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Arum was in HK to announce a three-fight deal with Rex Tso. Top Rank promotes Zou Shiming's bout tomorrow in Shanghai

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**SANDS CHINA QUARTERLY PROFIT FALLS**  
Sands China announced fourth-quarter earnings that fell less than analysts' estimates

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**WORLD BRIEFS**



**VIETNAM** One-party rule in communist Vietnam is a far better alternative to authoritarianism disguised as democracy, the country's newly elected leader, Nguyen Phu Trong, said yesterday.

**SOUTH KOREA** Samsung Electronics reports a bigger-than-expected decline in fourth quarter earnings as its mainstay smartphone and semiconductor business suffered from weakening global demand for consumer electronics.

**INDONESIA**'s state-owned telecommunications company says its has blocked the Internet video service Netflix in a possible setback to the US company's expansion in Asia.

**MYANMAR**'s pro-democracy party led by Aung San Suu Kyi announces ethnically diverse choices for leadership of the legislature as it prepares to take over the government from a military-backed party.



**HONG KONG** Controversial comedian Dieudonné has been detained at the Hong Kong International Airport for reasons that are not immediately clear. His production company has said that it is likely that he will be deported. Dieudonné has previously been convicted in France for anti-semitic remarks.

More on backpage

**LI GANG**

# Macau faces challenges, adjustment period

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## Critics question 'One Belt One Road' advantages to MSAR, Hong Kong

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**Extra** times  
weekend Guide  
INSIDE

## editorial

Paulo Coutinho



## HYPOTHERMIA

**C**OLD weather all over the planet is killing hundreds, especially the most delicate: the old, the sick, the homeless, and the lonely. In greater China and southeast Asia temperatures have been unusually low with sudden drops of the mercury.

In Macau, we too are having our fair share of the chill. Since temperatures reached a record low of 1.6 degrees Celsius on Sunday, four people have died of hypothermia and all over town people are complaining about the extremes of weather and about how difficult it is to keep their homes and offices warm.

"When one considers the poor quality of the local housing stock, particularly the appalling lack of insulation, it is surprising there are not more deaths. I call upon the Government to legislate higher minimum standards of insulation for all upcoming residential construction projects. Double-glazing and ceiling insulation is the bare minimum in such a climate as we have in Macau," reads a comment posted on MDT's website this week.

What our reader – who may as well be into engineering – is alerting us to is a structural problem. What our reader is proposing is a solution which demands changing legislation and ancient practices. I couldn't agree more with him, and the government should really look into it. But we all know those changes are time consuming. Old habits die-hard...

But there're more shocking reasons to be "surprised there are not more deaths."

According to the health authorities, the fatalities so far concerned old and/or bed-ridden patients. They all arrived at the hospital in precarious states of health – some from living alone and/or poor living conditions that the low temperatures dearly aggravated.

One of the victims, though, came from an aged care facility. And that makes me feel very uneasy. How come she froze?!

After consulting with medical and welfare professionals I realized that most of the care centers' conditions – heavily subsidized – are "simply appalling." I was told by insiders that very few institutions, namely Caritas and Obra das Mães, offer conditions beyond reproach for the elderly.

Moreover, most of the centers operate without resident medical and paramedic staff – against international health and welfare recommendations and best practice. Albeit as structural as the bad construction, the aged care problem would surely take incomparably less time and effort to amend.

In a city flooded by easy-money, inaction in this case is not only deplorable, it is criminal.

The last known victim of hypothermia was a 105-year-old lady who died yesterday at the central hospital. What an inglorious death for someone who lived to see almost all the momentous 20th century and may even have witnessed the previous lowest temperature recorded in Macau, in 1949.

Today, in her memory "je suis" old, lonely and sick.

## BOXING

## Bob Arum promotes bouts in HK, 'where the people are'

**B**OXING promoter Bob Arum was in Hong Kong to announce a three-fight deal with Rex Tso. The "Wonder Kid" fights promoted by Top Rank in the neighboring region should culminate with a chance at the world title in December. The unbeaten super flyweight Rex Tso will face regional opponents in the first two fights



Bob Arum

**“We know there is not the same appetite for events there [in Macau] as in prior years.”**

BOB ARUM

this year.

Arum is considered a legendary promoter, and has been involved in the career of major boxing stars like Muhammad Ali. In recent years, he promoted a series of fights at the Venetian Macao's Cotai Arena, featuring boxers including Manny Pacquiao, Zou Shiming and Brandon Rios, among many others.

Speaking at a press conference to announce the new Hong Kong deal, Mr Arum said that the decline in casino revenue in Macau has led him to opt for Hong Kong. "We thank Macau for hosting boxing and bringing it on a tremendous basis to this part of the world. But we know there is not the same appetite for events there as in prior years," he said, cited by AFP.

"If you're not going to get that type of support from the casinos in Macau, it is logical to bring the events to where the people are, and that's Hong Kong," he added.

During the press conference, the United States-based promoter also said that he hopes that Manny Pacquiao may reconsider his decision to retire after the fight against Timothy Bradley. Arum said that he would "love" to see a rema-

tch with Floyd Mayweather. But Pacquiao has maintained that he will step away from the ring after the third bout with Bradley which is scheduled for April.

## ZOU FIGHTS IN SHANGHAI TOMORROW

**BOB ARUM** is currently in Shanghai, where Top Rank is promoting tomorrow's fight between China's Olympic hero and professional boxer Zou Shiming and Natan Coutinho (12-0, 10 KOs). The fight will take place at the Oriental Sports Center. Zou returns to fight for the vacant WBO International flyweight title after losing against IBF world champion Amnat Ruenroeng in Macau.

## Liaison Office: Macau to face challenges in 2016

**T**HE director of China's Liaison Office in Macau, Li Gang, says that the MSAR will face challenges and obstacles during the year, owing to the region experiencing a "a deep financial adjustment." Li presided over the Liaison Office's reception



Edmund Ho, Li Gang and Chui Sai On

to celebrate the forthcoming Lunar New Year, which took place at the Macau Tower yesterday and was attended by hundreds of invitees.

The top official highlighted the fact that the 85-square-kilometer sea area to the east and south of Macau now under local administration presents "an opportunity to pursue the sustainable development of Macau." Li also highlighted the "social stability" of the region, praising the local government's efforts.

The Chief Executive Chui Sai On addressed the crowd during the reception. "Forecasting the next [Lunar] year, we can see significant opportunities for development but also major challenges that result from the coexistence of old problems with an increase of risks and dangers," he stated.

Before being appointed to the Macau office, Li was deputy director and spokesman of the Hong Kong Liaison Office from 2003 to 2012. As part of the reshuffle of officials in the Special Administrative Regions, he was assigned to the Macau office in December 2012. **PB**

## ONE SHOT NEWS



**The unusual weather conditions continue to take their toll. A new case of death by hypothermia was announced yesterday by the Health Bureau, involving a 105-year-old woman. It is the fourth death to hypothermia reported in the last few days.**

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## ANALYSIS

# Critics perplexed over how 'One Belt One Road' can benefit Macau, HK

**H**ONG Kong critics of China's "One Belt One Road" (OBOR) initiative, and those skeptical of what benefits the economic arrangement could bring to the territory, were left perplexed on the weekend after the cryptic comments of a member of HKSAR's Executive Council.

In Macau, the policy is being increasingly cited in official documents and has become part of the government's goals. Chui Sai On said that the region "will actively take part in the One Belt One Road strategy" during yesterday's reception organized by the Central Liaison Office in Macau (see page 2).

Laura Cha, a member of Hong Kong's Executive Council, reiterated the government's line, stressing the economic benefits that the "Belt and Road" initiative would bring to the territory. She also warned that concerns regarding alleged violations of the "One Country Two Systems" policy should not affect the HKSAR's economic integration with the mainland.

"What we can do, really, is promote Hong Kong [through being a part of the OBOR agreement] – to elevate our position as an international financial center. There will be a lot of other countries that would be interested in this, because everybody sees that this will be a new area of economic development for the next decade or so," she told TVB Pearl.

"We have always been an international financial center, and the reason for that is that international investors have confidence in our market, in our system," added Cha, who is also the head of the Financial Service Development Council.

The government official appeared to be referring to Hong Kong's expected role as a facilitator for mainland enterprises "going global." In this sense, Hong Kong's expertise in certain professional services – such as finance, law, tax, and risk assessment – can provide mainland Chinese investors with the tools and knowledge to manage investment in other countries included within the scope of the agreement.

However, critics in Hong Kong have said that they don't understand how the strategy can benefit Hong Kong.

Mark O'Neill, writing in the



Agnes Lam

Hong Kong Economic Journal, claims that there are many in the city that question what the project could possibly have to do with Hong Kong, "a city with almost no industry and no historical connections to most of these countries [in the scope of OBOR]."

"To many [people], CY Leung's initiative has more to do with politics than economics," added O'Neill.

"Hong Kong needs to be a part of the arrangement to fully benefit from it," said Larry So, a local scholar and current affairs analyst, before adding that investors "would still use Hong Kong's services, with or without the agreement. In Hong Kong, they have this opportunity already."

