



ATV NEWSCASTS TERMINATED
Hong Kong broadcaster ATV has announced that its news broadcasts have been "suspended"

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GAMING REGULATOR 'CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC'
"According to the predictions of economists and some investment banks, we are cautiously optimistic," Paulo Martins Chan said

P7 GAMING



SICHUAN GOVERNOR FIRED FOR 'DISLOYALTY'

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WORLD BRIEFS



CHINA More than 120 people, including senior officials, were responsible for deadly blasts in the Chinese city of Tianjin last year, investigators have said. According to a Xinhua report the warehouse blasts were caused by hazardous materials improperly or illegally stored.

SOUTH KOREA says it has agreed to begin talks with Washington on possible deployment of a US missile defense system. *More on p12*

INDIAN authorities have deported an Australian man on suspicion of being an Islamic State supporter. The man was detained by India's security agencies for questioning after he landed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi.

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FINANCIAL TIMES

Can China get its rebalancing right? **F1**

Taiwan quake toll climbs to 26 as rescuers search rubble

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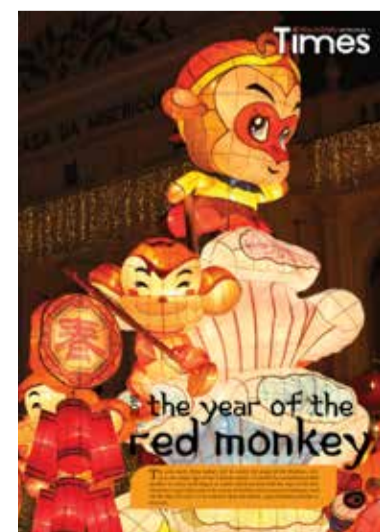


HOLIDAY TIMES

Macau Daily Times will not be published during the holidays. The Times will be back on the stands on Friday, February 12. However the MDT website will be updated with breaking news during the recess period. We wish our readers, advertisers and friends the best of times. Kong Hei Fat Choi!

CNY tourist numbers expected to grow despite decline in package tours

P2



CNY Almanac Inside

Tourist numbers grow 4.4 percent before CNY

Renato Marques

THE Lunar New Year is, for many, a pivotal moment of the year and the peak of the celebration season. In Macau, as has become habit, it is a season where many arrive to visit, while many locals take the opportunity to visit other places.

According to the latest figures released yesterday and cited by TDM, from Wednesday (February 3) to Saturday (February 6), around 573,000 people entered the territory, an increase of 4.4 percent year-on-year from the same period last year. From those arrivals, 81 percent (466,000) were mainland Chinese, a figure that has also increased – in this instance, by 8.2 percent year-on-year.

Marc, a German student, had recently landed in Macau after arriving from Shanghai. This being his first time in Macau, he told the Times that his first impression was a little contrary to what he had been hoping.

“I was actually expecting Macau to be a little bit more peaceful. I find it quite crowded and jammed like Shanghai. But it has been interesting so far. We are here to stay for two days

“I was actually expecting Macau to be a little bit more peaceful. I find it quite crowded and jammed like Shanghai.”

GERMAN TOURIST

and then we go to visit Hong Kong, too,” he said.

As for Qin, also a first-timer in the territory, she admittedly nurtures different interests to Marc, who was said to be interested “in the European side and in the history of Macau.” By contrast, Qin declared, “I’m aiming to try all the foods,” and added, “I’ve heard so much about Macau food from my friends who came here before me.”

Gastronomy and the big hotels and casinos are on top of Qin’s to-do list. Even so, she denied

feeling bored at the prospect of visiting more “historical sites” that were of interest to Marc.

Both admitted to the Times that Macau is different from what they imagined, as Marc was hoping for it to be more peaceful, while Qin was expecting to find a few more foreign tourists. She realized that, in fact, “most of the people in the streets are Chinese.”

Questioned about whether they would attend any events related to the Chinese New Year, the tourists said that they did not have much information about any program in Macau, but they had made plans to attend the Chinese New Year Parade in HK.

Elsewhere, the Times found Maria, a local resident who expressed some sadness at the fact that, this year, she is staying in Macau during this season.

“I usually take this opportunity [CNY] to spend a few days out of Macau, but, this year, I am forced to stay due to financial and family reasons,” she said.

In previous years, the Macau resident said she usually traveled to either Thailand, Singapore or even Japan.

This year, she said she is having an earlier Chinese New



Year dinner with friends and close relatives, and plans to spend the remaining days simply “staying at home as much as possible to avoid the crowds.”

According to unofficial data provided by a travel agent operating in Praia Grande dis-

trict, Macau residents choose this season to travel mostly to Taiwan, Japan and South Korea, and there is also usually an increased demand during the season for packages to mainland China, namely to Beijing and Shanghai.

1,500 MAINLAND TOURISTS TURNED AWAY MONTHLY

DURING 2015 reportedly more than 50 tourists were prevented on a daily basis by the Gongbei Port Customs from exiting China to enter Macau due to invalid endorsement. The issue follows the introduction of a new electronic document, launched in May 2014, which replaced the old version of the Travel Permit for mainland residents. A Zhuhai newspaper

reported on Saturday that some mainland tourists did not apply for the renewal and are being stopped at the border. Residents from Guangdong can apply for a renewal at any “self-accreditation machine” in Zhuhai, whereas people from other provinces must return to their place of residence registration to renew the endorsement.

CNY

Travel agencies see decline in group tours

Office (MGTO) indicates that the number of tourists dropped by 2.6 percent in 2015 (totaling 30.7 million). Of those, a total of 8.52 million tourists came to visit in tour groups, a year-on-year decline of 8 percent.

The drop in visitor arrivals on package tours is having repercussions for local travel agencies, although the agencies focused on daily excursions from mainland China to Macau showed little concern about the New Year traffic.

“The number of groups

“Hong Kong is not doing well in travel services, which is definitely affecting Macau.”

TRAVEL AGENT

will, for sure, shrink during the Spring Festival, especially right af-

ter the New Year,” Miss Chan, from Macao Vacation Travel Services, told the Times, adding that “2015 was not a good year as a whole though.”

Recent reports from Hong Kong media indicate that some Hong Kong tourism associations estimated a 70 percent drop in tourist group numbers during the big holiday. Correspondingly, Miss Chan said that “people prefer to go to the southeast regions because they are very cheap now. Hong Kong is not doing well in

travel services, which is definitely affecting Macau.”

Nonetheless, companies from Guangzhou stated that they will still prompt tourist groups to visit Hong Kong and Macau. Mainland media acknowledged that one of the biggest travel agencies in Guangzhou claimed that 70 percent of its Hong Kong and Macau lines are full.

According to Macau’s Statistics and Census Service, there were 237 travel agencies in Macau in 2014. **Staff reporter**



THE number of tourists traveling in tour groups is expected to slow throughout the ongoing Spring Festival holiday,

according to travel agents interviewed by the Times.

The latest information released by the Macau Government Tourism

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MDT's Website has logged over 120 million page views since January 1st, 2012 up to today.

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Macau expresses solidarity with Taiwan after earthquake

The local government has expressed great concern regarding the 6.7-magnitude earthquake that hit the southern part of Taiwan. The Chief Executive, Chui Sai On, extended his deepest condolences to the families of those injured as a result of the earthquake. The government issued a statement saying it is paying close attention to the latest developments in relation to the incident, and is maintaining close contact with the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Macau. It will also provide assistance to any Macau residents who have been affected by the earthquake in Taiwan.

'Beautification of garbage collection facilities' launched



The Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) has launched a design and research program focusing on the "beautification of garbage collection facilities." This will be conducted together with the "Step Out, Experience Macau's Communities" program, which aims to promote community tours and the development of diversified tourism products in Macau. IACM has invited the Macau Polytechnic Institute's School of Arts to help conduct the project. The main concept of the design and research program is to demonstrate the impression of Macau as a cultural blend of the Chinese and the Portuguese, a showcase of history and culture, and an integration of life and art.

IACM expects to collect 323 tons of 'large objects'

The Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) has revealed to Lusa agency that it expects to have collected this year, and in the period before the new Lunar Year, about 323 tons of furniture, appliances and other household equipment. The Bureau said that this year it extended its usual campaign for the collection of these kinds of objects to 118 collection points (ten more than in 2015). This year's campaign ran from January 25 to February 7 and was expected to substantially break last year's record of 287 tons, which was treated as waste for incineration or landfill by the Macau Waste Systems Company (CSR). The period just before the Chinese New Year is usually used by families to do thorough spring clean of their households, and to get rid of objects that are broken, no longer useful or are considered old and obsolete.

HONG Kong broadcaster ATV has announced that its news broadcasts have been "suspended" two months earlier than planned, following a mass exodus of the media division's staff over a dispute regarding unpaid wages.

The broadcaster violated the terms of its license on Saturday night after it failed to air its two newscasts of at least 15 minutes in Chinese and English due to a lack of staff working.

