

SJM RECORDS SHARP FALL IN REVENUE
Gaming revenue for the group amounted to HKD48.59 billion, a 38.7 percent fall over 2014, SJM announced

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INFLATION UP 3.81 PCT YEAR-ON-YEAR



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TOP DIPLOMATS MEET
The top diplomats of the U.S. and China met in Washington at a fraught time in relations between the two countries

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Gaming operators launch joint promotion to locals

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WORLD BRIEFS

SOUTH CHINA SEA
China's Foreign Ministry reasserts Beijing's right to develop its South China Sea island outposts following a U.S. think tank's report that China has built new radar facilities in the disputed Spratly Islands. [More on p11](#)



PHILIPPINES It's not just difficult to predict who will win the presidential elections this year — thanks to some of the candidates' legal woes, it's difficult to predict who will be allowed to run. Four are within striking distance. Sen. Grace Poe, a political newcomer, leads opinion polls ahead of the May 9 elections, with Vice President Jejomar Binay, close behind. They are followed by former Interior Secretary Mar Roxas and Rodrigo Duterte, mayor of the southern city of Davao.

[More on backpage](#)

Singapore's archbishop alarmed by Madonna's concert

Archbishop William Goh has expressed grave concerns from Singapore's Catholic Church over Madonna's upcoming concert in Singapore. He also reminded Catholics that it was their "moral obligation not to support those who denigrate and insult religions, including anti-Christian and immoral values promoted by the secular world." However, authorities have assured the Archbishop, both in writing and orally, that "restrictions have been placed to ensure that religiously-offensive content that breaches local guidelines will not be allowed on stage." Madonna performed in Macau over the weekend and her "Rebel Heart" tour is currently in Manila, Philippines.

Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme expands

The Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) held a conference on the promotion of the Quality Tourism Services Accreditation Scheme. Beginning this year travel agencies will be included in the scope of the scheme in order to improve the quality of tourism services. According to a statement by the MGTO, the catering industry is currently in talks to participate in what is now the third annual plan. So far under the scheme, 167 licensed restaurants have been awarded with "Star Merchant Awards", which can be used by merchants as a means of self-promotion.

IACM: 257 attacks by animals

The Civil and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) has released the 2015 statistics of animal attacks on humans, with data showing a total of 257 recorded cases. According to IACM, an additional 31 incidents involving animal attacks took place in January 2016. A vet currently working in the Municipal Kennel told local media that most of the injuries result from bites or scratches by the animals. Last year, the ICAM issued a total of 11,240 pet licenses, of which 2,014 were first-time issuances, representing 232 more than the previous year. The veterinary staff also commented that owners are required to vaccinate their pets against rabies when they apply for animal registration.

GAMING

SJM records 38.7 percent fall in revenue

SJM Holdings Ltd. announced yesterday its audited consolidated annual results of the company and its subsidiaries for the year ending Dec. 31, 2015. Gaming revenue for the group amounted to HKD48.59 billion, a 38.7 percent fall over 2014, which recorded almost HKD79.27 billion in revenues.

According to a statement issued by SJM, last year the gaming operator held a 21.7 percent share of Macau's gaming revenue, including 25.3 percent of the mass market and 20.2 percent of VIP revenues.

Profit attributable to owners of the company stood at HKD2.465 billion, a decrease



of 63.4 percent from 2014, according to a statement released by SJM. The figure includes an impairment loss on available-for-sale investment in equity securities and the impact on profit of the suspension of a satellite casino.

Further, the adjusted EBITDA totaled HKD3.86 billion for year-end 2015, down 50.3 percent from HKD7.76 billion in the previous year.

Basic earnings per share (HKD0.436) and diluted earnings per share (HKD0.435) fell significantly by 63.7 percent and 63.5 percent per share, respectively. Total dividends for the year tumbled 70.2 percent from HKD0.84 in 2014 to HKD0.25 at the end of last year.

Ambrose So, chief executive officer of SJM Holdings, commented: "SJM enters 2016 in a strong position in spite of the economic challenges faced by Macau's casino gaming market in 2015."

"We remain optimistic about the future of Macau's tourism industry with SJM as a strong contributor," So added.

MACAU'S composite Consumer Price Index (CPI), a main gauge of inflation, rose 3.81 percent year-on-year in January, up from 3.73 percent growth in the previous month, the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) announced yesterday.