In Macau, it may be difficult to understand why Beijing would be so interested in expanding the agreement to include the casino hub. According to official lines, the region's unique position as a former Portuguese enclave gives it a unique relationship with other Lusophone countries.

Agnes Lam, assistant professor from the Department of Communications, University of Macau, corroborates this idea by claiming that Macau "can use [its] connections with

the Portuguese culture and language to influence others."

"Our connections soften the distance," she told the Times. "It's easier for us to feel closer to these countries."

The case of Goa is a good example, Lam says. "I have never been there," she admits, "but I feel some sort of connection with them [the people of the enclave], because I have researched the area in depth."

However, with the possible exception of the former enclave of Goa, there are no Portuguese-speaking states within the current, imagined scope of OBOR.

**OBOR is about demonstrating to Taiwan that the two systems policy can work – because it's not working well in Hong Kong.**

LARRY SO  
CURRENT AFFAIRS ANALYST



Larry So

In reality, many regard Macau's involvement in the program partly as a "favor" from the mainland in terms of helping to drive tourism and to reduce the city's reliance on the gaming industry.

Agnes Lam goes further in suggesting that the Belt and Road Initiative can be seen in the larger context of an increasingly interconnected world. She regards it as "the next step in globalization," tying countries in the Central Asian region with the capital outflows and infrastructure projects of China and the mature financial institutions of West.

The strategy focuses on "the remaining part of the world that needs development," Lam told the Times, referring to Central Asia. The UM professor did not make mention of the under-developed areas of sub-Saharan Africa.

"But this is not really what the Central Government has in mind," Larry So wryly observed.

Instead, the involvement of Macau may have more to do with "demonstrating to Taiwan that the 'One Country Two Systems' policy can work – because its not working well in Hong Kong."

Despite criticism from the Pan-Democracy camp in Hong

Kong, Chief Executive Leung seems decided on pressing ahead – that's if the 48 mentions of the "Belt and Road" initiative in his recent Policy Address are anything to go by.

But while the term was frequently mentioned in CY Leung's Policy Address, the references involved little material of substance, aside from the intention to create a dedicated office to aid the incorporation of Hong Kong into OBOR.

Without an accompanying substance, some were led to believe that CY Leung was paying "lip-service" to Beijing.

A photo of a newscaster from the Hong Kong-based satirical magazine 100Most went viral last week in response to Leung's Policy Address. The picture mocked the Chief Executive's frequent referencing of the "Belt and Road" initiative by depicting the news anchor with one nipple covered and the other exposed.

"One Belt, One Road" in Cantonese roughly translates to "Yat Dai, Yat Lo," but "dai" can mean "belt" or "wear", while similarly, "lo" can mean "road" or "expose".

Larry So concluded: "Leung really wants to expand his influence [...] his critics don't like it but they will go along with it." **Staff Reporter**

Daniela Wei and  
Christopher Palmeri

## Adelson: Market stabilizing after Sands China profit falls 19pct

**B**ILLIONAIRE casino mogul Sheldon Adelson said Macau's gambling market has stabilized after Las Vegas Sands Corp.'s unit in the city announced fourth-quarter earnings that fell less than analysts' estimates.

Sands China Ltd. posted adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization fell 19 percent to USD581.2 million in the fourth quarter, its parent said in a statement. The figure beat the market estimate of \$555 million, according to Karen Tang, an analyst at Deutsche

Bank AG.

"I thought we had either hit bottom in the mass market or were bottoming out," Adelson said on a post-earnings conference call. "Some of the numbers put out and experienced through December and January" among other materials he has read, "indicate to me that that's the case."

Macau is facing headwinds as China's crackdown on corrup-



Sheldon Adelson

tion and a slowing economy have scared away high-end gamblers from the world's largest gambling market. While the city's casino takings dropped 21.2 percent in December - falling for the 19th straight month - that represented the smallest year-on-year decline since last January.

Sands China has seen its share price slump 30 percent in 2015. Still, the stock gained 14 percent in the fourth quarter as the decline in mass-market revenue has

narrowed. It rose as much as 4.9 percent to HKD25.75 in Hong Kong trading, reaching the highest intraday level since Jan. 6.

Sands China's earnings have "handsomely" beat consensus, said Karen Tang, an analyst at Deutsche Bank AG. "We expect Macau stocks to see a six to eight week short-term bounce into the seasonally strong Chinese New Year, and our top pick is Sands China."

Las Vegas Sands, the world's largest casino operator, earlier posted fourth-quarter sales and profit that missed analysts' estimates as gambling revenue in the key markets of Macau and Singapore declined.

The higher dividend could signal management's confidence in the outlook for Macau. Investors are looking for signs of a recovery after Adelson in December predicted a turnaround "in the near

**GOLDSTEIN: 'WE ARE A LITTLE MORE CONSERVATIVE'**

**DURING THE 4Q 2015** conference call, Rob Goldstein, president and chief operating officer of Las Vegas Sands Corp, commented on other gaming operators efforts to diversify their offer: "A lot of people have taken on the entertainment and other issues. We used to run first in Macau [but] we are happy to cede control of those areas and be a ticket buyer versus an entertainment purchaser. We are a little more conservative."

future, certainly in 2016."

Sands, which has the most casinos among other foreign operators, plans to open later this year the \$2.7 billion Parisian Macao, its fifth project featuring a half-size replica of the Eiffel Tower. Macau government has urged gaming houses to build more non-gaming entertainment facilities to attract tourists. **Bloomberg**

### 4Q2015 HIGHLIGHTS

\* Sands' adjusted earnings in Singapore fell 35 percent to \$338.2 million.

\* In Las Vegas, adjusted earnings rose 25 percent to \$97.4 million.

\* Profit excluding some items fell to 62 cents a share, lower than the average analyst estimate of 64 cents

\* Sales slumped to \$2.86 billion, while it raised its quarterly dividend to 72 cents a share for 2016.

## Asian Air jet banned from taking off to Macau

**A**N Asian Air jet has been refused take off from U-Tapao airport in Rayong, Thailand, after the Central Bankruptcy Court ordered a freeze on the airline's assets, aviation authorities revealed.

The aircraft was scheduled to leave the navy-owned airport at 9 a.m. on Wednesday and was due to pick up 200 passengers in Macau, to then fly back to the Philippines, according to the acting director of the Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT), Chula Sukmanop.

CAAT issued the ban after it received notification from the bankruptcy court. Sukmanop stated that no passengers were left stranded, as it was due to fly empty to Macau. He said the agency has discovered that the airline has unpaid debts and is being sued by its mainte-



nance service provider for bankruptcy.

According to the Centre for Aviation, Asian Air is a Thai carrier "providing both charter and scheduled services from its base at Bangkok Don Mueang Airport. The airline launched its inaugural service on March 15, 2014, flying from Bangkok to Narita Airport in Tokyo, Japan. Asian Air has further plans to expand services to other destinations in Japan and North Asia in the future."

## Cinematheque Passion to hold first film-themed talk

**A** series of film-themed talks is set to be held at the Cinematheque Passion. The first talk, entitled "Film X Critique X Audience: A Film's Triangular Relationships," will be held tomorrow from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Joyce Yang, an active film critic in Hong Kong and a member of Hong Kong Film Critics Society, will discuss topics based on the need for and role of film critique. Other upcoming talks will feature a variety of topics, which



Joyce Yang

include planning and coordinating a film festival, film marketing, film editing, cinematic sound effects, film arts, film costumes and film directing, all in the hope of familiarizing participants with

the film industry.

Cinematheque Passion began the new experimental phase of management earlier this month, and has continued to run the a temporary venue booking program, which is open for applications from members of the film industry, filmmakers and film associations. The program commenced last September, and aims to continually utilize the resources of the three-storey building located at Travessa de Paixão.

### corporate bits

#### 'THE HIDDEN'S' ANNOUNCED AT PRESS CONFERENCE IN CONRAD



Supported by The Venetian Macao, "The Hiddens" is a brand-new drama production from the well-known producer Mr Gary Tang. A press conference was held at the Conrad Macao in Cotai Central.

Actors and actresses from "The Hiddens," including Lawrence Ng, Jessica Hsuan, William So, Duncan Lai, Lui Jing Jing, Wylie Chiu and Felix Lok, were in attendance

to share their experiences both on and off the set with members of the media.

The production of "The Hiddens" is fully supported by the Macau Government Tourism Office and The Venetian Macao, the latter of which has provided suites, the outdoor lagoon area, the Venetian Theatre and Italian restaurant Portofino as shooting locations.

#### VINS D'ALSACE PRESENTS FRANCE'S WINEMAKING 'GARDEN OF EDEN' TO HK MARKET

A press release issued yesterday by Vins d'Alsace noted that Le Conseil Interprofessionnel des Vins d'Alsace (CIVA), the official organization that represents its winemakers, is set to introduce the best of the region to the Hong Kong market. Known for its white grape varieties - Riesling, Gewürztraminer, Pinot Blanc, Pinot Gris, Muscat and Sylvaner - Alsace wine can be enjoyed on all occasions. Alsace wines can hold up to 1,000

different aromas, and therefore pair exceptionally well with Asian dishes. Alsace's vineyards are among the most northerly, not only in France, but also in Europe, and are situated in 119 communes in Bas-Rhin and Haut-Rhin. A distinctive climate and exposure - which notably features hot days and cool nights - allows for a long, slow period of ripening and the development of complex aromas, vivid acidity and a rich fruity flavour.