"Because of manpower and other conditions, we had no choice but to suspend our newscasts. We may have to wait until after the Lunar New Year [...] to see if the newscasts will be resumed," ATV's senior public relations manager told SCMP.

The failure has resulted in a suspension of its news broadcasts, possibly on a permanent basis, as last year Hong Kong authorities announced that they would not be renewing ATV's broadcasting license in April 2016.

Also on Saturday some 80 staff at ATV attended a briefing organized by the Labor Department in Hong Kong to review their rights as employees.



ATV newscasts terminated over staff walkout

The incident is only the latest for Hong Kong's struggling broadcaster, the oldest in the territory and the first Chinese-language television broadcaster in the world.

ATV has previously been plagued with failing ratings, endemic financial problems, and has been penalized for false reporting. Further, it has been fined at least 16 times over de-

lays to the paying of staff wages and licensing violations.

Hong Kong television channels are widely viewed in Macau. They had been accessed through unlicensed public antenna companies until recently when an agreement was signed to have a publicly owned company to ensure the transmission of a 49 basic TV channel package.

Hong Kong television channels are widely viewed in Macau

ATV is among the channels that comprise the basic TV channel package. **Staff reporter**

Madonna sparks ire in China after wearing Taiwanese flag

MADONNA'S concert in Taiwan has sparked controversy after the 'Queen of Pop' draped herself in a Taiwanese flag during her performance.

"On Thursday as the singer prepared to play her first ever shows in Taiwan, she posted a picture of herself at the center of a blue star design," the BBC reported.

That design is an old badge of the Kuomintang. "For many Taiwanese it is strongly associated with the 'White Terror', one of the bloodiest times in the country's history," the British broadcaster added. Later, during the concert,

Madonna performed her iconic hit "Holiday" wrapped in the Taiwanese flag.

Although many netizens responded positively on Taiwanese Internet forums, interpreting the gesture as a boost to guard the region's sovereignty against Beijing, the move has also agitated social media users in China, who posted furious tweets on China's version of Twitter, Weibo.

"Madonna draped the flag and you think you are going to be recognized by the UN? So funny," said one.

The 'Queen of Pop' has yet to comment



publicly. The "Rebel Heart Tour" is set to arrive in Macau to perform two concerts, which will be held on February 20 and 21 in Studio City.

CE highlights diversification in his CNY message

THE government will continue its ongoing efforts at economic diversification in the coming Year of the Monkey. In his Lunar New Year Message, Chief Executive Chui Sai On said that Macau will accomplish greater social achievements with the collective wisdom of the region's residents.

Looking towards the upcoming Chinese New Year, the Chief Executive added that the government would step up its efforts to maintain a robust financial environment, and would weather internal and external challenges by working closely with the public.

According to a statement, Chui said that the government will continue to prioritize projects that help to enhance the lives and welfare of the people in order to ensure Macau is a more habitable city.

In his message delivered yesterday, Chui urged the public to share the joy and warmth of this festive season with their families and people in need. He also extended his gratitude to all workers – in the private and public sectors – who are involved in keeping services operating during the holidays.

STATISTICS

Fewer companies registered in 2015

A total of 5,023 new companies were incorporated during 2015, a decrease of 386 year-on-year. According to information from the Statistics and Census Service, the total value of registered capital dropped by 28.8 percent to MOP1.3 billion.

Analyzed by industry, there were 1,804 new corporations operating in Wholesale and Retail, and 1,239 in Business Services, with the value of registered capital amounting to MOP226 million and MOP403 million, respectively.

The number of companies in dissolution totaled 595 in 2015, and the value of registered capital of companies in dissolution amounted to MOP190 million.

Considering the amount of registered capital, there were 3,502 new

companies (69.7 percent of the total) registered with capital under MOP50,000, together holding capital value of MOP92 million (7 percent of the total). Meanwhile, there were 108 new companies registered with capital of MOP1,000,000 or over, and the total value of capital amounted to MOP1 billion.

At the end of 2015, the number of registered companies increased by 4,431 year-on-year to 53,057, including 472 commercial offshore companies, a figure that was down by eight year-on-year.

In the fourth quarter of 2015, a total of 1,048 new companies were incorporated, down by 406 year-on-year, with the total value of registered capital increasing by 32.2 percent to MOP412 million.



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Technical failure causes bet cancellation



A failure in the Singapore Turf Club betting system has caused bets associated with the live broadcast of races in Macau and South Africa to be canceled, Shin Min Daily News reported. According to the Singapore Turf Club, the betting system failed to stop accepting bets after the race had started. Despite the fact that the race had ended in both Macau and South Africa, the system continued to receive bets. Consistent with the Singapore Turf Club procedures, the bets will all be refunded. One of the punters revealed that he had bet on the horse "Macau Spring", but the prize couldn't be delivered because the bets had been canceled. Some horseracing experts commented that if Hong Kong had been involved, the amount of bets cancelled would have been higher.

Judge: US citizen serving as foreign diplomat can face trial

Larry Neumeister, New York

A U.S. citizen serving as a foreign diplomat from the Dominican Republic is not immune from criminal prosecution in a United Nations bribery scandal, a judge ruled last week.

U.S. District Judge Vernon Broderick said Francis Lorenzo can be prosecuted in a bribery case that also resulted in the arrest of a former president of the U.N. General Assembly and Macau businessman Ng Lap Seng.

Lorenzo, who has pleaded not guilty and is free on bail, had claimed he was entitled to diplomatic immunity as an ambassador from the Dominican Republic.

The judge said Lorenzo's interpretation of law would mean he could not be criminally prosecuted for any crime as a U.S. citizen even though the Department of State had not granted him diplomatic immunity. Broderick said diplomatic immunity was not designed to give diplomats with dual citizenship a "get out of jail free card."



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

Broderick said Lorenzo could still claim immunity from prosecution for official acts taken in connection with his diplomatic position. He noted that Lorenzo is not subject to expulsion from the United States, as a non-U.S. citizen would be if he were accused of criminal acts.

"We are extremely disappointed," said defense lawyer Brian Bieber. He noted that his immunity argument was the first time the 2nd Circuit had confronted the question.

He said lawyers now planned to review 1.3 million pages of evidence turned over by prosecutors

and "move forward with our motion to dismiss the indictment on 'officials act' immunity grounds."

Lorenzo, who lives in the Bronx, has been suspended from his position as deputy U.N. ambassador from the Dominican Republic.

Lorenzo was arrested in the fall on charges that he participated in a conspiracy that prosecutors say caused more than a million dollars in bribes from Chinese businessmen to be given to John Ashe, a former diplomat from Antigua and Barbuda who served in the largely ceremonial post as head of the 193-nation assembly from September 2013 to September

Prosecutors say Ashe was paid bribes to support projects including a Macau conference center

ber 2014.

Ashe, who is free on bail, has pleaded not guilty to tax fraud charges brought against him in the fall.

Prosecutors say Ashe was paid bribes to support projects including a Macau conference center planned by Chinese billionaire Ng Lap Seng. Ng, who is free on bail but subject to 24-hour guards, has pleaded not guilty to charges that he was behind the majority of the bribes. MDT/AP

AD

Happy
Chinese
New Year
2016

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Online gaming ban in Portugal leads poker players to emigrate

A report from Portuguese newspaper Diário de Notícias (DN) states that in the last six months, and as part of the enforcement of a new law, Portuguese authorities have closed 86 websites dedicated to online casino games, namely Poker. The same report states that this “crack-down” on online gaming has already led to at least 50 players moving to other countries where online gaming is allowed.

Czech Republic, Brazil, Hungary, Malta and the UK are the top five destinations chosen by these “special migrants” to be able to continue playing online professionally.

Some of them had to leave their families behind; others stopped their studies in order to continue to perform this activity, which grants them sufficient income to live abroad. In one case cited by the DN, one of the players stated that he would only return to Portugal when the “profession” is legally permitted.

The ban in Portugal is due to a legal breach that precipitated a new regulation stating that online gaming is only allowed when run by approved websites. That is not possible yet, since the ruling entity is yet to issue any licenses, but there are at least 11 companies that have submitted applications, the processes for which are, according to DN, still ongoing without a precise date to be concluded.

The lack of licensing has led the poker players to become frustrated. This frustra-

tion, however, extends beyond poker players, as the regulation also applies for other activities like sports betting.

João Nunes, head of the largest poker website in Portugal, said that “the bureaucracy is huge and the process takes a long time, and it is a very complicated situation for the players.” He recalls that this community has about 60,000 registered users and that many are professionals or semi-professionals who are using this income to provide for all, or at least part, of their income.

In Macau, at the present time, there are no licenses for online gaming operations.

In June last year, the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ) issued a warning to local residents about online gambling sites, stating that it “has never issued any online interactive gaming license to any company. Hence, all online interactive gambling websites in Macau are considered illegal operations.”