The increase was mainly attributed to the soaring price of vegetables, rising costs of eating out and the increasing price of rent for residences and parking spaces.

According to DSEC, a notable increase was observed in the price index of Alcoholic Beverages & Tobacco products, which jumped 39.11 percent when compared with a year ago.

Inflation up 3.81 percent

The bureau also mentioned that higher tuition fees, rising wages of domestic helpers and increasing rental costs for parking spaces drove up the price indexes of Education, Household Goods & Furnishings, and Transport by 8.91 percent, 5.96 percent and 5.95 percent respectively.

Meanwhile, a decrease was reported in the price indexes of Clothing & Footwear (-2.23 percent) and Communication (-1.26 percent).

The region's CPI rose slightly in January

by 0.04 percentage points on a monthly basis, on account of rising prices of tobacco, higher charges for in-patient services and eating out, as well as increasing prices of vegetables due to the extreme cold weather, DSEC data indicated.

On the other hand, seasonal sales of winter clothing and lower prices of package tours pushed down the price index of Clothing & Footwear and Recreation & Culture by 2.08 percent and 1.8 percent respectively. **MDT/Xinhua**

ARTS

Printmaking Triennial exhibition extended

THE Museum of Art's "2nd Macau Printmaking Triennial" exhibition, which presents printmaking works by artists from around the world, has been extended to April 10.

The event received 560 submissions from 22 countries and regions. Local printmaker Wong Cheng Pou planned this year's exhibition, which is the first edition to accept submitted works.

The prints, chosen by nine judges, are displayed in the Museum of Art alongside other selections from Croatia, Canada,

India, Indonesia and more.

The first prize went to a copper etching titled "Macau People" by local printmaking artist Cheong Cheng Wa.

Organized by the Cultural Affairs Bureau and the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau, in collaboration with local arts and culture hubs, the exhibition has been open to the public since November on the ground and first floors of the museum.

The "Chinese Printmaking New Scene" exhibition at the Tap Seac Gallery has also been extended to April 10.



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Proposal limits vehicle use of HK-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge

A proposal to limit the number and kinds of vehicles allowed to use the Hong Kong-Macau-Zhuhai Bridge has been made by Hong Kong's Transport and Housing Bureau.

In a submission to Hong Kong's Legco, the Transport and Housing Bureau proposed that only some vehicles be allowed to use the bridge, suggesting that the main users of the infrastructure should be large passenger buses that have licenses to operate in Hong Kong and Macau or Hong Kong and Guangdong. The bus operator, which will be chosen in the second quarter of this year at the earliest, will make a proposed 300 trips per day during the first three years.

Discussion is still continuing among the three regions in regards to the use of private cars on the bridge. Hong Kong's Transport and Housing Bureau has therefore said that there was no timeframe for a discussion to enable private vehicles with Guangdong license plates to use the bridge.

The proposal addresses the concerns of the Hong Kong and



The under-construction Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge

Macau governments and the public, who do not want a large influx of vehicles from Guangdong crowding their already-congested streets.

In addition, the department proposed that 13,000 Hong Kong and 800 mainland cargo vehicles with permits for both places should be allowed to use the bridge to facilitate the development of the transport and logistics sectors.

However, experts believe that the bridge will be under-utilized, as it will only carry an estimated 9,200 vehicles in the first year; meaning that it may

take decades to repay the substantial investment in construction costs.

The Finance Committee of Hong Kong's Legislative Council approved an extra fund of HKD5.4 billion on January 30, in addition to the original budget of HKD30.4 billion for the infrastructure project.

Construction of the bridge will not be completed until the end of next year. So far seven workers have died and 129 have been injured during the construction, according to a report published in the Hong Kong Economic Journal. **Staff reporter**

Mong Kok riots diverted tourists to Macau

CHAIRMAN of the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB), Peter Lam, has said that the Mong Kok riots during the CNY encouraged tourists to choose to visit Macau, media outlets in the neighboring region reported.

"During the Golden Week, Macau saw a 4.7 percent increase in tourist numbers, whereas Hong Kong saw a double-digit decline," Lam said. He then asserted that "the decline proves that many visitors altered their destinations [as a result] of the riots."

The HKTB office received numerous calls asking about security and safety in the Hong Kong region following the chaos in Mong Kok on February 9. According to Lam, the calls show that the incident has impacted the reputation of the region.