#### TURBOJET LAUNCHES TUEN MUN-MACAU ROUTE

TurboJet's Tuen Mun Ferry Terminal commenced services yesterday. At the same time, two new routes towards the Macau Maritime Ferry Terminal and Shenzhen Airport Fuyong Ferry Terminal, have also been launched.

According to a press release issued by the company, "the new cross-boundary routes represent the company's strategic step to enhance its service network by harnessing Tuen Mun's geographical advantage as the centre of the Pearl River Delta, driving visitations to Macau and facilitating exchanges in the region, so that Macau can further tap into the market potentials of Hong Kong's Northwest New Territories and mainland China." The



new routes "also provide a time-saving choice for Macau outbound travelers departing from the Hong Kong International Airport," the press release adds.



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REAL ESTATE MATTERS

What Will Influence Property Prices In 2016?

This three part article explores the different factors that affecting the market

Juliet Risdon is a Director of JML Property and a property investor. Having established the company in 1994, JML Property offers Investment Property & Homes. It specializes in managing properties for owners and investors, and providing attractive and comfortable homes for tenants.



JULIET RISDON

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In last week's article we explored just one of the factors that will influence property prices this year. In the second part of this article we look at another three factors, and remind readers that Macau property prices are influenced by at least seven variables and may potentially be affected by many more. As a reminder, the more variables there are, the more complex the equation. The more complex the equation, the higher chance of inaccuracy.

In no particular order and carrying on from last week;

Gaming & Related Growth

As we are all aware, the state of the Gaming sector is the fuel for the Macau economy. Diversification? Not happening.

As growth slows and related projects are delayed, budgets are cut and there are less new people arriving that require housing. Those that are here already are faced with tighter purses and less urgency.

However, when a decrease slows down and stabilizes, the drop in revenue will usually have had a positive effect on the business.

A lot of the 'fat' will have been cut away, and companies are forced to become more competitive and

client centric instead of shareholder focused.

Do you see a rebound in the gaming industry growth?

A rebound may not be as important as a stabilization of the revenues. Steady revenue allows companies and governments to plan and budget accordingly.

The new projects and attractions due to open this year may just have a stabilizing effect.

Macau Government Policy

It seems that the Macau government is under increasing pressure to interfere in the free housing market.

They will attempt to implement policies that may be designed to either slow down or speed up the housing market such as rent control or the supply of low cost housing.

These attempts to influence the market rarely work out as planned, and often have an opposite effect.

Why? Because there are too many variables to be able to predict the outcome.

For example, rent control policy will cause landlords who are already reluctant to rent their properties to take them off the market.

Since rental yields are incredibly low, many owners don't want the

hassle of having tenants in a property. This is of course reduces supply, in turn pushing new rents even higher.

As rental prices rise, it is not long before the cost of renting is high enough to warrant purchasing instead, and selling prices start to rise again.

So will the government interfere with the free market? Based on past observations, our guess is that they probably cannot help themselves.

China Government Policy

As we can see from this past year, Macau is dependent upon the visitor traffic and revenue from mainland China visitors.

China government policy and travel permits to Macau are at the heart of the numbers, and if the tap is turned down, gaming growth is adversely affected.

If policy is relaxed the numbers are affected in a positive manner.

So the question becomes, what will China do this year? General speculation says that 2016 will be similar to 2015 in terms of government policy.

Next Week: The other three factors that will influence what you pay for your apartment in 2016.

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# Facebook posts strong 4Q as company closes gap with Google



**F**ACEBOOK is growing at an exceptional pace as it enters adolescence, propelling it into a better position to challenge Google as the Internet's most powerful company.

Facebook's fourth-quarter report Wednesday provided the latest gauge of the company's impressive strides.

It marked the first time that Facebook's quarterly revenue has surpassed USD5 billion — more than fading Internet star Yahoo now generates in an entire year. Facebook's earnings also more than doubled to \$1.56 billion, even as the Menlo Park, California, company invests heavily in virtual reality, artificial intelligence, Internet access in remote parts of the world and a mobile ad network for services other than its own.

The performance lifted Facebook's stock by \$11.37, or 12 percent, to \$105.82 in extended trading after the report came out.

Although Google remains three times larger by revenue, Facebook has been closing the gap as it sells more mobile advertising on its addictive social-networking app. And it's just beginning to mine revenue from its trendy Instagram service and a rapidly expanding video library.

This spring's debut of the Oculus Rift headset, part of the virtual-reality technology that Facebook bought for \$2 billion in 2014, could open another lucrative market. Google is now hiring more virtual-reality specialists, a sign that is trying to catch up with Facebook in a still-nascent field that could transform computing.

Social networking remains Facebook's foundation. The service picked up another 46 million

users during the final three months of last year to expand its worldwide audience to 1.59 billion users.

"I'm excited about our progress and the chance to build something great for the future," Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg told analysts yesterday (Macau time) in a conference call.

Google, now a part of the recently created Alphabet Inc., is thriving too, with more than 1 billion users on its search engine as well as its YouTube video site and its Android software for mobile devices. That makes it unlikely that Facebook will topple Google anytime soon.

Powered by the world's dominant Internet search engine, Google still sells the most digital advertising by a wide margin. Just how much more will be disclosed Monday, when Alphabet is scheduled to announce its fourth-quarter earnings. Alphabet is expected to report fourth-quarter revenue of nearly \$17 billion, after subtracting ad commissions, nearly triple what Facebook generated during the same three-month period.

But consider this: Facebook will be turning 12 years old next week and it just posted revenue of \$5.8 billion in its latest quarter. At the same stage of its existence in September 2010, Google's net revenue stood at \$5.5 billion.

What's more, Facebook's revenue is climbing at a more rapid clip than Google's was at a comparable stage. Facebook's revenue in the past quarter represented a 52 percent increase from the same time a year ago. When it turned 12 years old, Google's quarterly net revenue rose 25 percent from the previous year. **AP**

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### LIONS AND LAI SEE

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US Secretary of State John Kerry speaks to journalists on Jan. 17 about his negotiations with Iran. As part of a prisoner swap deal, seven Iranians in custody won their freedom and the US dismissed charges against 14 others, including Jamili

## Lawyer criticizes US for Chinese, Iranian double standards

Denise Lavoie, Boston

A lawyer for a Chinese national who supplied Iran with U.S.-made devices that can be used to convert uranium for nuclear weapons is criticizing the U.S. government for dropping charges against his Iranian co-defendant as part of a breakthrough U.S.-Iran deal.

The criticism was leveled during a sentencing hearing for Sihai Cheng, who pleaded guilty in December to supplying pressure transducers to an Iranian company. Cheng was sentenced to nine years in prison.

Cheng's lawyer, Stephen Weymouth, objected to the 15-year sentence recommended by prosecutors, calling it unfair because his Iranian co-defendant, Seyed Abolfazl Shahab Jamili, won't face prison time.

Weymouth called Jamili the "main actor" in the case and said he would have sought the dismissal of charges against Cheng if he had known prosecutors would drop charges against Jamili. Weymouth asked U.S. District Judge Patti Saris to force prosecutors to drop the charges or allow Cheng to withdraw his guilty plea.

"In this case, it has been outrageously unfair as far as Mr. Cheng is concerned," Weymouth said.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Stephanie Siegmann said the fact that prosecutors dismissed the indictment against Jamili — "someone we couldn't extradite anyway" — does not mean Cheng should be allowed to wi-

thdraw his guilty plea.

Siegmann said Cheng admitted he knew he was supplying parts to an Iranian company the U.S. had designated as a proliferator of weapons of mass destruction.

"It's clear that he's not innocent," she said.

**Cheng's lawyer objected to the recommended 15-year sentence, calling it unfair because his Iranian co-defendant won't face prison time**

Saris rejected the defense request, but said she may consider fairness among co-conspirators in sentencing Cheng.

As part of the deal announced earlier this month, four Americans detained in Iran were sent home and seven Iranians in U.S. custody won their freedom. The U.S. also dismissed charges against 14 Iranian nationals, including Jamili.

The other Iranians who had charges dropped include: Jalil Salami, a citizen of both the

U.S. and Iran charged with using a company he owned in San Marcos, California, to purchase electronic test equipment and components from U.S. companies and arrange for them to be exported to Malaysia and then sent to Iran; Amin Ravan, indicted in Washington, D.C., for allegedly attempting to obtain military antennas for shipment to Iran; and Behrouz Dolatzadeh, charged in Phoenix, Arizona, with conspiring to purchase hundreds of M-4 assault rifles to export from the U.S. to Iran.

Prosecutors said Cheng set up shell companies in China to receive pressure-measuring sensors known as pressure transducers from the Shanghai subsidiary of MKS Instruments Inc., based in Andover, Massachusetts. The transducers have commercial applications, but are strictly controlled under federal law because they can be used in gas centrifuges to convert natural uranium into a form that can be used in nuclear weapons.