Although illegal, online gaming has been promoted, leading the authorities to employ endless efforts to tackle this activity.

Industry conventions and fairs, such as the Global Gaming Expo (G2E Asia), have also tried to address this topic more than once.

Las Vegas Sands Corp. Chairman and CEO Sheldon Adelson has tried to push legislation that would ban online gambling in the United States. **RM**

Responsible Gaming Kiosk version 3.0

Renato Marques

THE first of a new version of self-use kiosks that aim to help in tackling “problematic gaming” was inaugurated yesterday.

Located at Studio City, the responsible gaming kiosk version 3.0 is the third version of the gaming help response mechanism that was launched by the government in 2012 with version 1.0 – a program conceived and developed by the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS), Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ) and the University of Macau’s Institute for the Study of Commercial Gaming.

For this newly added version, which joins the 18 version 2.0 units in operation across several casinos and institutions that provide gaming-related counseling, a few improved features have been installed, namely more information and a more interactive and enhanced system. There are several new functions, including the “self-exclusion from the casinos” option, which is now extended to all tourists and is not only available for local residents as with the previous version.

Another unique attribute, which has resulted from the partnership of the several institutions, is the inclusion of the so-called “Ambassadors of Responsible Gaming”: that is,



staff that can help to provide information and kiosk operation procedures, as well as participate in promotional events.

According to the figures cited by the DICJ Director, Paulo Chan, to 2015 there were 38,000 people who used the previous versions of the kiosks, which proved that these kiosks are use-

ful. “I believe that this kind of idea is very important to implement in our society. Throughout the year, the results have shown that improvement, namely on the number of requests of “self-exclusion” from entering into the casinos, has been growing.”

Also present at the inauguration was the Secretary

for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, who took the opportunity to highlight the efforts of the many professionals helping people who request assistance, as well as taking time to try the equipment himself.

The secretary also said, “In the near future, we plan to expand this new equipment to other casinos.”

DICJ ‘cautiously optimistic’ about gaming in 2016

ON the sidelines of the inauguration of the new version of the Responsible Gaming Kiosk event held at Studio City Macau casino, DICJ Director Paulo Martins Chan said that, “According to the predictions of economists and some investment banks, we are cautiously optimistic. Also in January [2016], there was slight growth when compared to December [2015] and, since we are in the month of Chinese New Year, we believe that the revenues will grow.”

Paulo Martins Chan added that the



Paulo Martins Chan

expectation for the rest of 2016 is that the “the decline will not be so strong as in the previous years.”

He concluded by saying: “The most difficult phase has already passed.” **RM**

corporate bits

MGM Macau’s Aux Beaux Arts continues to present exquisite gourmet cuisine from around the world. In February’s finest offerings, Aux Beaux Arts brings to Macau the famed wild blue lobster from the seacoast of Brittany along with French culinary artistry loaded with local flavors.

Brittany blue lobster, which has a distinct blue-tinged shell, is prized for being sweeter and far more flavorful than its clawed cousins. According to a press release, Chef Elie Khalife, Chef de Cuisine of Aux Beaux Arts, only picks the best serving sizes of the blue lobsters for Macau to be used in the restaurant’s recipes.

The French Brittany Blue Lobster Promotion is avail-

AUX BEAUX ARTS PRESENTS BRITANNY BLUE LOBSTER FEAST



able in both appetizer and main course menus. The menu offerings range from “Blue Lobster and Quinoa Citrus Salad with Manda-

rin Gel and Celery Sorbet” to “Cocotte of Braised Blue Lobster and Chicken Oyster with Rigatoni Pasta in Cream Sauce and Dry Morels.”

SANDS CHINA CONTINUES WELFARE SHOP SPONSORSHIP

Sands China Ltd has continued to support Macau Holy House of Mercy’s (SCMM) Welfare Shop for the fourth consecutive year, making another donation of MOP300,000 on Saturday to help needy families facing inflation and hardship.

Sands China has contributed MOP1.1 million in cash donations since the project was launched in 2013. According to a press release issued by SCMM, over 11,300 under-privileged households in the neighborhood have received bags of food essentials through the SCMM Welfare Shop’s monthly distribution, which is coordinated in an effort to help provide relief against the rising cost



of living.

Thirty Sands China Care Ambassadors distributed food on Saturday as a ges-

ture of sharing and warmth, as 353 families were also given special gifts to welcome the Year of the Monkey.

China foreign-exchange reserves drop as PBOC supports Yuan

CHINA'S foreign-exchange reserves shrank to the smallest since 2012, indicating that the central bank sold dollars as the yuan's retreat to a five-year low exacerbated depreciation pressure.

The world's largest currency hoard decreased by USD99.5 billion in January to \$3.23 trillion, according to a People's Bank of China (PBOC) statement released yesterday. The contraction was less than a Bloomberg survey's median estimate of a \$120 billion drop. The stockpile slumped by more than half a trillion dollars in 2015, the first-ever annual decline.

Policy makers fighting to hold up the weakening yuan amid slower economic growth, plunging stocks and increasing outflows have been burning through the reserves. The draw-down has continued since the central bank's surprise devaluation of the currency in August, when the stockpile tumbled \$94



billion, a monthly record before December's unprecedented \$108 billion decline.

"While the remaining reserves represent a substantial war chest, the rapid pace of depletion in recent months is simply unsustainable," said Rajiv Biswas, Asia-Pacific chief economist at IHS Global Insight in Singapore. "Domestic private investors and global currency traders see

a one-way bet against the currency. This has resulted in large-scale private capital outflows since early 2015 as expectations mount that the PBOC will eventually be forced to capitulate once its reserves are sufficiently depleted."

Capital outflows increased to \$158.7 billion in December, the most since September and were \$1 trillion last year, according to

estimates from Bloomberg Intelligence. That's more than seven times the amount of cash that left in 2014.

The PBOC has stepped up efforts to stem the exodus, warning speculators that they will be punished. It intervened in the Hong Kong market last month after the yuan's offshore exchange rate sank to a record 2.9 percent discount to the onshore rate.

Apart from selling dollars, the monetary authority also gave guidance to some

Chinese lenders in the city to suspend yuan lending to curb short selling, a move that contributed to the overnight interbank lending rate surging to an all-time high of 66.8 percent on Jan. 12.

The median estimate in a Bloomberg survey is for the yuan to drop to 6.76 a dollar by the end of this year, with Rabobank Group the most pessimistic with a 7.53 prediction. The currency has declined 1.24 percent so far

this year, closing at 6.5755 in Shanghai on Friday. Chinese financial markets are shut for the Lunar New Year holiday.

China's top economic planner said that the objective for this year is for an expansion in the range of 6.5 percent to 7 percent. The 6.9 percent growth in 2015 was the slowest in 25 years. Exports probably declined for the seventh straight month in January, according to the median estimate in a Bloomberg survey before data due Feb. 15. China increased its gold hoard in January, raising its holdings to 57.18 million ounces at it looks to diversify its foreign-exchange stockpile.

"The smaller decline in the reserves suggests that some capital outflow restrictions imposed in January worked," Shen Jianguang, chief Asia economist at Mizuho Securities Asia Ltd. in Hong Kong, wrote in a note yesterday, adding that he estimates the drop in February will be "much smaller." **Bloomberg**

AD



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Governor fired for 'disloyalty' as Xi tightens grip

Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

THE governor of a major Chinese province has been accused of disloyalty to the ruling Communist Party and removed from his post, amid a growing consolidation of power by President Xi Jinping that some have likened to a personality cult.

Deposed Sichuan Gov. Wei Hong joins a long list of those sidelined in a sweeping crackdown on dissent, civil society and corrupt officials.

However, the accusations against Wei are unusual in that they make no mention of graft or any other crime, which some observers took as a sign that Xi has become powerful enough to take down major politicians without charging them with criminal activity. Wei was accused only of violating "party discipline," not of breaking the law, demoted to a vice departmental post and removed from his party duties.

Wei had been "disloyal to the party, dishonest and failed to value the many opportunities to receive education and rectify his wrongdoing," the party's Central Commission for Discipline Inspection said in an unusually long statement on its website.

Along with "seriously violating political and organizational discipline," he also sought to subvert the investigation, refused to confess and interfered with judicial activities, the commission said.



A woman looks at souvenir plates bearing images of Chinese President Xi Jinping, (left), and late Chinese leader Mao Zedong

No details were given about the specific accusations against Wei, who has spent most of his career in the Sichuan party apparatus and was also a delegate to the national party and government congresses.

The commission also announced an investigation into a vice governor of the southern province of Guangdong on the same charge. It said Liu Zhigeng was under investigation but gave no details about his alleged viola-

tion of party discipline.