Last year, arrivals to Hong Kong totaled 59.3 million, a 2.5 percent drop compared to 2014. Mr Lam foresaw no significant



Riot police advance on protesters on a Mong Kok street

changes in external factors, such as global economic climate or mainland policies. Consequently, he had only expected there to have been a 1.8 percent drop this year.

Anthony Lau, executive director of the HKTB, said that the department would be introducing a series of promotions aimed at families, such as providing free tickets and accommodation for children who travel with their relatives. Moreover, they will launch promotional products particularly to attract young visitors who make plans for short trips.

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Suspected drug users arrested in Shenzhen

gedly tested positive for marijuana consumption.

According to reports, two suspected drug dealers were also arrested in the city's Shekou district as a result of information provided by the alleged drug users. However, their nationality was not revealed.

Vice Commissioner of China National Narcotics Control Commission, Liu Yuejin, said at a conference in Beijing last week that the number of foreigners detained for alleged drug-related offenses is soaring, and he has called for a police crackdown and

stronger international collaboration.

Last year alone, a total of 1,927 foreigners were arrested and 13 tons of drugs were seized. The suspects hail from 39 countries including Myanmar, Vietnam, Nigeria and Pakistan, according to the 2015 China Drug Situation Report.

A Narcotics Control official confirmed that Shenzhen is a prime breeding ground for cross-border drug smuggling due to its proximity to Hong Kong and Macau.

Meanwhile, Macau's anti-drug law, currently under

amendment process, is set to introduce heavier penalties for both drug trafficking and consumption.

Last month, the Times reported that the proposal, currently under detailed discussion in the AL, sees the minimum prison term for drug consumption increase from up to three months to a range of three months to a year, while the minimum penalty for drug trafficking will rise from three years to five in prison, with the maximum limit remaining at 15 years of imprisonment. **Staff reporter**

FIFTY foreigners were among the 95 people who have been detained by the Shenzhen police after testing positive for drug use this week. Most of the cases alle-

Police received over 7,500 noise-related complaints

THE Prevention and Control of Environmental Noise Law took effect one year ago. The police revealed that as of Monday over 7,500 com-

plaints have been filed. According to a TDM report, advice was given in response to more than 2,000 complaints, while only 45 cases advanced to

prosecution. Authorities indicated that over 5,000 of the objections were not able to be confirmed due to unclear locations or unpredictable noi-

se sources, as well as a failure by the police to locate the people who lodged the complaint. Nevertheless, the law enforcement encountered difficulties in

conducting operations, and appealed to the public to assist them by providing accurate information. The police also said that some of the complaints

were related to animals, and requested that pet owners pay greater attention to noise emanating from domestic premises. Locations that are repeatedly reported for noise violations will be regularly inspected, according to the PSP.

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FOR the first time ever, the six gaming operators of the region joined hands to promote a concerted campaign involving a set of special offers for non-gaming entertainment to local residents. The campaign, titled “Macau Loves Locals,” was presented yesterday afternoon in an event held at the World Trade Center.

Representatives from all of the gaming concessionaires attended, as well as the Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong, and the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ) director, Paulo Martins Chan.

The campaign aims to offer Macau residents (permanent and non-permanent) the opportunity to enjoy non-gaming facilities through a specially organized program of offers and promotions by all the gaming operators throughout their integrated resorts.

The “Macau Loves Locals” campaign will run from February 23 to March 31 and will include participation from 28 hotel brands, 18 spas and gyms and 186 restaurants, as well as all of the major attractions and programs from the six gaming concessionaires, with discounts that can go from 20 to 50 percent.

In the opening speech, Secretary Leong said, “Currently, Macau’s gaming industry is in a period of adjustment, bringing new challenges to the economy and to the local community. The government has attached great importance to any problems that may arise during this adjustment process, trying to mitigate the consequences in other sectors and eliminate the possibility of unemployment problems resulting from this adjustment.”

Lionel Leong added that the government “has been encouraging the industry to develop non-gaming elements, in order to enrich the industry and Macau tourism, and support the development of micro, small

Gaming operators join together in promotion to locals



■ The ‘Macau Loves Locals’ campaign will run from February 23 to March 31

and medium-sized enterprises, contributing to the reinvention of Macau as an international center of tourism and leisure and for the proper diversification of the territory’s economy.” He concluded by saying:

“After the cold winter always follows spring,” expressing in metaphor that he expects the challenges to strengthen everyone’s spirit to overcome difficulties “hand-in-hand with the workers and the community; to realize the words ‘Macau loves me and I love Macau.’”