Cheng was accused of conspiring with Jamili to send hundreds of transducers to Eyvaz Technic Manufacturing Co., a Tehran company that has supplied parts for Iran's development of nuclear weapons.

Prosecutors said Jamili told Cheng that the Iranian end-user of the transducers was Kalaye Electronic Co., which the U.S. designated as a proliferator of weapons of mass destruction for its work with Iran's nuclear centrifuge program. **AP**

## Market falls again, defying gains in other emerging countries



A man looks at an electronic board displaying stock prices at a brokerage house in Beijing, after Asian stock markets sank on Tuesday led by a plunge in the Shanghai index

**G**LOBAL stocks held steady after the Federal Reserve's policy statement acknowledged global risks, reducing the chances of a March rate hike to 18 percent, according to Bloomberg data, compared with 25 percent on Tuesday. Since the Fed tightened policy on December 16 the MSCI All Country World Index has fallen 7 percent.

China's Shanghai Composite Index fell to its lowest level since November 2014, taking its decline for the year to 25 percent, the most since 2008. Authorities continue to take measures to stabilize the nation's financial markets.

This week's net injection of RMB590 billion (USD90 billion) into the money markets ahead of the start of the Lunar New Year was the biggest since February 2013.

Further declines in the equity benchmark could be on the way. Strategists and technical

analysts surveyed by Bloomberg are targeting a bottom of 2,500, compared with 2,656 reached yesterday.

Since the Shanghai Composite Index reached a record high on June 12 it has plummeted 48 percent. It remains the world's worst performing major equity index in 2016.

Emerging market stocks and currencies gained outside of China as investors stepped up bets the Fed will refrain from raising U.S. interest rates at its March meeting. They have rebounded 4.4 percent from an almost seven-year low last week on Thursday.

Today's best performing emerging market currency is Malaysia's ringgit. It rose for a fifth day, the longest winning streak since September. Prime Minister Najib Razak announced a revised 2016 budget to take into account the slump in oil revenue for Asia's only major net oil exporter. **MDT/Bloomberg**

## 800-year-old town sees tourism overthrow local culture



In this August 23, 2006 file photo, tourists look at the World Cultural Heritage city, Lijiang Old Town in Yunnan. An influx of commercial tourism has threatened to degrade the town's cultural heritage

**T**HE 800-year-old town of Lijiang in China's southern province of Yunnan faces a number of major challenges if it is to preserve the cultural heritage that saw the location bestowed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1997.

After its designation, outsiders with more capital and skills moved in, sparking tensions with mostly ethnic minority residents who felt they were "losing their town."

By the early 2000s, many streets of the old quarter were up to 90 percent in the hands

of newcomers profiting by the mass influx, while today the town is considered to be one of the country's top domestic tourist destinations.

Annual visitors swelled from some 150,000 before the heritage designation to 2.8 million three years later and some 16 million last year. Local culture has been adulterated in a complete tourism-oriented make-over.

The charming houses are actually reproductions as virtually the entire old town was razed by an earthquake in 1996. **MDT/AP**

Ralph Jennings,  
Christopher Bodeen

# Taiwan leader presses claim to South China Sea in isle trip

**T**AIWAN'S president, defying a rare criticism from key ally the United States, visited an island in the disputed South China Sea yesterday to emphasize Taiwan's sovereignty claims in the increasingly tense region.

Accompanied by about 30 staff members, Ma Ying-jeou spoke at a national monument on Taiping Island, also known as Itu Aba, and reiterated his call made last year for peaceful coexistence and joint development with other claimants. The island is part of the Spratly archipelago, where China, Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines and the city-state of Brunei have overlapping claims.

Roughly 2,000 kilometers south of Taiwan and 46 hectares in size, Taiping is the largest naturally occurring island in the area. It has recently been eclipsed in size, however, by man-made islands created by China out of reefs and shoals. China has built housing, ports, airstrips and other infrastructure on the newly created

AP PHOTO



In this Nov. 7, 2015 file photo, Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou speaks during a press conference at the Shangri-la Hotel in Singapore. Ma visited an island in the South China Sea yesterday, defying criticism from Taiwan's key ally, the US

**We disagree with this particular action. We view it as raising tensions rather than what we want to see, which is de-escalation.**

MARK TONER  
US STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN

islands, drawing accusations from the U.S. and others that it is exacerbating tensions in the strategically vital region.

Ma cited infrastructure developments, including a 10-bed hospital and a lighthouse, saying they reinforced Taiwan's claim of sovereignty and granted it rights over the surrounding waters. Taiwan is spending more than USD100 million to upgrade the island's airstrip and build a wharf capable of allowing its 3,000-ton coast guard cutters to dock.

"All this evidence fully demonstrates that Taiping Island is able to sustain human habitation and an economic life of its own. Taiping Island is categorically not a rock, but an island,"

Ma said.

The Philippines expressed concern over the trip, and U.S. State Department spokesman Mark Toner said yesterday (Macau time) that the United States was disappointed, saying it could exacerbate tensions.

"President Ma Ying-jeou has every right to make his position clear on the South China Sea. We just disagree with this particular action. We view it as, frankly, as raising tensions rather than what we want to see, which is de-escalation," Toner said.

During a visit to Beijing, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry encouraged all parties in the South China Sea to clarify their territorial claims, exercise restraint and engage in negotia-

tions on the basis of international law.

Taiwan stations about 200 coast guard personnel, scientists and medical workers on Taiping Island. It occupies a number of other islets in the South China Sea, including the Pratas island group to the north.

There was no immediate response to Ma's visit from China, although a spokesman for the Cabinet's Taiwan Affairs Office yesterday (Macau time) repeated Beijing's claim to "indisputable sovereignty" over the South China Sea islands.

"Safeguarding national sovereignty and territorial integrity and the overall interests of the Chinese nation are the common responsibility and obligation

of compatriots on both sides" of the Taiwan Strait, Ma Xiaoguang told reporters.

China and Taiwan hold identical claims to the South China Sea, aligning with Beijing's "one China principle" that considers the two part of a single Chinese nation. Beijing has threatened to retaliate to any formal change in Taiwan's legal status with military force.

Coming near the end of his eight years in office, Ma's visit is the second by a Taiwanese leader. Former president Chen Shui-bian visited in 2008 when he delivered a similar message.

Ma, who has been criticized at home as weak on foreign policy, must step down in May due to term limits and analysts said he considers the island visit a capstone to his time in office. Opposition party president-elect Tsai Ing-wen declined an invitation to go on the trip.

Tsai won a decisive victory over the candidate from Ma's China-friendly Nationalist Party in this month's election while leading her independence-leaning Democratic Progressive Party to a majority in the legislature, casting new uncertainty over the future of Taiwan-China relations.

"President Ma... views advancing [Taiwan's] maritime interests as part of his legacy," said Bonnie Glaser, senior adviser for Asia at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a think tank in Washington. "His visit to Taiping will further incite nationalistic fervor in the claimant countries and increase tensions." AP

## XINHUA INSIGHT

# Mainland denies capping number of tourists to Taipei

**T**HE Chinese mainland earlier this week denied setting a cap on the number of tourists that can visit Taiwan, instead pointing to market behavior as the reason for a recent change.

Ma Xiaoguang, spokesperson of the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office, told reporters that the quota for tourists was made by Taiwan and is a unilateral approach. Taiwan-bound tourists from the mainland vary depending on travel

agencies and tourists.

Ma made the remarks while answering a question on whether the Chinese mainland will tighten the quota of tourists to Taiwan.

The office spokesperson said that he hoped Taiwan's inbound tourism can be developed and rights of mainland tourists can be safeguarded.

In terms of the flight transfer programs, Ma said the mainland's Association for Relations

Across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS) and Taiwan's Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) are coordinating on the issue and will implement it when it is prepared.

Flight transfers through Taiwan's Taoyuan International Airport will be the first limited flights to or from the cities of Nanchang, Kunming and Chongqing. The three cities are popular outbound tourist departure cities in central and western China.

The flight transfer plan is a result of the meeting between President Xi Jinping and Ma Ying-jeou, two leaders from the mainland and Taiwan, in early November.

"Whether more cities will be allowed to operate transfer flights will depend on the pilot program and the development of the cross-strait situation," Ma Xiaoguang added.

When commenting on the fight between Internet commentators in the

XINHUA



In this Dec. 30, 2015, file photo, Ma Xiaoguang, a spokesperson with the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office, speaks at a press conference in Beijing

mainland and Taiwan on Facebook, the spokesperson said young people from both sides should strengthen exchanges in order to develop a better understanding of cross-strait relations and tighten their national sentiment.

Tens of thousands of mainland web users bombarded the official Facebook page of Taiwan

leader-elect Tsai Ing-wen with anti-independence messages, though the page cannot be accessed on the Chinese mainland.

Tsai, the candidate for the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), won the recent four-year election earlier this month, beating rival Kuomintang candidate Eric Chu. Xinhua

# Australian accused of planning to pack kangaroo with bomb on ANZAC Day

A teenage suspect discussed with a British accomplice packing a kangaroo with explosives before setting it loose on Australian police officers, prosecutors alleged yesterday.

