of just questioning the figures, ignoring in the process the quiet transformation - lately not so quiet at all - going on in the MSAR.

If Macau fails for a lot of different reasons to close ranks around the core values, praxis and tools that make it a "second system", the "first system" will make it the second just in name... by gently applying the theory of everything.

Even with the 2019 factor hanging over us, legislators and others keep arguing about the numbers. One has to wonder what they will do when there are no numbers to play with!

The head of the Chinese Liaison Office, Li Gang, does not give numbers, but gives plenty of stuff to consider. We recall that back in October Li mentioned measures "to revitalize the Region's continuously sluggish economy", and that later on the local government announced a five-year plan to transform Macau into a World Centre of Tourism and Leisure. This development plan incorporates advice from the National Development and Reform Commission, Tsinghua University and other agencies. It was also known that the plan took China's five-year plans and other studies on the "Centre" policy as reference points in formulating future development. Finally, Li Gang said a few days ago that the central government had set up an ad hoc body aimed at supporting Macau's economic development. Li declined to offer details, much less numbers.

Finally, a brief note on the apparently brief detention of the CEO of the Fosun conglomerate, even though it is not clear yet whether he was taken in for disciplinary investigation or if the questioning was about other people. He would not be the first tiger to fall in disgrace under President Xi's crackdown on corruption, and probably will not be the last. We have a disclaimer: if this is the case of Guo Guangchang.

But we do have to remark that the fallout from his absence was limited to a brief freeze of the Shanghai bourse and a mere wait-and-see from abroad; that is to say, Fosun has its own gravitas despite he who takes the helm.

On a bitter note, we dare to guess the corporation that spent US 5.7 billion over two years acquiring insurance assets, including the Portuguese "Fidelidade", providing (according to the Bloomberg) low-cost funding for acquisitions in other industries, will have to shift its investment spree back to the mainland.

P.S.: And on a musical note, they say that the Rolling Stones rolled over to a bit of censorship upon their 2006 debut in China. They say they were precluded from playing five songs: Brown Sugar, Honky Tonk Women, Beast of Burden, Let's Spend the Night Together, and probably Rough Justice.

THE BUZZ OF OKINAWA TRIES TO STOP MOVE OF US MARINE AIR BASE

Local authorities on Okinawa sued Japan's central government on Friday in an attempt to stop the relocation of a U.S. air base, deepening their decades-long row over the heavy American troop presence on the southern Japanese island.

The Okinawa government says the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism illegally suspended the prefectural governor's

cancellation of approval for reclamation work needed to relocate U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Futenma to a less-populated part of the island called Henoko.

"We will do whatever it takes to stop the new Henoko base," Okinawa Gov. Takeshi Onaga told a news conference in the prefectural capital of Naha. "Okinawa's argument is legitimate, and I believe that it will be certainly understood."

BRAZIL

Attorney general alleges bribes tied to Rio Olympics



Construction workers build Deodoro Olympic Park in Rio de Janeiro

BRAZIL'S attorney general is investigating allegations that bribes were paid to a powerful lawmaker to help secure contracts for the building of venues and other works for next year's Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

In documents obtained by The Associated Press, Attorney General Rodrigo Janot accuses Eduardo Cunha, speaker of the lower house in Brazil's two-chamber legislature, of receiving 1.9 million Brazilian reais (USD475,000) from the construction company OAS to craft legislation favorable for the company.

Cunha has called the allegations "ridiculous" in comments to local media, while OAS refused to comment.

The investigation is the first linking corruption to the billions being spent on Olympic building projects.

OAS is involved with building the BMX, mountain bike

and canoeing venues at Deodoro in northern Rio, the second-largest cluster of Olympic venues.

The constructor is also involved in work on high-speed bus lanes, the 8 billion reais (\$2 billion) renovation of Rio's port, and projects to clean the polluted waters in Barra da Tijuca, the area where the main Olympic Park is being built.

The International Olympic Committee referred an email seeking comment to local organizers, who did not immediately respond.

Under the Brazilian system, the prosecutor is largely an investigator and it's up to the court — in this case Brazil's Supreme Court — to accept a case.

In the 190-page report, Janot says that Cunha "treated the lower house as a center for trading bribes for bills."

The report alleges that

Cunha guided legislation approved in 2012 that gave tax exemptions to all Olympic-related construction works, and exempted import taxes on some foreign goods needed for the Olympics.

The Brazilian government's executive branch estimated the tax breaks amounted to 3.8 billion reais (\$1 billion).

Janot also said Cunha used "his position as a lawmaker to craft business-friendly legislation that was against the public interest." He described Cunha and an OAS executive of being "part of a criminal organization."

"At least since 2012, Eduardo Cunha has been illegally acting on the behalf of corporations, 'selling' legislation to benefit them," the report said. "That shows he can no longer remain in office."

Cunha was elevated to speaker earlier this year.

Cunha is facing calls for his resignation in connection with a series of scandals. At the same time he is leading an impeachment effort against President Dilma Rousseff.

The investigation is more bad news for Brazil. The country is mired in a deep recession, Rousseff is fighting off impeachment charges, and there is an on-going investigation of massive bribes and corruption surrounding state-run oil company Petrobras. AP

Station	Air quality
Roadside	50-70 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	50-70 Moderate
Ambient	50-70 Moderate

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

PHILIPPINES The government's tax research unit said it supports pending bills in Congress to charge entrance fees in casinos and tax lottery winnings because horse racing, another form of gambling, is taxed, the Philippine Daily Inquirer reported on its website. The Department of Finance's National Tax Research Center backs a 3,500 pesos (USD74) entrance fee for casinos, the newspaper said, citing the center's "Profile and Taxation of Selected Gambling and Betting Activities in the Philippines."

VIETNAM's economic growth quickened in the fourth quarter helped by rising industrial output and record-high foreign investment.

INDONESIAN police said they have arrested two more suspected militants including a member of China's ethnic Uighur minority who was allegedly preparing to be a suicide bomber. More on p13



AUSTRALIA Hundreds of surfers dressed as Santa Claus caught the waves and celebrated on the shore in what has become an annual tradition at Florida's Cocoa Beach.

USA Star Wars: The Force Awakens" was poised to pass USD1b in worldwide ticket sales this weekend and become the first picture to reach that mark so quickly.

USA A boy who was driving a car that crashed near Pittsburgh has been tentatively identified by the government as the eighth death in the U.S. due to an explosive air bag inflator made by Japanese auto parts maker Takata. More on p8

THAILAND A court on Thursday sentenced two Myanmar migrants to death for the murder of two British backpackers on a resort island last year, in a case that raised questions about police competence and the judicial system in Thailand.

SYRIAN activists say government forces set off explosives planted at a farm where Islamic rebel factions were gathering, killing 17 militants.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Xinhua/Lu Hanxin



A photo taken yesterday shows the landslide site at an industrial park in Shenzhen. The death toll is confirmed at seven, with 75 still unaccounted for.