The accusations appear to show an expansion of Xi's anti-corruption campaign to include those who fail to profess fealty to his leadership rather than just those who have engaged in criminal activity, said Willy Lam, who closely follows China's elite politics at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Whereas previous leaders tolerated some degree of factionalism, Xi appears intent on removing all who fail to toe the line,

Lam said. Wei may have been suspected of being under the sway of one of Xi's two predecessors, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, he said.

"This is a warning to party members that they can lose their place," Lam said. "It is an alarming development in the personality cult around Xi."

The son of a founder of the Communist state, Xi has increasingly turned to well-worn methods of state propaganda to pro-

mote his image. He has appeared on decorative plates, medals and billboards, and even established a presence on social media within China's narrowly confined online world.

More so than usual, Xi has dominated state broadcaster CCTV's newscasts in recent days, visiting mountainous areas of central China where the nascent Communist Party established its foothold in its early days.

No details were given about the specific accusations against Wei, who has spent most of his career in the Sichuan party apparatus

During the visit, local residents grasped Xi by the arm, clapping, smiling and singing revolutionary folk songs. Xi then held forth in front of local government officials and military units, cementing his image as the paramount leader.

Xi now appears to be moving to elevate his status to the "core" of the party leadership, rather than simply its general secretary, Lam said. The distinction is highly significant in Chinese politics, raising him above Hu and placing him on the level with Jiang, who ruled from 1989 to 2002. **AP**

China sheds more light on three missing Hong Kong booksellers

Kelvin Chan, Hong Kong

MAINLAND Chinese authorities confirm they've detained three missing Hong Kong booksellers for an investigation into unspecified criminal activity, shedding more light on a case that's gripped residents with fear that Beijing is tightening its hold on the city.

Hong Kong police said last week they were told by police in neighboring Guangdong province about the men, who are among five people linked to a publishing house specializing in politically sensitive titles banned on the mainland to have vanished in recent months.

It's the latest development in a case that's

sparked international concern that Beijing is backtracking on a promise it made when it took over from Britain nearly 20 years ago to let the city retain a high degree of control over its own affairs.

The five are associated with publishing firm Mighty Current Media and its retail outlet Causeway Bay Bookshop. The company's books on political scandals and intrigue involving China's communist leaders are popular with mainland Chinese visitors to Hong Kong.

The letter from Guangdong's public security department was the first time that mainland authorities had acknowledged holding Lui Por, Cheung Chi Ping and Lam Wing Kee, who

are shareholders or employees of the company.

It said the three are suspected of involvement in a case involving a person surnamed Gui, an apparent reference to Mighty Current publisher Gui Minhai.

The four went missing in October but Gui resurfaced in January, making a tearful appearance on Chinese state TV to say he surrendered over a 12-year-old fatal drunk driving case.

The three are suspected of being "involved in illegal activities on the mainland," Hong Kong police said, citing a letter from Guangdong Provincial Security Department's Interpol liaison office.

"Criminal compulsory measures were imposed on

them and they were under investigation," it said. No details on the alleged crimes or their specific whereabouts were disclosed.

Gui, a Swedish national, disappeared from his holiday home in Pattaya, Thailand, while the three others went missing on the mainland.

Hong Kong police also said they received a handwritten letter from the fifth missing person, editor Lee Bo, in which he purportedly rejected a request to meet with them. Lee, a British citizen, disappeared on Dec. 30 and many suspect he was abducted by mainland Chinese security agents operating in Hong Kong, which would be a breach of the "one country, two



A poster featuring five missing Hong Kong booksellers is displayed by their supporters at the entrance of the closed Causeway Bay Bookstore

systems" principle Beijing agreed to when it took control of the city from Britain in 1997.

The European Parliament called for the five to be immediately released, joining British, American and Swedish officials who have raised concern about the case.

The latest announcement appears unlikely to quell suspicions by human rights activists and pro-

democracy groups that Lee and Gui's statements were made voluntarily.

"The latest official disclosures about the last three missing book publishers are anything but satisfactory," William Nee of Amnesty International said in a statement. "The Chinese authorities need to end their smoke and mirrors strategy and come clean with a full and proper explanation." **AP**



In the early morning, emergency rescuers continue to search for the missing in a collapsed building from an earthquake in Tainan



Emergency rescuers remove a body found in a collapsed building

Gladys Tsai, Tainan

Rescuers in Taiwan pull out survivors from quake rubble

WITH anxious families waiting nearby, rescuers yesterday painstakingly pulled more survivors from the remains of a high-rise apartment building that collapsed a day earlier in a powerful earthquake that shook southern Taiwan and killed at least 26 people. More than 100 remained buried in the building's rubble.

The government in Tainan, the worst-hit city, said that more than 170 people had been rescued from the 17-story building, which folded like an accordion after the quake struck.

Mao Yi-chen, 20, was rescued soon after the magnitude-6.4 quake hit before dawn Saturday, and her older sister Mao Yi-hsuan was pulled out yesterday in serious condition. A rescue worker had handed over a photo album and homemade cards found next to her for her family to collect, said local official Wang Ding-yu.

"He said that 'maybe your home is damaged, but memories of the family can last,'" Wang said.

Tainan Mayor Lai Ching-te

said authorities estimated that 124 people were still trapped, many at the bottom of the wreckage. He said rescuers were able to reach many people by

The powerful earthquake shook southern Taiwan and killed at least 26 people

using information from residents who got out about the possible locations of those still inside.

Two of the trapped, a male and a female at different sides of the building, were talking to rescue

workers yesterday evening, Lai said. He told reporters that rescuers intended to pull them out, and then bring in heavier excavators to remove part of the structure on top to allow access to the areas at the bottom.

The spectacular fall of the high-rise, built in 1989, raised questions about whether its construction had been shoddy. Tainan's government said the building had not been listed as a dangerous structure, and Taiwan's interior minister, Chen Wei-zen, said an investigation would examine whether the developer had cut corners.

Eighth-floor resident Huang Guang-wei was pulled out yesterday morning from a different section from where he lived, showing how distorted the building is, Lai said. Rescuers could see Huang only through a 10-centimeter (4-inch) crack

AIR MACAU OFFERS RE-ROUTING TO TAIPEI

AIR MACAU has announced special ticketing arrangements for individual passengers set to fly on the airline's Kaohsiung route until February 22. Those passengers whose tickets were issued on or before February 5 will be permitted to re-route on a flight to Taipei and if necessary alter the date of the flight up until February 29. The airline

adds that, in view of the earthquake natural disaster, ticket change fees will be waived in this instance, however any fare difference will still need to be collected if the altered fare is more expensive. Those seeking a refund for a ticket issued between the stated dates are advised to check the terms and conditions of their original purchase.

and it took eight hours to get him out, Lai said.

Among the fatalities was a six-month-old baby girl who was pulled from the rubble and rushed to a hospital, where she was pronounced dead. A deceased man believed to be her father was pulled out 40 minutes later, Wang said.

A man in his 60s, whose son escaped and whose daughter-in-law was in serious condition, was trying to help rescuers pinpoint his grandsons. "My 11- and 12-year-old grandsons are still inside on the ninth floor," said the man, who gave only his surname, Huang. "I told my son not to buy an apartment here; it was suspiciously cheap."

Beside him, another man nodded in agreement as he waited for news of his own relatives on the seventh floor.

The city government said that 24 of the 26 confirmed deaths from the earthquake were from the building collapse. It said that 171 had been rescued from the building, 91 of whom were sent to hospitals. More than 100 people were rescued from other parts of Tainan, eight of whom received hospital treatment. Nine other buildings in

the city collapsed and five careened.

Yesterday, thousands of rescuers worked on different levels of the folded building, which was supported by steel pillars. Rescuer Su Yu-min said they were trying to cut through walls and pillars.

"It takes a few hours to complete a search for just one household and sometimes it takes two hours just to go forward 30 centimeters " when the way is blocked by a wall, he said.

Taiwanese broadcaster EBC showed video of volunteers trying to comfort the mother of a missing 20-year-old man, Chen Guan-yu. "He always thinks of me," said the woman, whose name was not given. "He worries about me being single and lonely and that no one is taking care of me."

The quake came two days before the start of Lunar New Year celebrations that mark the most important family holiday in the Chinese calendar.

Earthquakes frequently rattle Taiwan, but most are minor and cause little or no damage, though a magnitude-7.6 quake in central Taiwan in 1999 killed more than 2,300 people. **AP**

Macau resident: Damage in Tainan restricted to a small area

THE damage from the earthquake that struck Tainan city in Taiwan has been restricted to a small area and is not visible in other parts of the city, such as the city center, according to local Macau resident Alvaro Mourato, who was traveling in Tainan when the earthquake hit.