Sevdet Ramadan Besim was ordered in the Melbourne Magistrates Court yesterday to stand trial in the Victoria state Supreme Court on charges that he planned an Islamic State group-inspired terrorist attack at a Veterans' Day ceremony that included targeting police officers in April last year.

Besim, 19, pleaded not guilty to four charges relating to a plot to attack commemorative services in Melbourne or the neighboring city of Dandenong to mark ANZAC Day, the annual April 25 commemoration of the 1915 Gallipoli landings in Turkey. The campaign was the first major military action fought by the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps during World War I and hundreds of thousands attend commemoration services around Australia.



In this file April 25, 2014, file photo, a pipe band marches during the ANZAC Day parade in Sydney. Almost a year later, five Australian teenagers were arrested on suspicion of plotting an Islamic State-inspired terrorist attack

Besim and four alleged conspirators were arrested in Melbourne a week before ANZAC Day. He has been in custody since and now faces a potential life sentence in prison if convicted.

Prosecutors alleged in court documents that Besim discussed with a British-based accomplice in online conversations that a kangaroo could be packed with explosives, painted with "the IS symbol" and set loose on police.

Besim was also accused of

planning to use a car to run over, then behead, a police officer. He allegedly said in online communications he was "ready to fight these dogs on there [sic] doorstep."

"I'd love to take out some cops," Besim is alleged to have written. "I was gonna meet with them then take some heads."

Police allege Besim was motivated by an extremist ideology and had expressed support for terrorist organizations, particularly the Islamic State movement. AP

# Philippine growth short of target at 5.8 percent in 2015

Teresa Cerojano, Manila

THE Philippine economy grew 5.8 percent in 2015, short of even lowered government expectations after being hampered by a weak world economy, El Nino and slow government spending in the first half of the year.

The government initially forecast growth of 7-8 percent for 2015 but later lowered its projection to 6-6.5 percent.

"Though this is lower than what we targeted for the year, this growth is respectable given the difficult external environment," Economic Planning Secretary Arsenio Balisacan said yesterday.

The Philippines has been one of the fastest growing economies in Asia for several years. Despite increased government efforts to raise living standards, the country of more than 100 million still faces considerable challenges including its vulnerability to typhoons and other natural disasters, poverty, corruption and poor infrastructure.

Balisacan said growth has averaged 6.2 percent in the past six years, which is the best performance since the late 1970s. The growth has not been due to unsustainable borrowings like in the 1970s and short-lived portfolio capital but fueled by investments that create jobs and increase incomes, he said.

He said last year's growth was driven by much stronger domestic demand and government spending that grew 9.4 percent compared to the previous year's 1.7 percent. Growth in public and private investments more than doubled, primarily led by public construction.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima said the Philippines was well-positioned to withstand turbulence in financial markets caused by uncertainty about the strength of the global economy. AP

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Elaine Kurtenbach, Tokyo

# Japan economy minister quits over graft allegations

**J**APAN'S economy minister resigned yesterday as he fended off corruption allegations, in a setback for Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's effort to rev up growth in the world's third-largest economy.

Akira Amari choked back tears as he announced his resignation in a televised news conference. He denied wrongdoing but apologized for causing "concern and trouble" and for undermining public trust in the government with a "very embarrassing situation."

The corruption scandal surfaced last week after the magazine Weekly Bunshun reported that Amari and his aides accepted at least 12 million yen (USD103,000) in cash and hospitality from the unnamed construction company.

As economy and fiscal minister since late 2012, Amari has been one of the most trusted members of Abe's Cabinet. He also served as Japan's top negotiator for the 12-nation Trans-Pacific Partnership trade pact. Amari, 66, is a career politician and son of a lawmaker who was first elected in 1983.

With Amari's departure, Abe has lost a key ally as he is gearing up for an upper house



Japanese Economy Minister Akira Amari bows before answering questions at the upper house of the parliament in Tokyo, yesterday. He later said that he intends to resign due to allegations he accepted bribes from a construction company

election in the summer.

Political donations and their handling are perennial weak spots for Japanese lawmakers. The allegations against Amari have become fodder for attacks by Communist Party, Democratic Party of Japan and other members of the opposition, who otherwise are unable to effectively challenge the ruling Liberal Democrats' overwhelming majorities in the lower and upper legislatures.

During questioning in parliament, Amari said he did not recall clearly the details of meetings in his office with the construction company.

Shukan Bunshun said that on one occasion, a construction company employee met with Amari in his office in November 2013, handing him an envelope containing 500,000 yen in cash and an expensive Japanese sweet called "yokan."

Asked about the gift, Amari said yesterday that he wasn't sure what was inside the bag,

**Amari apologized for undermining public trust in the government**

but that it was "very heavy."

His resignation comes amid mounting signs Japan's economic recovery is faltering, raising pressure on its central bank to inject still more cash into the economy on top of its already massive monetary stimulus.

Data released yesterday showed weak retail sales in December. Other major monthly data are due for release today.

Abe apologized over the scandal and said Amari's resignation was "very regrettable." He said Nobuteru Ishihara, a former environment minister, would take on Amari's posts. **AP**

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Julie Pace, Iowa

**R**EPUBLICAN presidential candidates took to the debate stage this morning (Macau time) absent their front-runner, billionaire Donald Trump, who is instead seeking to starve his rivals of attention at a critical juncture in the campaign by holding a competing event of his own.

Trump's abrupt decision to boycott the final debate before Monday's Iowa caucuses has added a new layer of uncertainty to a race that has defied political convention. He cited "unfair" treatment from debate host Fox News as his reason for skipping the contest and holding a rally instead.

"I don't like being taken advantage of," Trump said in an interview earlier this week on Fox, signaling he wasn't boycotting the highly rated network completely.

On Monday, Iowa residents will gather in schools, churches and even private homes to choose among the Republican and Democratic candidates battling to be their party's 2016 presidential nominee — the first in a series of state-by-state contests to choose delegates to each party's presidential nominating convention.

Some Republican candidates saw Trump's move as a welcome opportunity to emerge from the long shadow the billionaire has cast over the race, while also hoping it might damage his standing with Iowa voters.

"I think it'll hurt him that he's not showing up in the Iowa debate four days before the Iowa caucuses," former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush told CNN.

Florida Sen. Marco Rubio said Republicans "don't have time for these kinds of distractions."

Trump has led the Republican race nationally for months, to the surprise of many. In Iowa, howe-

# Trump looks to grab attention as Republican rivals debate

■ **Trump's absence is likely to turn attention to Cruz, a firebrand conservative, and Rubio, who is hoping for a third-place finish in Iowa**

ver, polls suggest he's locked in a tight race with Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, a favorite of the conservatives and evangelical Christians who hold significant sway in the state's Republican caucuses.

Given Trump's unpredictable nature, some campaigns were preparing for the possibility he could reverse course and take the stage in Des Moines, Iowa after all. Still, Trump moved forward with plans to host a rally just a few miles away that his campaign said would raise money for wounded warriors.

With Fox carrying the debate, other cable channels were likely to show Trump's event, stealing away at least some viewers who would have otherwise watched the contest.

While earlier debates have been instrumental in the rise and fall of several Republican candida-



This file photo combination made from August 6, 2015, shows Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump (left) and Fox News host and moderator Megyn Kelly during the first Republican presidential debate in Ohio

tes, they have had minimal apparent impact on Trump's standing. He's preferred to make his case to potential voters in national television interviews and on Twitter, and has often faded into the background in the debates.

Trump's absence is likely to turn attention to Cruz, a firebrand conservative disdained by many in his party, and Rubio, who is hoping a third-place finish in Iowa could help him establish himself as the choice of more traditional Republicans.

Others on the debate stage will have their eye on New Hampshire, where they're hoping a strong showing in the February 9 pri-

mary will jumpstart their White House hopes. Bush, Ohio Gov. John Kasich and New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie have all devoted the bulk of their campaign resources to New Hampshire.

Also on the main debate stage this morning (Macau time) was retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson, who has a loyal following in Iowa, and Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul, who was relegated to the undercard event in the last debate.

Trump's Fox feud dates back to the first Republican primary debate, when moderator Megyn Kelly took Trump to task over derogatory statements he'd made

in the past at women.

Trump had threatened to boycott the debate if Fox stuck with plans for Kelly to moderate again, but said it was a sarcastic statement from the network that was the final straw.

That statement said the leaders of Iran and Russia "both intend to treat Donald Trump unfairly when they meet with him if he becomes president" and that "Trump has his own secret plan to replace the Cabinet with his Twitter followers to see if he should even go to those meetings."

Trump and his campaign manager slammed the statement as taunting and juvenile. **AP**

# Car-making deals, protests greet Iranian president in Paris

**F**RANCE welcomed Iranian President Hassan Rouhani yesterday with a long-term car-making agreement and pledges to boost trade now that a diplomatic deal is easing nuclear tensions.

Yet clouds hung over the historic outreach trip. France has asked its European Union partners to consider new sanctions on Iran for its recent ballistic missile tests, officials have told The Associated Press. That highlights continued suspicions between Iran and the West despite the recent agreement curbing Iran's nuclear program that prompted the lifting of earlier sanctions.