Several top executives from the gaming operators also stressed the idea of “sharing the fruits of our success with the locals,” as put by Angela Leong, managing director of SJM.

“Through this campaign we hope that our local guests’ experiences will not only exceed their expectations but also have

such a positive effect on them that they will choose to share it with their friends and families, not only in Macau but all over the world, and most especially from mainland China,” said Kevin Kelley, chief operating officer of Galaxy Entertainment Group.

The President of Sands China, Dr Wilfred Wong said “during these five weeks [the duration of the campaign] both permanent and non-permanent residents just need to present their Macau ID in our designated hotels and resorts to enjoy exclusive promotional offers.” He added that “this

time, Sands China will offer discounts at ten of our hotels as well as discounted concert tickets, free valet parking, and discounts on ferry tickets and other family friendly activities such as gondola rides. There will also be free prizes everyday including 1,400 free gondola ride tickets and another 1,400 free DreamWorks character breakfasts, as well as daily lucky draws for shopping and accommodation vouchers.”

“Our world class attractions are not just for tourists but also for locals,” said Ted Chan, chief operating officer of Melco Crown Entertainment, also stating that all of the group’s attractions will be included in the campaign.

“I believe maybe even our local citizens don’t fully appreciate what’s actually happening to their city in terms of the international quality of non-gaming amenities and facilities that are now available to them,” commented Grant Bowie, chief executive officer and executive director of MGM China. He added, “We all can take advantage of this offer and I think we all will be trying out all these new attractions. This is a really great opportunity for Macau citizens to discover Macau.”

He concluded by saying, “we have come to the end of the beginning and now we have the opportunity to really take charge of being a leisure and tourism destination.”

2016 gaming revenue forecast deemed ‘reasonable’

THE government’s MOP200 billion forecast for casino gaming revenue in 2016 is considered reasonable based on the industry’s performance during the Lunar New Year period, according to the Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong.

He reported that gaming revenue during the CNY period was similar to that recorded in the same period last year. He also added that the government would continually monitor external developments and evaluate any potential impact on Macau’s economy.

To pay closer attention to the latest developments impacting local small-and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), the government will collect more data on tourist and local consumption patterns,

as the secretary argued that the development of the city’s SMEs is essential to the prosperity of Macau. He also said that the entire community – including young people and local businesses, had confidence in Macau’s long-term prosperity.

Meanwhile, Mr Leong told reporters that gaming operators in Macau had well-defined development plans, adding that delays in the completion of some integrated resort projects currently under construction have been caused by a number of factors.

The secretary added that by launching international promotional campaigns to promote non-gaming elements and attract more international visitors, gaming operators were showing confidence in Macau’s tourism sector.



Lionel Leong, pictured yesterday

BUSINESS

Canada encourages local investment



Lynn McDonald, Consul and Senior Trade Commissioner

AN investment seminar was held yesterday at the Grand Lapa Hotel by the Consulate General of Canada in Hong Kong and Macau as part of their Pop-Up Canada! in Macau event.

The seminar, titled "Invest in Canada: your partner and platform to the world," presented Canada as an ideal destination for outbound Chinese investment. It outlined, through reference to other Group of Seven (G7) countries, Canada's comparative advantage in case of business policies, availability of talented workforce and education levels, and the country's forecasted GDP growth rates in the years ahead.

Among those presenting were Lynn McDonald, Consul and Senior Trade Commissioner, and Janice Vogtle, Consul and Trade Commissioner, both from the Consulate General.

Representatives from Canadian law firm McMillan were scheduled to present alongside

members of the Canadian Consulate General, however the company's presenters were unable to attend for reasons not disclosed at the seminar.

The presenters also emphasized Canada's easy access to important export markets, such as the U.S. and Mexico, under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Additionally, since major population centers in Canada lie in close proximity to the country's border with the U.S., in some cases Canadian manufacturing areas are actually closer to northern U.S. cities than their U.S. counterparts, providing a comparative advantage in terms of transportation costs.