The local resident said, "The earthquake went unnoticed by many, and if they had not seen it in the news, they would not have known that there was such a strong earthquake," admitting that he had not felt it either. The same source told the Times that "all city life is still working normally, shops are open, restaurants too, and there is no visible damage in other parts of the city. The one exception is in the area where the apartment block collapsed." **RM**



XINHUA

N. Korea praises rocket; others view as covert missile test

Foster Klug

FOR North Korea's propaganda machine, the long-range rocket launch yesterday carved a glorious trail of "fascinating vapor" through the clear blue sky. For South Korea's president, and other world leaders, it was a banned test of dangerous ballistic missile technology and yet another "intolerable provocation."

The rocket was launched from North Korea's west coast only two hours after an eight-day launch window opened yesterday, its path tracked separately by the United States, Japan and South Korea. No damage from debris was reported.

North Korea, which calls its launches part of a peaceful space program, said it had successfully put a new Earth observation satellite, the Kwangmyongsong 4, or Shining Star 4, into orbit less than 10 minutes after liftoff. It vowed more such launches. A U.S. official said it might take



A Japan Self-Defense Force member stands by a PAC-3 Patriot missile unit deployed for North Korea's rocket launch at the Defense Ministry in Tokyo yesterday

days to assess whether the launch was a success.

The launch follows North Korea's widely disputed claim last month to have tested a hydrogen bomb. Washington and its allies will consider the rocket launch a further provocation and push for more tough sanctions. The United States and Japan quickly requested an emergency meeting

of the U.N. Security Council last night (Macau time) saying Pyongyang violated a council ban on ballistic missile launches.

In a development that will worry both Pyongyang and Beijing, a senior South Korean Defense Ministry official, Yoo Jeh Seung, told reporters that Seoul and Washington have agreed to begin talks on a possible deployment of

the THADD missile defense system in South Korea. North Korea has long decried the 28,500 U.S. troops stationed in South Korea, and Beijing would see a South Korean deployment of THAAD, which is one of the world's most advanced missile defense systems, as a threat to its interests in the region.

In a statement, North Korea's National Aerospace Development Administration, in typical propaganda-laden language, praised "the fascinating vapor of Juche satellite trailing in the clear and blue sky in spring of February on the threshold of the Day of the Shining Star." Juche is a North Korean philosophy focusing on self-reliance; the Day of the Shining Star refers to the Feb. 16 birthday of former dictator Kim Jong Il. North Korea has previously staged rocket launches to mark important anniversaries.

South Korean Defense Ministry spokesman Moon Sang Gyun said a South Korean Aegis-equipped destroyer detected the North

Korean launch. The U.S. Strategic Command issued a statement saying that it detected and tracked a missile launched on a southern trajectory, but that it did not pose a threat to the United States or its allies.

The global condemnation began almost immediately. South Korean President Park Geun-hye called the launch an "intolerable provocation." She said the North's efforts to advance its missile capabilities were "all about maintaining the regime" in Pyongyang and criticized the North Korean leadership for ignoring the hardships of ordinary North Koreans.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe vowed to "take action to totally protect the safety and well-being of our people." U.S. National Security Adviser Susan Rice called the North's missile and nuclear weapons programs a "serious threats to our interests — including the security of some of our closest allies."

The Foreign Ministry in China, the North's only major ally and its protector in the U.N. Security Council, where Beijing wields veto power, expressed "regret that, disregarding the opposition from the international community, the [North] side obstinately insisted in carrying out a launch by using ballistic missile technologies." AP

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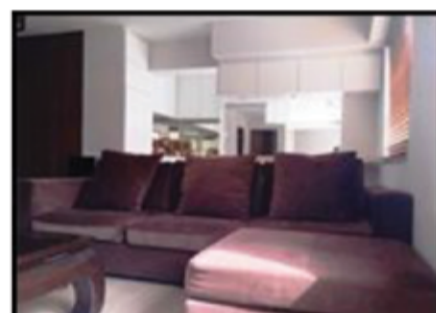


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Japan may change temple map icon to avoid Nazi confusion

AS Japan gears up to host the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and caters to a surging influx of foreign visitors, the country faces a cultural dilemma: Should it stop identifying Buddhist temples on maps with the traditional "manji" symbol that is often confused with a Nazi swastika?

The symbol, from ancient Sanskrit, means happiness and prosperity. It has been used for centuries by Hindus and Buddhists, and has turned up in archaeological digs in Europe. But many Western tourists associate it with anti-Semitism and the Holocaust because the emblem was adopted by Nazi Germany to try to enhance a sense of ancient lineage.

The swastika in Japan — which usually points counter-clockwise, the reverse of the Nazi symbol — has been used for centuries in Buddhist decorations and to denote Buddhist temples on maps.

At Sensoji Temple, a top



Visitors stand next to a religious ornament with the "manji" symbol at a temple in Tokyo

tourist destination in Tokyo, a big gold "manji" emblem appears on a pair of lotus-shaped bronze ornaments, while smaller, more subtle ones decorate roof tiles. It's even an official emblem for Hirosaki, a city in northern Japan.

In a report released last month, a government panel proposed a three-tiered pagoda symbol to replace the swastika. It is

one of 18 suggested icons for landmarks like hospitals and convenience stores for foreign-language maps, part of a broader push to create user-friendly maps for the growing number of foreign tourists, which jumped more than 40 percent last year to a record 19.7 million.

Japan's main Buddhist group is nonchalant because the change doesn't affect

domestic maps and therefore likely won't alter perceptions at home.

"We are aware that some people say the 'manji' symbol could remind them of the 'hakenkreuz' symbol, which was created much later in history," said Ryoka Nishino, a spokesman for Japan Buddhist Federation, referring to the "hooked cross" term often used to denote the Nazi emblem. "Even though we have more foreign visitors, our symbol that decorates each temple will stay," he said.

Supporters for the change say it would help avoid confusion among tourists, while opponents say there is no need to change the ancient sign just to cater to foreigners. Instead, they say, the symbol should be kept as a way to teach people about the ancient history behind it.

A final decision is expected in late March following a period of public consultation. **MDT/AP**

Sakurajima volcano erupts spectacularly

ONE of Japan's most active volcanoes, Sakurajima on the southern island of Kyushu, erupted spectacularly Friday evening with a fiery blast that sent lava rolling down its slope.

Japanese television showed an orange burst out of the side of the volcano, near the summit, accompanied by lightning-like flashes. Dark gray smoke billowed into the sky.

The Meteorological Agency banned entry to the area, expanding an existing no-go zone around the crater to a two-kilometer radius, according to public broadcaster NHK. There were no immediate reports of injuries.

Kyoto University volcanologist Kazuhiro Ishihara told NHK that rocks spewing out of the crater were expected to fall within a two-kilometer radius of the crater. Smoke and ash rose two kilometers into the air, about half the height measured in 2013 in one of the mountain's biggest explosions in recent years, he said.

"I don't think there will be any serious impact from the explosion," Ishihara said. "But of course we must keep monitoring the volcanic activity." **MDT/AP**

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COLOMBIA

3,177 pregnant women with Zika; no microcephaly



Health worker Javier Lozano empties stagnant water from a tire during a campaign to destroy potential hatching grounds for *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes that transmits the Zika virus in Villavicencio, Colombia.

COLOMBIA'S President Juan Manuel Santos said on Saturday that there's no evidence Zika has caused any cases of the birth defect known as microcephaly in his country, though it has diagnosed 3,177 pregnant women with the virus.

Santos also announced that a U.S. medical-scientific team will arrive in Colombia to help investigate the mosquito-borne virus.

Brazilian officials say they suspect Zika is behind a seemingly unusual number of microcephaly cases, in which children are born with unusually small heads. The link is not confirmed, but it has helped prompt the World Health Organization to declare an emergency over the virus.

Santos says Zika apparently has affected more than 25,600 Colombians overall.

Colombian officials said last week that three people had died of the paralyzing Guillain-Barre syndrome they attributed to cases of Zika.

To date, the mosquito-borne virus has spread to more than 20 countries in the Americas.

With global concern over the Zika virus growing, health officials are warning pregnant women to be careful about who they kiss and calling on men to use condoms with pregnant partners if they have visited countries where the virus is present.

The flurry of recommendations began in Brazil, where a top health official said that scientists have found live virus in saliva and urine samples, and the possibility it could be spread by the two body fluids requires further study. **AP**

EGYPT

Fungus-ridden French wheat cargo returned

Salma El Wardany and Abdel Latif Wahba

EGYPT, the world's largest wheat importer, issued a decision to send 63,000 metric tons of French grain back home after it was found to exceed the allowed level of ergot, a potentially toxic fungus.

The wheat is being sent back because it exceeded the allowed 0.05 percent level of ergot, Supply Minister Khaled Hanafy said at a press conference in Cairo Sunday. Egypt still has enough grain stockpiles to meet domestic demand until mid-May, Hanafy and Agriculture Minister Essam Fayed said.