Iranian President Hassan Rouhani (right) inspects an honor guard during a welcome ceremony yesterday at the Invalides in Paris. The trip is an effort to usher in a new era after the landmark accord signed in November

Rouhani arrived in Paris earlier this week from Rome, where billions of euros' worth of trade deals were reached, and was formally greeted

yesterday morning at the gold-domed Invalides monument that houses Napoleon's tomb.

French Prime Minister Manuel Valls said the

countries should forget past rancor. "France is available for Iran," he said. "Iran can count on France."

Rouhani's visit was also met with protests, notably over executions in Iran. A nearly naked woman hung from a fake noose off a Paris bridge yesterday next to a huge banner reading: "Welcome Rouhani, Executioner of Freedom."

But the thrust of the trip was about improving economic and diplomatic relations after years of isolation for his country of 80 million people.

Rouhani said his country is "favorable terrain" for resumed trade between East and West, as

he and Valls pledged to turn the page on past tensions.

Rouhani, speaking to French executives, urged efforts to unblock financing for resumed trade now that sanctions over Iran's nuclear program have been lifted.

Sanctions were lifted on Tehran on January 16 in exchange for U.N. certification that Iran had scaled back its nuclear programs. Iran maintained those programs were peaceful but critics feared it wanted to build nuclear weapons. But Iran's latest ballistic missile tests prompted new U.S. sanctions.

While France has asked EU partners about possible new sanctions over

those tests, too, the French government is also hoping to draw in Iran's help in peacemaking in its region, notably in Syria and Yemen, and easing tensions with regional rival Saudi Arabia.

Rouhani said the protracted, complex — but ultimately successful — nuclear negotiations could serve as an example for solving multiple crises in the Middle East.

Rouhani, in a speech to French think tank IFRI, said that for such diplomacy to work, both sides must "lower our pretensions."

Speaking through a translator, he said: "Each side must feel it is a win-win agreement." **MDT/AP**

## TV canal macau



## FRIDAY

13:00	TDM News (Repeat)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
17:30	Castle S.5
18:10	Trail of Lies (Repeated)
19:00	TDM Talk Show (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:15	Documentary Serie
21:45	Miscellaneous
22:10	Trail of Lies
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Portuguese Movie
01:40	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

## SATURDAY

10:30	Boonie Bears - Sr.2
11:35	Young Adult
12:00	Miscellaneous
13:00	TDM News (Repeat)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	Soap Opera
18:30	Contest
19:20	Miscellaneous
19:55	Documentary Serie
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Drama
21:50	Documentary
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Movie
01:15	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

## SUNDAY

10:30	Young Children
11:00	Sunday Mass
12:00	Miscellaneous
13:00	TDM News (Repeat)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	Zig Zag
16:15	Young Adult
17:40	Miscellaneous
18:50	Action
19:40	Comedy
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Contraponto
22:00	Every Breath We Take - Understanding our Atmosphere
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Non-Daily Portuguese News
23:45	Miscellaneous
00:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report

## offbeat

## US: TURN 'SILENCE OF THE LAMBS' HOUSE INTO ANIMAL MUSEUM



An animal rights group wants to convert the western Pennsylvania house used in the film "The Silence of the Lambs" into an empathy museum, where visitors could wear the skins of slain and abused animals.

The group People for the Ethical Treatment of

Animals (PETA) says in a release that it has written to the real estate agent handling the sale and wants to create a museum. The building was home to psychotic killer Buffalo Bill in the 1991 film.

PETA says by wearing animal skins, people would be reminded that animals also are "made of flesh, blood and bone."

Scott and Barbara Lloyd listed the Layton home for sale last summer. It's located about 28 miles southeast of Pittsburgh. The asking price dropped from USD300,000 to \$250,000 earlier this month.

## cinema



## CINETEATRO

28 JAN - 04 FEB



## THE 5H WAVE

ROOM 1

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: J Blakeson

Starring: Chloë Grace Moretz, Nick Robinson, Maika Monroe

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 112min



## THE LAST WOMEN STANDING

ROOM 2

2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Luo Lu

Starring: Shu Qi, Eddie Peng Yuyan, Hao Leie

Language: Mandarin (English/Cantonese)

Duration: 100min



## THE BIG SHORT

ROOM 3

2.30, 4.45, 9.30 pm

Director: Adam McKay

Starring: Christian Bale, Steve Carell, Ryan Gosling

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 130min

## IP MAN 3

ROOM 3

7.30 pm

Director: Wilson Yip Wai Shun

Starring: Donnie Yen, Lynn Xiong, Max Zhang

Language: Cantonese (English/Cantonese)

Duration: 110min

## MACAU TOWER

14 JAN - 10 FEB

## THE 5H WAVE

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: J Blakeson

Starring: Chloë Grace Moretz, Nick Robinson, Maika Monroe

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 112min

## this day in history



## 1959 FOG BRINGS TRANSPORT CHAOS

Dense fog - the worst for seven years - has brought road, rail and air transport in many parts of England and Wales to a virtual standstill.

London has been worst affected - but many areas of the Midlands, East Anglia, southern England and east and south Wales have also been shrouded in fog and frost for most of the day.

In 1952, London suffered from what became known as The Great Smog - fog intensified by thick smoke. More than 2,000 people died in the week ending 6 December mostly from chest and lung-related illnesses.

The Meteorological Office is predicting the latest "smog" will persist during the next 24 hours in the London area and possibly in some parts of South Wales, Birmingham and the industrial Midlands.

An AA spokesman said 28 hours of fog in the capital had left a nil-visibility ring around London.

He said: "It is a motorist's nightmare as rush-hour drivers grope their way through nil visibility in the Hendon, Finchley, Northolt, Wandsworth, Bromley and Sidcup districts."

Traffic patrols have reported nose-to-tail jams and vehicles travelling at a crawl from all parts of the capital.

At least six people were injured in three collisions on the ice-covered Kingston by-pass in Surrey. Thirty-five vehicles were involved in a collision in dense fog at Hampton Hill in Middlesex.

A London Transport spokesman said many buses had been unable to leave their garages because crews could not get to work on time.

London airport was closed with visibility down to 20 yards. Many flights were diverted into Gatwick.

Many long-distance trains from London were cancelled. Suburban services were also seriously disrupted.

There are some businesses benefiting from the smog. One Birmingham travel agent has reported bookings up 10% on last year and the number of inquiries has gone up since the fog descended.

Chemists are also reporting a boom in the sale of smog masks. One chemist in the centre of Manchester had sold out of masks by 1000 this morning.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

In response to the smog of December 1952, the Clean Air Act was introduced in 1956.

It restricted the burning of domestic fuels in urban areas with the introduction of smokeless zones, but fogs continued to be smoky after the act as residents and operators were given time to convert.

The act was revised in 1968 when industries burning coal, gas or other fuels were ordered to use tall chimneys. In 1974 the first Control of Air Pollution act introduced regulations on the composition of motor fuels.

By the 1980s and '90s the increasing use of the motor vehicle led to a new kind of smog caused by the chemical reaction of car pollutants and the sunshine.

The 1995 Environment Act introduced new regulations for air pollutants.



**YOUR STARS**

**Aries**  
Mar. 21-Apr. 19  
Do you need a new phone — or some other, more esoteric gadget? Now is an ideal time to get a great deal, so look around for something suitable and then see what you can do to drive the price down.

**Taurus**  
April 20-May 20  
Your mind is racing, and you are torn between two or more alternatives for today's action. That means you could flip a coin, but it's better to wait for the right information to come your way.

**Gemini**  
May 21-Jun. 21  
Your mental energy is topping out today, so find a way to record all those great ideas that are flowing through your head! You may find that you need to grab a friend to help sort through them all.

**Cancer**  
Jun. 22-Jul. 22  
Nobody seems able to tell you what you need to know — so make sure that you're seeking out more people! You may never get the definitive word, but the chorus of voices helps you settle on something.

**Leo**  
Jul. 23-Aug. 22  
You need to listen carefully — your friends are trying to tell you something that may be somewhat delicate. It's not exactly life and death, though, so you don't have to feel like the world is at stake.

**Virgo**  
Aug. 23-Sept. 22  
This day is less nailed down than others — which means that your actions have a greater effect! Make sure that you do your best, so you can at least feel good about your activities when it's all over.

**Libra**  
Sep. 23-Oct. 22  
Your social and intellectual energies are working together, and you are seeking out new topics for conversation. Things may get really interesting when you run into someone who's like-minded!

**Scorpio**  
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21  
Try to relax and avoid the temptation to take risks today — you can tell that the odds are just not on your side. Things could get really weird if you let them, but you're better off just lying low.

**Sagittarius**  
Nov. 22-Dec. 21  
You've got almost too much going on today — but you don't really mind! Things may get a little nutty as you swing from one rope to the next, but you always manage to catch yourself.

**Capricorn**  
Dec. 22-Jan. 19  
Keep chatter to a minimum today — you need to just relax and focus on your work or whatever else you've decided is of primary importance. Things are looking good, but stay on task!