A Hong Kong-Canada Tax Treaty was signed in November 2012 and has now become formally ratified. It is designed to encourage cross-border business and investment and provide protection against tax discrimination and double taxation. **Staff reporter**

COURTS

Alan Ho trial coming to a close

THE trial of six defendants accused of crimes relating to a prostitution ring operating in Hotel Lisboa, among them the former executive director of the hotel Alan Ho, will soon be coming to an end.

The final stage of the allegations is expected to start on March 4, almost two months after the first session in the Court of First Instance (TJB).

Yesterday during another session of the trial, the panel of judges, presided over by judge Rui Ribeiro, expressed the belief that a final sentence could be reached in the early days of April.

The trial is now reaching its decisive moments. On March 4 the court will hear the defense submissions from the lawyers of the six accused, as well as the arguments from the public prosecutor.

During yesterday's session, the court heard the witnesses in favor of the defendants Peter Lun, Bruce Mak and Pun Cham Un, the defendants who are facing the lightest charges in the group: three counts of prostitution exploitation and one count of participation in a criminal association.

Alan Ho, Stanley Ho's nephew, is being accused of forming and leading a criminal association and has been charged with ninety counts of criminal exploitation. This accusation is also shared by defendants Kelly Wong, Peter Lun and Bruce Mak.

Qiao Yan Yan, the former assistant of Kelly Wong, is accused of ninety counts of prostitution exploitation and participation in a criminal association.

Earlier this week, Alan Ho's lawyer, Neto Valente, challenged the prosecutor to present a certificate for criminal proceedings against another official of Hotel Lisboa, Louis Ieong, who during the trial was accused of involvement in the case. The public prosecutor had not taken any action in relation to Ieong. **RM**

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Melco Crown announced yesterday that nine of its hotels, spas and restaurants at Altira Macao and Crown Towers at City of Dreams have garnered prestigious Star Awards in the 2016 Forbes Travel Guide.

"The company once again succeeded in leading the luxury travel ratings across Macau by holding eight Forbes Five Star Awards and one Four-Star Award, making these two properties the places to be for guests seeking the ultimate, star-studded travel experiences," according to a press release issued by the gaming operator.

Lawrence Ho, Co-chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Melco Crown Entertainment, said: "These accolades signify our colleagues' ongoing dedication and pursuit of excellence in hospitality, committed to serving our distinguished guests the most remarkable, second to none experiences."

BNU DONATES MOP750,000 TO UM



BNU donated MOP750,000 to the University of Macau (UM). The presentation ceremony was officiated by Professor Wei Zhao, UM rector, and Pedro Cardoso, CEO of BNU.

UM is the leading university in Macau's higher education sector, with around 1,500 staff members, 9,500 students and over 25,000 alumni, according to a press release.

In order to provide better services to students,

staff members and alumni and to support the University's development, BNU and UM jointly issued the UM's Affinity Card in 2013. BNU donates a percentage of retail sales turnover of the card to the institution.

According to a press release issued yesterday by BNU, the introduction of the affinity card serves as a good example of collaboration between the financial sector and a non-profit organization.

AVIATION

Qantas reports half-year profit trebled to USD497 million

QANTAS Airways Ltd. yesterday reported that its latest half-year profit had more than trebled to a record 688 million Australian dollars (USD497 million) on the back of low fuel prices and a falling Australian dollar.

The Australian airline's net profit for the six months through December was up 239 percent on AU\$203 million for the previous corresponding half year, boosted by the AU\$448 million saved through hedging on lower fuel prices.

Qantas also approved a AU\$500 million share buyback starting in March.

The Sydney-based company attributed AU\$261 million in cost and revenue benefits to its ongoing restructuring.

Underlying profit before tax was AU\$921



million, in the upper end of the airline's guidance of AU\$875 million to AU\$925 million.

Qantas opted against paying an interim dividend and instead will hand over cash to shareholders in the form of a buyback to start in March.

"The strength of our performance and balance sheet means we can con-

tinue to reward our shareholders for their confidence in our business," chairman Alan Joyce said.

The airline already handed back the vast majority of the AU\$557 million full year net profit announced in August to shareholders in the form of a AU23 cents per share cash distribution.

The weak Australian

currency was driving a surge in inbound tourism, Joyce said. Qantas had responded by increasing capacity, particularly on North American and Asian routes.

Qantas posted a \$409 million full-year profit last year, in a dramatic turnaround from the \$2.6 billion loss the previous year. AP

US: Rent prices are still climbing, just not as fast as before

HOME rental price growth slowed down in January — as even sizzling markets such as the San Francisco Bay Area, Denver and Portland are cooling.