Egypt is looking for alternative sources of wheat beyond tenders, Hanafy said, without providing details. The nation last week canceled its second grain tender in a week after traders raised prices amid uncertainty over shipping requirements. Both Fayed and Hanafy said shipments can't exceed ergot levels of 0.05 percent, in line with international standards. **Bloomberg**

EUROPEAN UNION

UK 'Brexit' campaigners fail to unite behind a common strategy

Robert Hutton and Emma Charlton

RIVAL campaigners for the U.K. to leave the European Union are struggling to agree on how they can rally the British public and win a vote that could come as soon as June.

Divisions among 'Brexit' proponents are widening, leaving them with neither an agreed spokesman nor a clear message. The different groups are vying to be designated the official campaign, giving them access to more funding and the right to make television advertisements and send a government-funded mailing to every home. U.K. Independence Party leader Nigel Farage has shifted his backing to Grassroots Out, while the party's only House of Commons lawmaker, Douglas Carswell, supports the Vote Leave group.

Differences among the groups center on the role immigration should play in communications. Prime Minister David Cameron - who will campaign for the U.K. to stay in a reformed EU - hopes to win approval for his renegotiations with the bloc at a Feb. 18-19 summit in Brussels, paving the way for a referendum as early as June 23.



Differences among the groups center on the role immigration should play

"There is a difference of approach and strategy," Carswell said in an interview with Sky News yesterday. "It's not just about immigration. Vote Leave wants a campaign that is optimistic, upbeat, internationalist, a

campaign that focuses on the economy."

Border control and an Australian-style points system for migrants are key issues, Farage told the Sunday Telegraph in an interview. He criticized Vote Leave's Dominic Cummings and Matthew Elliott for rejecting collaboration, telling the newspaper that the group, which is backed by Conservative lawmakers, is "frankly just too Tory" and a cross-party alliance would be more effective.

Leave.EU Co-Chairman Arron Banks, who is also funding Grassroots Out, said last week that he was suing unspecified people in Vote Lea-

ve. That came after the Guardian published an e-mail from the deputy chairman of Vote Leave asking Cummings to stop insulting people on his own team.

"Campaigns matter less than everyone thinks, but they do matter," said Philip Cowley, co-author of "The British General Election of 2015." "If the leave campaigns are devoting their time to this, it's time they're not spending targeting voters. And it must be making it harder for them to recruit significant figures to their side."

Stronger In, the unified campaign to keep the U.K. in the EU, has chosen Stuart Rose, the former chief executive of Marks & Spencer Plc, as its chairman.

Unless a clear spokesman emerges, the job may fall by default to Farage. Other "Leave" supporters fear his anti-immigration rhetoric will alienate undecided voters.

"Nigel Farage was always going to be a very important figure in the campaign but he appeals to a particular section of the population," John Mills, deputy chairman of Vote Leave, told reporters last week. "He doesn't appeal to everybody. What I think would be better for one-to-one debate would be to have someone who's a more inclusive figure." **Bloomberg**



Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (left) shakes hands with Ecuador's President Rafael Correa in Quito last week. Erdogan is in Ecuador as part of his Latin America tour that includes Chile and Peru.

Benjamin Harvey and Salma El Wardany

PRESIDENT Recep Tayyip Erdogan said his country should not repeat in Syria the same mistake it made in Iraq when it turned down a U.S. request to be part of the coalition that toppled Saddam Hussein.

"We don't want to fall into the same mistake in Syria as in Iraq," the president said, recounting how Turkey's

SYRIAN CIVIL WAR

Erdogan signals Turkey won't stay out of Syria if asked to join

parliament denied a U.S. request to use its territories for the invasion of Iraq in 2003. "It's important to see the horizon. What's going on in Syria can only go on for so long. At some point it has to change," he told journalists on the return flight from a tour of Latin America according to Hurriyet newspaper.

Opposition forces supported by Turkey and Saudi Arabia are losing more ground to the troops of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, who is backed by Hezbollah militants and Russian airstrikes. Turkey has repeatedly urged the U.S.-led coalition fighting Islamic State militants in Syria and Iraq to increase its support for moderate rebel groups seeking the ouster of Assad.

Had parliament approved the U.S. request to join the coalition in 2003,

"Turkey would have been at the table," Erdogan said. Asked if Turkey could manage some sudden development in Syria, he said: "You don't talk about these things, when necessary, you do what's needed. Right now our security forces are prepared for all possibilities."

The United Nations last week suspended its long-awaited peace conference in Geneva until later this month, after Syrian forces launched a major offensive against rebels, edging closer to retake the city of Aleppo. The talks came after four months of Russian air strikes helped reverse the tide of the war in favor of Assad's military.

"What are you doing in Syria? You're essentially an occupier," Erdogan said addressing Russian President Vladimir Putin, the daily reported. **Bloomberg**

what's ON



ALUMNI ART EXHIBITION OF FINE ARTS DEPARTMENT, THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG 2016 MACAU
 TIME: 12pm-8pm (Tuesdays to Sundays);
 3pm-8pm (Mondays, open on public holidays)
 UNTIL: February 22, 2016
 VENUE: Albergue SCM, Calçada da Igreja de São Lázaro No.8, Macau Gallery A2
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2852 2550 / 2852 3205

"FANTASY" PAINTING EXHIBITION BY GRACE YEU
 TIME: 2pm-7pm
 UNTIL: February 13, 2016
 VENUE: Creative Macau, G/F Macau Cultural Centre Building, Xian Xing Hai Avenue
 ADMISSION: free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2875 3282

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

MACAU GRAND PRIX MUSEUM & WINE MUSEUM
 TIME: 10am-8pm daily (Except Tuesdays)
 VENUE: Rua Luis Gonzaga Gomes, 431, basement
 (Tourism Activities Centre-CAT)
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 8798 4108 / 2833 3000

MACAU SCIENCE CENTRE
 TIME: 10am-6pm daily
 (Except Thursdays, open on public holidays)
 VENUE: Macau Science Centre,
 Avenida Dr. Sun Yat-Sen
 ADMISSION: Exhibition Centre MOP25;
 Planetarium MOP60-80
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2888 0822

Offbeat

MONKEY YEAR INSPIRES KUNG FU, PREDICTIONS OF FIRE, DISEASE



The new Chinese year is the one to go bananas over. Today the zodiac calendar enters the Year of the Monkey — the ninth of 12 animal signs. Plastic monkeys are adorning shopping centers and office buildings, and government departments have been giving out toy monkeys.

Having a baby in the Year of the Monkey is generally thought to be more auspicious than in that of its predecessor, the sheep, and the cute creature is in any case largely beloved by the masses for its playful and human-like characteristics, despite a penchant for stealing food.

The new lunar year is already boosting a fighting style that imitates the movements of a monkey. It also offers an excuse to cash in on China's most famous monkey — Sun Wukong, or the Monkey King — a fabled demon-slayer.

Less happily, feng shui predictions foresee fire, disease and volatile stocks. **AP**

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:28	Chief Executive Chui Sai On's Lunar New Year Message
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	Inside China's Biggest Gala
15:20	Documentary Series
15:50	Documentary Series
16:30	Zig Zag
16:50	Castle S.5
17:40	Trail of Lies (Repeat)
18:30	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

cinema



CINETEATRO

08 FEB - 10 FEB

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: ROAD CHIP

ROOM 1

2.00, 5.30, 7.30 pm

Director: Walt Becker

Starring: Jason Lee, Jessica Ahlberg, Josh Green

Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)

Duration: 92min



MERMAID

ROOM 1

3.45, 9.30, 11.30 pm

Director: Stephen Chow

Starring: Deng Chao, Show Luo, Zhang Yuqi

Language: Cantonese (English/Cantonese)

Duration: 93min

FROM VEGAS TO MACAU III

ROOM 2

2.30, 7.30, 9.30, 11.30 pm

Director: Andrew Lau, Wong Jing

Starring: Chow Yun-fat, Andy Lau, Nick Cheung, Jacky Cheung

Language: Cantonese (English/Cantonese)

Duration: 112min

CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON:

SWORD OF DESTINY

ROOM 2

4.30 pm

Director: Yuen Woo-ping

Starring: Donnie Yen, Michelle Yeoh

Language: Cantonese (English/Cantonese)

THE GOOD DINOSAUR

ROOM 3

2.30, 4.30, 7.15 pm

Director: Peter Sohn

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 93min

THE MONKEY KING 2

ROOM 3

9.15, 11.30 pm

Director: Cheang Pou-soi

Starring: Aaron Kwok, Gong Li, Feng Shaofeng

Language: Cantonese (English/Cantonese)

Duration: 120min

MACAU TOWER

04 FEB - 02 MAR

THE GOOD DINOSAUR

ROOM 3

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: Peter Sohn

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 93min

this day in history



1962 EIGHT DIE IN PARIS RIOT

At least eight people have been killed during a demonstration in Paris against the recent wave of bomb attacks in the French capital.

One of the dead was a 15-year-old boy. About 240 people were injured - more than half of them police officers.