**Aquarius**  
Jan. 20-Feb. 18  
You need to speak from the heart — but you need to do so in a way that acknowledges that you still have a brain! Make sure that your people get the message in a way that only you can deliver it.

**Pisces**  
Feb. 19-Mar. 20  
What you thought was solid turns out to be rather mushy — so make sure that you're in a good place to watch and see what needs to happen next. Your energy is perfect for improvising!

**THE BORN LOSER** by Chip Sansom



**SUDOKU**

**Easy**

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

**Easy+**

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

**Medium**

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

**Hard**

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

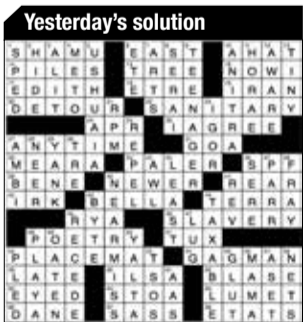
**WEATHER**

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
<b>CHINA</b>			
Beijing	-7	0	clear/cloudy
Harbin	-27	-15	clear
Tianjin	-3	0	cloudy
Urumqi	-15	-8	cloudy/clear
Xi'an	-4	4	cloudy/overcast
Lhasa	-9	7	cloudy
Chengdu	0	10	cloudy/clear
Chongqing	4	10	overcast/cloudy
Kunming	1	15	clear
Nanjing	3	5	moderate rain
Shanghai	5	8	drizzle
Wuhan	2	6	drizzle/cloudy
Hangzhou	4	6	moderate rain
Taipei	18	24	moderate rain
Guangzhou	13	17	heavy rain
Hong Kong	15	18	heavy rain
<b>WORLD</b>			
Moscow	0	2	sleet
Frankfurt	1	11	cloudy/drizzle
Paris	1	11	clear/cloudy
London	10	12	drizzle
New York	-2	5	clear/overcast

**CROSSWORDS**

**ACROSS:** 1- DEA agent; 5- Nobelist Bohr; 10- Enemies; 14- Moonfish; 15- Dam extending across the Nile; 16- Smell \_\_\_; 17- Aloe \_\_\_; 18- \_\_\_ having fun yet?; 19- Nothing more than; 20- Rebirth of the soul in a new body; 23- Back of the neck; 24- "Runaway" singer Shannon; 25- Cow catcher; 28- CD forerunners; 31- Laid-back; 35- Construction pieces; 37- \_\_\_ Lingus; 39- Year abroad; 40- In spite of; 44- Hobby shop buy; 45- Affirmative answer; 46- Off-campus local; 47- Reduces speed; 50- Desire; 52- Actress Spacek; 53- Curvy letter; 55- \_\_\_ arms (angry); 57- Donkey; 63- Confer; 64- Broadcasting; 65- Escaping fluid; 67- Cairo's river; 68- Churns up; 69- Patron saint of sailors; 70- Animated character; 71- 1957 hit for the Bobbettes; 72- Stains;

**DOWN:** 1- Calendar abbr.; 2- Imitator; 3- Infrequent; 4- Portable power saw; 5- Civil rights org.; 6- Sharon's land; 7- Large jug or pitcher; 8- Mown grass; 9- Slammin' Sammy; 10- Clan; 11- Black-and-white treat; 12- Merit; 13- Fr. holy woman; 21- A Judd; 22- Vietnamese New Year; 25- Rings of a chain; 26- Bubbling; 27- Rhubarb; 29- Dated; 30- Collector's goal; 32- Hurts; 33- Bandleader Skinnay \_\_\_; 34- One over par; 36- Sloppy place; 38- Fink; 41- Yo!; 42- Polite refusal; 43- Lessened; 48- Enervate; 49- Conscripting org.; 51- Marriageable; 54- Tempest; 56- Money bag; 57- Scott of "Charles in Charge"; 58- Cockney greeting; 59- \_\_\_ about; 60- Go belly up; 61- Hard to hold; 62- Title; 63- Explosive initials; 66- Floors;



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

**USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

- Emergency calls 999
- Fire department 28 572 222
- PJ (Open line) 993
- PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
- PSP 28 573 333
- Customs 28 559 944
- S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
- Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
- Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
- IACM 28 387 333
- Tourism 28 333 000
- Airport 59 888 88
- Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
- Water Supply - Report 1990 992
- Telephone - Report 1000
- Electricity - Report 28 339 922
- Macau Daily Times 28 716 081



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<p><b>Houston Court, Coloane Village Coloane</b> 1 Bedroom Apartment Upgraded in Sept 2015 HKD 13,500 / 800 sq ft Ref: 15090532</p>	<p><b>Lakeview Macau</b> 3 Bedrooms Apartment Fully Furnished HKD 25,000 / 3,430 sq ft Ref: 15080524</p>	<p><b>Tai Nin Macau</b> 1 Bedroom Apartment Apartment near Senado Square HKD 8,500 / 850 sq ft Ref: 15090536</p>	<p><b>Manhattan F Unit, Taipa</b> 3 Bedrooms Apartment Large Master Bedroom HKD 21,500 / 1,720 sq ft Ref: 15090534</p>

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FOOTBALL | FA CUP

## Van Gaal defiant as criticism mounts ahead of FA Cup match

Steve Douglas, Manchester

Saturday, 3:55am  
Derby v Man Utd  
H 4.3, D 3.5, A 2

**I**F Manchester United went on the attack in games as much as its manager does in news conferences, England's biggest team may not be in such a rut.

Yesterday, a defiant Louis van Gaal criticized sections of the British media who reported this week he had offered to resign in the wake of United's latest poor result — a 1-0 home loss to Southampton in the Premier League on Saturday.

"I think it's awful and horrible," said Van Gaal, who walked out of a news conference last month. "It's the third time I've been sacked and I'm still sitting here."

Lose to second-tier Derby in the FA Cup today (Saturday, 3:55am), and even Van Gaal acknowledges the scrutiny could be too much to take.

"Now I cannot lose anymore because I am condemned for the fourth time that I have been sacked," Van Gaal said. "And maybe then you have written the truth, because sometimes it happens."

Van Gaal was heckled by fans after the loss to Southampton, with United having won just three of its last 13 games and in fifth place in the Premier League. United's style of football under Van Gaal is dull and risk-averse, and the supporters appear to have had enough.

The Dutchman said that he hadn't offered to quit and the support of Ed Woodward, United's executive vice-chairman, was "fantastic."

"It gives you a lot of pressure because when the board has such confidence in you, the pressure is much higher than when they say it's your last game," Van Gaal said. "Then the confidence is not so high."

United may be playing Derby just at the right time. It has won only one of its last six games — in the FA Cup third round — and has dropped off the top of the League Championship.

Derby is managed by Paul Clement, the former assistant manager at Real Madrid where he worked under Carlo Ancelotti. Clement said he might speak to Ancelotti before the game at Pride Park.

"I am not sure it will quite be a giant-killing if we get a good result," Clement said. "It is a challenge we are really looking forward to, up against a team that is not in great form." **AP / Oddschecker.com**

RUGBY

# No talk of who's favorite among Six Nations teams

Foster Niumata, London

**T**HE new leaders of the bookmakers' favorite team to win the Six Nations were keen to downplay their qualities.

Eddie Jones said he was enjoying his honeymoon period as England coach, still waiting for the first big blow-up in the squad, while captain Dylan Hartley, their most experienced player by far, admitted he was "not the finished article, I need help."

The kind of help Hartley was referring to at the tournament media launch this week was in regard to skills, though it could also have been about his poor disciplinary record. More than a year's worth of suspensions caused his suitability to be the skipper to still be questioned two days after his appointment, and prompted answers from the straight-backed hooker as prickly as his haircut.

Hartley's appointment prompted a rush of betting at William Hill on England as the favorite for the title and a Grand Slam, which didn't put off Jones calling their first opponent, Scotland, "the form team of Europe," presumably because the Scots reached the Rugby World Cup quarterfinals and England didn't.

Jones admitted he was still finding out what makes each of his players tick, but was sure enough to pick three uncapped players who could receive testing debuts on Feb. 6 at Murrayfield in front of "65,000 crazy Scots."

Scotland captain Greig Laidlaw hopes that crowd plays its part because "we want to make Murrayfield not a nice place for teams to come and play us."

The Scots haven't beaten England for eight years, but they are riding a wave of confidence after making the World Cup quarters, which ended in controversial fashion.

A year after being whitewashed in the Six Nations, the Scots have stated they are aiming for the title they haven't won this century, and can't afford to get caught up in the usual



anti-English jingoism that comes with Calcutta Cup games.

"We can't go into it with clouded minds, we need clear minds to win this game," Laidlaw said.

Defending two-time champion Ireland announced a clear mind for star flyhalf Jonathan Sexton, who passed concussion protocols and trained on Tuesday after suffering another head injury in the Champions Cup last weekend. He will be available for Ireland's Six Nations opener against Wales on Feb. 7 at Lansdowne Road, coach Joe Schmidt said.

Schmidt admitted he was concerned about Sexton's long-term health, but trusted the medical advice on Sexton, who was stood down for 12 weeks a year ago after four concussions in quick succession, and took another head knock against France at the World Cup.