Real estate data firm Zillow said yesterday that median rent rose a seasonally adjusted 2.9 percent from a year ago. The median rent nationwide has held steady at USD1,381 a month since August, after having previously surged dramatically above the pace of wage growth. The slowdown points to two factors: an increase in supply

of new apartments and landlords finding that housing costs can only rise so much before they strain renters' ability to pay.

Rents are now moving closer to the pace of wage gains, with the government reporting earlier this month that average hourly earnings improved 2.5 percent from a year ago to \$25.39.

Prices around Silicon Valley have decelerated sharply. Rentals in San Jose, California rose at a high annual rate of 8.34 percent to \$3,443. But that's substantially below the

rate of 18.49 percent a year ago. The slowdown comes as tech stocks have shed value this year and funding for start-ups are drying up.

Yet rental price growth has also dipped in metro areas without the same booming economies.

Rental costs increased just 1.17 percent in St. Louis to \$1,123. That's down from the annual growth rate of 2.97 percent in January 2015. A similar deceleration occurred in Charlotte, North Carolina and Indianapolis, among other locales. AP

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Chinese investment in Africa continues despite economic slowdown

THE level of Chinese investment in Africa is expected to remain high in the near future, even in the current economic slowdown, according to analysts of Sino-African relations.

In December 2015, during the Johannesburg China-Africa summit, President Xi Jinping announced the assignment of USD10 billion of additional capital to the China-Africa Development Fund, \$10 billion to launch the China-Africa Industrial Fund and another \$6 billion for the China Development Bank Fund for small and medium-sized African businesses.

Lucy Corkin, a researcher at the University of London Lucy Corkin, who analysed the Chinese credit lines to Angola, said in a recent interview with The Diplomat (thediplomat.com) that a careful reading of the Johannesburg Action Plan (2016-2018) and



the Chinese President's comments seem to indicate the intention to apply funds to the development of infrastructure, "the cornerstone of the China-Africa relationship," but also to the development of industrial capacity and agricultural projects.

"The launch of the China-

Africa Industrial Cooperation Fund is the formalisation of a trend, slowly gathering pace, albeit from a low base, of Chinese companies setting up assembly and production bases in Africa, as operating costs increase in industrialized eastern provinces of China," said Corkin,

China became the leader in the financing of the continent's infrastructure projects

author of "Management of Angola China Credit Lines" (2013).

The 2015 Africa Construction Trends report, released last week, reveals that China has eclipsed traditional Western donors, becoming the leader in the financing of the continent's infrastructure projects and that African countries will benefit from Chinese investments in strategic areas such as infrastructure, agriculture, tourism and energy production.

Gabriel Ouko, Director at Deloitte Consulting for Infrastructure and Capital Projects, told Chinese news agency Xinhua, the Chinese economy is tending to stabilize, which "will promote trade and investment" in Africa.

"China is the largest market for products originating mainly in Africa," said the analyst, quoted by the agency.

Mark Smith, director of Deloitte East Africa for Infrastructure and Capital Projects, told the Chinese news agency that the current economic slowdown in China would not affect the status of the country as a major financing and trade partner with Africa.

"The issue of economic slowdown in China is more a matter of perception than reality. China is growing at an average of 6-7 percent and the country's investments in Africa and the rest of the world are still high," he said.

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AP PHOTO



An upside-down house created by a group of Taiwanese architects at the Huashan Creative Park in Taipei

TAIWAN

Building this house was topsy-turvy experience

BUILDING and designing a new house of your own may seem like a topsy-turvy experience. For a group of architec-

ts in Taiwan, it certainly was. On commission from Taiwan's Culture Department, they designed and

built an ordinary American family house. The colorful home has three floors, a master bedroom and bath,

and a garage. And the house and everything inside it — from the car to the appliances to the toys on the floor — are upside down.

It has just over 300 square meters of ceiling, er ... make that floor, space. The car in the garage is attached to the ceiling. An outdoor staircase at ground level leads to the third-floor living room and its ceiling furniture. Its appliances are real, with working lights throughout. The overhead

fireplace, though, was an LCD screen of a cozy fire.

The designers paid close attention to details: the pasta on the dinner table hangs vertically as do the bathroom towels, and a computer in the study has yellow sticky notes attached to it.