The protest, which was banned under the State of Emergency currently in force in Paris, was organized by France's main communist-led union. It is one of the groups spearheading the fight against the right-wing Secret Army Organization (OAS) which wants Algeria in north Africa to remain a French colony.

During the three-and-a-half hour disturbances the police were outnumbered two to one by the 20,000-strong protesters. The officers were at first reportedly relatively restrained but they lashed out as they came under attack from demonstrators.

In one incident a police van was ambushed and a policeman fired five shots into the crowd. Several people were said to have received gunshot wounds but no shooting fatalities have been reported. It is believed those who died during the disturbances were trampled underfoot in the crush.

However, while the police were busy trying to quell the anti-OAS rally some of the group's agents planted more bombs in the city. One device went off outside the offices of Tass, the Russian news agency - the first time a foreign media organization has been targeted.

The bombing campaign is believed to be a response to French President Charles de Gaulle's declaration that it is up to Algerians to decide the fate of their country. General de Gaulle has proposed a referendum on the issue.

The OAS was set up last year and is led by former French army general Raoul Salan. Many of its agents are believed to be former army personnel who served in Algeria. Last year members of the group were believed to be behind an attempt to assassinate General de Gaulle.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

A one-hour strike was called the following day in protest at police behavior during the demonstration.

In March 1962 General de Gaulle reached agreement with Algerian nationalists to give Algeria independence.

The OAS made several more unsuccessful attempts to kill General de Gaulle.

General Salan was captured and jailed in April 1962 and the OAS collapsed.

In 1963 a former general in the French army, Antoine Argoud, stood trial for the assassination attempt on President de Gaulle and was sentenced to life imprisonment.

However, he was released, along with other former OAS members, during a general amnesty in May 1968.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 You're almost compelled to move forward, even though success seems unlikely...

Taurus April 20-May 20 If ever there was a day to take things personally, this is it. There's plenty to hurt your feelings and ruffle your feathers over...

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 You're not feeling the ripple effect so much as the hint of dangerous undercurrents. You want to keep your finger on this. The moment it turns into a rip tide is the moment you take a bath.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 These days, you can't afford to put anything off for later. You need to deal with things as they come up. If you need some incentive, imagine all the people out there drooling over your source of income.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 You're the financial butcher today. It's hard to muster much gusto for what you have to do. That's understandable. You don't need enthusiasm, you just need to get the job done.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You don't have anything left over to put on any finishing touches. In fact, you need to remove some, not add them. Being creative will have to wait until saving money is less critical.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 If being at home only reminds you of better times, then it's not a good place to be in. On the other hand, it could be all the incentive you need to renew your efforts to get things back in balance.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Some are hunkering down, staying safe until conditions improve, but that's not how you choose to wait for the storm to pass. Implementing new plans makes sense to you, as long as it doesn't take much of an umbrella.

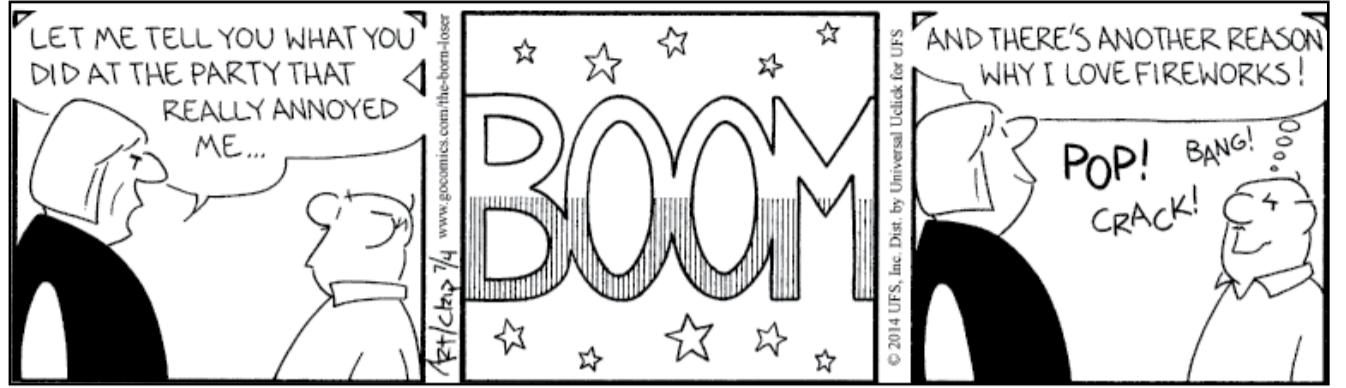
Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Being focused on money is certainly not unusual. If anything, it has only intensified with time. The only thing that's shifted is your angle. Make perfecting penny pinching your new goal.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 If you've been working hard and results have been good, the money should follow. Right? Well, maybe. You can impress everyone the world over and still not see a dime. Today, working hard is its own reward.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Wallowing in your woes becomes more tempting by the day. Don't give in to it. Those who survive this difficult period will do it by staying organized and disciplined.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 You need to find some direction. Your efforts are like seeds blowing in the wind. They'll find a place to take root, but where will you be by then? If you're not sure, ask the advice of a natural born leader.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle.

Easy+

9x9 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle.

Medium

9x9 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle.

Hard

9x9 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle.

WEATHER

Weather forecast table with columns for MIN, MAX, and CONDITION for various cities in CHINA and WORLD.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Performs; 5- In the buff; 10- Apprehends; 14- Linebacker Junior; 15- Unified; 16- Earth Day subj; 17- Abducting; 19- Razor name; 20- List of candidates; 21- Ear ornament; 23- Peer Gynt's mother; 25- Is wearing; 26- Family group; 29- Noisy; 31- Inventor Nikola; 35- Help, resource; 36- Thick slice; 37- Christian festival; 38- Ceremonial staff of a bishop; 40- Exterior; 41- Occur; 42- Make weary; 43- Links org.; 44- Aromatic compound; 45- ___ Alto; 46- Dates; 47- Running wild; 49- Warned the bench; 51- Professional hunting guide; 54- Division of the United Kingdom; 58- ___ but known...; 59- Pure; 63- Actor Ken; 64- Rock; 65- Hydroxyl compound; 66- Designer Cassini; 67- Hilton competitor; 68- Capital of Yemen;

DOWN: 1- Questions; 2- Slather plaster on the upper surface of a room; 3- I did it; 4- Darkening of the skin by sunlight; 5- Forty winks; 6- Egyptian cobra; 7- Pond fish; 8- Group of nine; 9- Impressionist Edgar; 10- Proximity; 11- Play opener; 12- Brought into the world; 13- Smelting waste; 18- Loser to DDE; 22- Take turns; 24- Actress Barkin; 25- Wheel center; 26- Hiding place; 27- Turkish money; 28- Take as one's own; 30- Lever for rowing; 32- Michael of R.E.M.; 33- Flat shelf; 34- Neighborhoods; 36- Mountain range; 37- Continental cash; 39- Talking; 40- Black gold; 42- Flat-a-...; 45- Having a sharp tip; 46- Gazes fixedly; 48- Whiskey type; 50- Feeling of being overwhelmed; 51- Drive away; 52- Auditorium; 53- Romeo's last words; 55- Turner of "Peyton Place"; 56- School founded in 1440; 57- Actress Ward; 60- Get thee ___ nunner; 61- Tolkien tree creature; 62- Manhattan museum, family



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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RUGBY

New Zealand beats Australia 27-24 to win Sydney Sevens

NEW Zealand beat Australia 27-24 in a thrilling final yesterday to win the Sydney leg of the World Rugby Sevens Series, though it played the tournament's second day in the shadow of controversy lingering from the teams' first meeting.

Australia and New Zealand were drawn in the same group at the inaugural Sydney tournament and in the last pool match Saturday New Zealand scored a stoppage-time try for a 17-17 draw with Australia that placed it atop Pool A. Television replays later showed New Zealand had eight players on the field at the start of the move that produced the decisive try.

World Rugby launched an investigation yesterday as New Zealand fought its way into the final and scored a try after full

time for its second-straight tournament victory.

New Zealand also scored a try in stoppage time to beat South Africa in the final of last week's Wellington Sevens. Again, both of the finalists in Wellington emerged from the same pool and New Zealand's victory in the last pool match against South Africa was contentious; won with a try after the final siren.

Yesterday's final between Australia and New Zealand was one of the most thrilling in World Series history. Australia led through most of the match but New Zealand mounted a series of comebacks before finally snatching victory with a try to Reiko Ioane.

"We said it would take 20 minutes to win and we just kept on going and we got the victory in the end," New Zealand captain Tim Mikkelson said.

Australia drew first blood in the final with a try by Henry Hutchinson who had come off the bench to score two second-half tries — including a sudden death winner — in the quarterfinal against England.

New Zealand leveled the scores with Reiko Ioane's first try which came from a powerful break down the left touchline by his brother Akira.