"All we can do is go on the best medical opinion," Schmidt said. "If there are people who question that, it's a disappointment and a reality."

Schmidt was impressed by how Wales "picked themselves off the ground" to beat England at Twicke-

nam in the Rugby World Cup last September, and doesn't expect anything less than a fight to the finish next week.

There's pessimism in Ireland about its chances of a hat trick of Six Nations titles after all three provincial teams — all former European club champions — failed to reach the Champions Cup quarterfinals.

"Have you seen our record?" Wales coach Warren Gatland asked. Neither of the two Welsh provinces made the quarters either, and a Welsh club hasn't reached the final for 20 years.

Like the Welsh players, Gatland expected the Irish players to have their enthusiasm renewed by rejoining the national setup, and reminded of their past achievements.

It's been six years since France last won the championship, and its last appearance anywhere was a record 62-13 hiding from New Zealand in the World Cup quarterfinals. But new coach Guy Noves was bored of the reminders, and preferred to look ahead.

"I have no defeats with my team," he said. "We have good players who can bounce back, and boun-

cing back is what we must do."

After years of underwhelming rugby from France, Noves was, like England counterpart Jones, trying to return the team to its strengths and restore pride. It was less about ambition, than taking responsibility on the field.

"The players must not only take pleasure on the field but also give pleasure," Noves said.

They have the pleasure of hosting the tournament opener on Feb. 6 against Italy, which will try to give leaving coach Jacques Brunel a suitable send-off.

Expectations aren't high, as usual. Especially after the squad included 10 new caps, and will have limited training together.

"Every single year people ask if we deserve to be in this tournament, and every year we must show that we really deserve to play," Italy captain Sergio Parisse said.

"The only way we can be credible as a team is by performing well. We know it's going to be really, really difficult to get victories in the first two matches against France and England, but we will try to build confidence for the matches afterwards." **AP**

THE BUZZ US: 19 ARRESTED IN CONNECTION WITH DRUG, GAMBLING RING

Nineteen people from four states were arrested in connection with an international drug trafficking and illegal gambling ring that authorities allege was headed by a former college athlete. Arrests were made in Southern California, Sacramento, Phoenix, Louisiana and Virginia, the U.S. attorney's office said.

Two other people were previously arrested, including Owen Hanson, who played football and volleyball at the University of Southern California

more than a decade ago. They are among nearly two dozen people indicted this month in San Diego.

The federal indictment, unsealed yesterday, alleges that Hanson ran an organization known as "ODOG" that sold drugs from heroin to meth, laundered millions of dollars through shell companies, operated illegal sports gambling websites, ran a network of bookies, and strong-armed debtors.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	50-70 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	55-75 Moderate
Ambient	55-75 Moderate

SOURCE: DSI/MG

opinion

Kapok  
Eric Sautedé



MAKE THE RESULTS (TRULY) PUBLIC

Reports released by any audit commission anywhere are often written in a dreary, matter-of-fact style, and deal with topics that, although of general interest and direct taxpayer concern, seldom capture the public's imagination. Yet, contrary to the general belief, they habitually make a fun read. The title itself can be eye-catching - although not a Macao tradition - and of course the general conclusions and recommendations need to be unequivocal and effective, especially when your values are "professionalism, independence, objectivity and professional due care" and your mission is "to conduct independent audit on public sector organizations with respect to their utilization and management of public funds," as it is the case for the Commission of Audit (CA) in Macao. Here, no abusive speech about the need for consensus building, but rather hard talk and professional judgment with the clear transformational objective of making the administration more accountable and capable.

The tradition runs deep in China. Censors, a mix of graft-fighters and auditors, were put in place under the Han dynasty (206 BCE - 8 CE) and then the position of Censor-in-chief became one of the most coveted positions in Imperial China up to 1911. In Republican China, the Control Yuan was and is still today in the Republic of China (Taiwan) one of the five main branches of government as imagined by Sun Yat-sen (the four others being the Executive, Legislative, Judicial and Examination yuan), and the Ministry of Audit is actually placed under the Control Yuan. In the People's Republic of China, a National Audit Office was created in 1983 and is constitutive of the State Council - we were reminded of the existence of that institution this week when one of the Deputy Directors of the Macao Liaison Office, Zheng Zhentao, was nominated discipline inspection chief in that very office. And of course, we have the pretty notorious Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, the highest internal-control institution of the Communist Party of China that brought down the like of Bo Xilai and Zhou Yongkang.

In Macao, the CA merely deals with the (mis) management of public funds, and is not concerned with corruption or even maladministration as these are left to the probing of the Commission Against Corruption. Although it enjoys administrative and financial autonomy, the CA reports directly to the Chief Executive. Yet, in more than 16 years it has released dozens of convincing and daring reports, first under the stewardship of long-term civil servant Mrs Fátima Choi Mei Lei and since 2009 under Mr Ho Veng On, the only element of continuity still standing today after the extensive cabinet reshuffle of December 2014.

Released last week, the latest CA report concerns the awarding of surveys and consultancy services by the government agencies, and clearly there is a lot to be improved. In terms of number, things are not so bad: out of 1,514 "contracted" projects representing more than MOP1.4 billion from January 2010 to June 2013, only 280 are considered as posing a "high risk" and 81 being "actually problematic", for a total of only MOP153 million. More worrying though is that all of these are concentrated among a handful of administrations, the worst of which in value and/or instances being the Transport Bureau, the Public Works Bureau, the Macao Foundation and the Environmental Bureau; the main faults residing in discretionary attributions of contracts and disregard for due processes and regulations. It is all the more disturbing that these are precisely the departments where issues are the most pressing and public wariness the most vocal: city planning, transport and environment! The secretaries have immediately issued directives to all departments to carefully "study" the cases raised and the recommendations made. The Chief Executive himself has requested the utmost vigilance and indicated that this poses a wider question as to why so much expert advice needed to be outsourced.

In the end, if the CE wants his "scientific governance" promise to take hold, all the reports produced (and their authors) should be made public as the end result as much as the due processes appear to be at fault!

Norwegian preschool drops carnival over gender stereotypes

Mark Lewis, Stavanger

A preschool in egalitarian Norway has canceled its traditional carnival celebration saying it encourages gender stereotypes, with boys dressing up in macho superhero costumes and girls in frilly princess dresses.

Renate Kvivesen, the principal of the Vikaasen preschool near Trondheim, told The Associated Press that "we don't think it fits our values to host an event where children feel it's important to fit into specific gender roles."

The preschool has children from zero to six years old.

Parents were informed by email that the annual dress-up for carnival, held just ahead of Lent in the Christian calendar, would not be taking place as usual this year after a split decision by the parent-teacher board.

Kvivesen said some parents were disappointed but added "the nature of the celebration has chan-



ged in recent years so we felt we needed to look again at the arrangements."

Norwegians are proud of their record in promoting women's rights. Some 40 percent of Norwegian lawmakers are women, including the prime minister and finance minister, while company boardrooms are required to have a female quota of four in every 10.

Still, some are sensitive about letting gender politics affect the upbringing of their children.

One of those who disagreed with the decision to cancel the dress-up was Sarah Askim, a Swiss-born mother of three boys, the youngest of which attends the preschool.

"I appreciate that they try to open the kids' minds," she said. "I am happy if the girls play with cars and the boys play with kitchen stuff. But I won't dress my

boys later on with a skirt. I believe at one point we have to admit that there is difference between girls and boys."

While referencing gender-stereotyped costumes, the email to parents also added concern at the commercialization of the holiday. "Not all children experience this day as something positive," it said.

Hilde Noest, who had planned to send her 18-month-old daughter to preschool in a piglet costume, said some might think of Norway as "the crazy equality country," but added the decision would help protect children.

"It's OK if all of the boys want to be Batman and all of the girls want to be princesses," she said. "But maybe some of them feel differently and they should not be made to feel left out." AP

times square by rodrigo



WORLD BRIEFS

**PAKISTAN** Diplomats from Pakistan, Afghanistan, China and the US are due to meet in Islamabad next month, Pakistan's Foreign Ministry announced, to discuss how to resume the stalled peace process between the Kabul government and the Taliban.



**INDIA** Suspected Maoist rebels killed seven policemen and injured six others, a top police official in India said yesterday, after they detonated a land mine in Jharkhand state. The rebels operate mostly in central and eastern India, demanding a greater local share in the region's natural resources.

**AUSTRALIA** A teenage suspect discussed with a British accomplice packing a kangaroo with explosives before setting it loose on Australian police officers, prosecutors allege. The suspect is believed to be connected to an IS-inspired terrorist attack at a Veteran's Day ceremony in April last year. More on p12

**BRAZIL** New figures released by Brazil's Health Ministry as part of a probe into the Zika virus have found fewer cases of a rare birth defect than first feared.

**FRANCE** An activist from international women's rights organization, Femen, staged a mock hanging of herself from a bridge in Paris to protest the visit of Iranian president Hassan Rouhani yesterday. She had an Iranian flag painted on her chest. More on p15



**FRANCE** A man with two handguns and a Quran was detained yesterday along with his female partner at Disneyland Paris, Europe's most-visited tourist attraction, police said. No one was hurt in the incident and the park remained open after the arrests.