Hutchinson scored his second to give Australia a 12-7 lead but New Zealand immediately replied with a try to Kurt Baker. Next, Sam Myers put Australia ahead 17-12 and New Zealand again fought back with a try to Mikkelson to level the match at 17-17.

Australia seemed to have clinched victory when Greg Jeloudev scored less than two minutes from full time for a 24-17 lead. Ioane scored again but a missed



AP PHOTO
Sonny Bill Williams of New Zealand (left) and Ed Jenkins of Australia vie for the ball during the World Rugby Sevens Series Cup final

conversion with 30 seconds remaining left the home side with a 24-22 lead.

Then with the last play of the game Ioane achieved his hat-trick and New Zealand sealed a 27-24 win. Australia was unable to join South Africa, who won in Cape Town, and New Zealand, who won in Wellington, in winning their home leg of the World Series.

New Zealand, South Africa and Fiji are now tied in first place in the Series standings after four of eight rounds.

World Rugby had the option after New Zealand's eight-man error in pool play to award that ma-

tch to Australia that would hand it first place in the pool. Australia preferred to stick with a draw that pitted it against England in the quarterfinals and avoided a rematch with New Zealand at the semifinal stage.

The decision paid dividends as Australia beat England 17-12 in an extra-time quarterfinal, then upset pre-tournament favorite South Africa 12-7 to give itself the chance of its first World Series win in four years.

World Rugby officials said they were investigating how New Zealand's eight-man error occurred and what sanctions could be applied. AP

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opinion

Rear Window

Severo Portela



AU MAKES HIS MOVE

For the New Macau Association leadership and one of its veteran founders, it's definitely an "auf wiedersehen!" The departure of Au Kam San came as no surprise, given the differences between the new generation of pro-active democrats and their veteran predecessors. However for a period of time both the young newcomers and the NMA old guard managed to strike a kind of deal or entente. The rules of engagement were light and easy, and a bit paternalistic to say the least... Ng Kuok Cheong and Au Kam San were the ones to draft the NMA political agenda as a copy and paste of their legislative performance. That is to say Ng and Au would provide the music... Jason and the youth team were to dance to the tune

To cut short a longer story, pro-democracy activists were shy about dancing and NMA lawmakers were shy about democracy. This should be the recipe for a bitter dispute and a hard fought separation, but there was none... Au gave notice and faded away!

Anyway, we should try to understand the motives behind Au Kam San avoiding an immediate departure from NMA. We have to recall that first he set up a new association and then severed his financial contribution to NMA - a percentage of his wages as a lawmaker.

Allegedly, Au complained about the NMA method of accepting and declining new membership applications to NMA as a tool to put virtual challengers at bay. It looks like Au Kam San has been feeding bad thoughts on the way Scott Chiang and Jason Chao ascended to the top of the Macau Democrats. And he tried a payback.

Scott Chiang is keeping low key on this matter, but it is clear the problem with Au is about the new applications NMA had to reject after checking their respective backgrounds. Scott Chiang maintains silence on the general profile of the refused applicants like in the oft used phrase "we never divulge the names of our clients." He probably has no need to learn from hard experience that adding apples and oranges makes bad arithmetic and worse politics. Anyway this is unfinished business, or not business as usual.

New Macau Association may, just may, ask Au Kam San to step down from the Legislative Assembly following the departure from the pan-democratic NMA, under whose ticket he was elected to the AL. There is no requirement to do so... but if Au keeps the NMA seat, his political persona becomes fragile among pro-democracy circles, unless that is precisely the idea - to split democrats between the endogenous or wise type and exogenous or wild type. NMA knows that if there is a by-election, Ng Kuok Cheong will be alone again, naturally.

If this is the case, we would not be surprised if Au Kam San found his way back to his "alma mater," the soon to be revamped Institute for Civic and Municipal Affairs.

Finally, a note on the warning the pro-democracy New Macau Association is giving about the lack of transparency and public scrutiny regarding the regional extradition treaty being drafted or in progress. The call came at the same time the US upgraded its concern about the disappearance of the Mighty Current five that raises serious questions about Hong Kong's autonomy. A State Department spokesman urged China to let them return home.

THE STARVING SEA LION FOUND IN SAN DIEGO RESTAURANT

A starving sea lion has been rescued after finding its way into the booth of a fancy San Diego restaurant. Experts at SeaWorld were called last week to The Marine Room, an oceanfront restaurant in La Jolla.

Rescuers found an 8-month-old female pup asleep in a dining booth. The pup was severely underweight and dehydrated.

The pup was taken to SeaWorld's Animal Rescue Center, and experts are cautiously optimistic about her recovery. There's been a surge in sea lion mortality over the past year, with marine biologists collecting thousands of sick, starving, stranded or dead pups. So far this year, SeaWorld has rescued 47 sea lions and other marine mammals.

Sri Lanka's Tamil leaders call for UN help on 4,000 missing

Maryathas Newton, Jaffna

Sri Lanka's ethnic Tamil leaders yesterday asked the top U.N. human rights official to help determine the fate of more than 4,000 civilians reported missing in the country's long civil war amid the government's assertion that most of them are probably dead.

The U.N. official, Zeid Raad al-Husseini, met with the chief minister of Sri Lanka's Northern Province, the center of the civil war, which ended in 2009. Zeid is on a four-day visit to Sri Lanka to review measures taken by the government to investigate alleged war abuses during the war.

Both the Sri Lankan government and the defeated Tamil Tiger rebels are accused of serious human rights violations. According to U.N. estimates, up to 100,000 people were killed in the 26-year war, but many more are feared to have died, including up to 40,000 civilians in the final months of the fighting.

The U.N. Human Rights Council last year adopted a consensus resolution in which Sri Lanka agreed to an investigation with foreign participation.

Zeid said he discussed several issues with Northern Province Chief Minister C.V. Wigneswaran and other pro-



Supporters of the Sri Lankan opposition political parties backing former president Mahinda Rajapaksa protest outside the U.N. office in Colombo

vincial officials, including the missing people, detentions without trial and military-occupied private land. He said he would take the issues up with the central government.

"The discussions very much focused on the challenges faced by the province, but also the plans and achievements in that regard, and the people who aspire to see more information in terms of those detained and those missing and the issue of release of lands," Zeid said.

He said the discussions would continue during his visit.

Wigneswaran said he gave Zeid a list of the more than 4,000 people reported missing, with dates and places where they were seen last.

Many civilians have not been heard from since they were picked up by police or

military personnel at their homes or abducted by pro-government militia during the war. Relatives say there are many whom they personally handed over to the military at the end of the fighting, after the military requested the surrender of anyone who had even the smallest link to the now-defeated Tamil Tiger rebels, promising their early release.

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, who was elected last year, has said most of those reported missing are probably dead. He said that the new government found no secret detention centers being run by the state, as suspected by families of the missing, and that there are only 292 people in government detention.

Wigneswaran said Zeid opposed the suggestion of negotiating an amnesty for Tamil rebel suspects detained for years without trial. Zeid said releasing innocents through a quick and proper legal process would be the best course of action.

Since defeating his nationalist predecessor last year, Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena has released some land and promised speedy trials for detainees. But Tamils have complained that the authorities are slow in fulfilling their promises. AP

Station	Air quality
Roadside	35-55 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	60-80 Moderate
Ambient	55-75 Moderate

WORLD BRIEFS



AFGHANISTAN Taliban forces are on the verge of overrunning the key area of Sangin district in the north of the country's notorious Helmand Province. Government officials in the country have repeatedly asserted that the opium-rich region is safe.

SYRIA The mother of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, Anisa, has died at the age of 86 in the country's capital, Damascus, his office announced. Reports said she was ill for many years and travelled frequently to Germany for treatment before 2012, when she was blacklisted by the EU.

ALGERIA has reinstated a two-term limit on its presidency, seven years after it was lifted so President Bouteflika could run for a third term.



EUROPEAN UNION officials have urged Turkey to let in tens of thousands of Syrian refugees trapped on its border at Kilis, after fleeing fighting in the war-torn country in the Middle East. Turkey says the refugees are receiving food and shelter inside Syria and there is no need to allow them to cross. More on p15

USA A white Chicago police officer who fatally shot a black 19-year-old college student and accidentally killed a neighbor has filed a lawsuit against the teenager's estate, arguing the shooting left him traumatized.



HAITIAN leaders negotiated an agreement to install a short-term provisional government less than 24 hours before President Michel Martelly was scheduled to step down, an official with the Organization of American States announced.

EL SALVADOR Police have arrested four former soldiers wanted in Spain for the 1989 murder of six Jesuit priests that sparked international outrage during the Salvadoran Civil War.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Xinhua/U Aung



People perform a dragon dance at the Chinatown in Yangon. A celebration was held yesterday in Myanmar's capital to celebrate the Chinese Lunar New Year, which starts today.