The project is on display at the Huashan Creative Park, a site that was once a Japanese plum wine factory but has been turned into an arty warehouse with hip restaurants and a theater showing independent films. **AP**

SMUGGLING

Pittsburgh-area company pleaded guilty in Chinese electrodes case

A company that supplies the steel industry has pleaded guilty to smuggling Chinese-made graphite electrodes into the United States.

An attorney for Ameri-Source International Inc. entered the plea yesterday [Macau time] before a federal judge, who immediately fined the company USD250,000.

The fine is in addition to more than \$2.1 million in restitution the company paid the government for importing the electrodes but lying about their size to avoid anti-dumping duties imposed by the U.S. Department of Commerce. The government sued the company in 2013 and settled that case last week when the company paid \$3 million, which included the restitution but not the criminal fine imposed Monday.

According to the criminal charges, the company imported the electrodes, which are used to power electric arc steel furnaces, but lied about their size in April and June 2011 on shipments from Dalian, China.

The federal government charges a duty of nearly 160 percent on electrodes that are less than 16 inches in diameter to stop Chinese companies from dumping cheap smaller electrodes on

the market.

Ameri-Source International, based in Bethel Park, just south of Pittsburgh, was falsely claiming the electrodes it imported were larger to avoid paying the duty, according to the criminal charges. There is no duty imposed on the larger electrodes.

The smuggling charges each carried up to a \$500,000 fine and probation of one to five years. Under federal law, a company can be placed on probation and subject to additional sanctions if it violates the law again while on probation. But U.S. District Judge Joy Flowers Conti opted not to impose probation after defense attorney Tom Farrell told her the company was no longer in business.

During the hearing, Farrell had also told the judge that the civil settlement and criminal fine would punish Ameri-Source but enable the company to continue doing business. The U.S. Department of Justice unsealed the civil settlement, which involves three Ameri-Source-related companies, two of which continue to operate.

The companies' owner, Ajay Goel, declined to comment on the criminal case.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Leo Dillon told the judge that the smaller electrodes are used to keep melted scrap steel in its molten state. That process consumes the electrodes, so companies that recycle the molten steel are continually buying additional smaller electrodes, Dillon said.

The U.S. Department of Commerce issued an anti-dumping order after investigating claims filed in 2008 by two American companies, Superior Graphite Co., of Chicago, and SGL Carbon LLC, of Charlotte, North Carolina. The U.S. International Trade Administration investigated, and the Department of Commerce determined Chinese exporters were selling the smaller graphite electrodes at 133 percent to 159 percent less than normal value.

As a result, the government imposed a 159.64 percent duty on the smaller graphite electrodes to discourage American companies from buying the Chinese products.

Ameri-Source International dodged the duties on about \$1.4 million worth of graphite electrodes it bought between December 2009 and March 2012. The restitution the company paid was based on anti-dumping duties it should have paid, Dillon said. **AP**

Two Chinese nationals charged with defrauding Goodyear Tire

TWO Chinese nationals accused of accepting kickback payments while buying natural rubber for Akron, Ohio-based Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. have been arrested.

The FBI says in a statement issued yesterday that Xin Franco Fan and Rex Xu Yu were arrested Friday for honest services wire fraud. The two are in custody and have detention hearings in federal court in Youngstown on Thursday.

Affidavits say Goodyear contacted the FBI on Feb. 1 about the two men, who worked for a Singapore-based subsidiary that acquires USD1 billion a year in rubber for the company. The affidavit says Goodyear began an internal investigation after being told last summer about the kickback scheme. It's unclear how much money was involved.

The men's attorneys haven't responded to messages seeking comment. **AP**

Matthew Pennington, Washington

THE top diplomats of the U.S. and China met yesterday in Washington at a fraught time in relations between the two world powers.

It's been seven weeks since North Korea conducted a nuclear test and they still haven't agreed on how to censure Pyongyang. Also, tensions are rising in the South China Sea after Beijing deployed anti-aircraft missiles on a disputed island.

Secretary of State John Kerry and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi sparred over much of the same territory a month ago in Beijing. But as they sit down for more talks at the State Department, both situations have only grown more serious.

North Korea followed up its Jan. 6 underground nuclear explosion with a Feb. 7 rocket launch that was condemned by the U.N. Security Council because such rockets use technology that could be applied to ballistic missiles.

While China has joined in the international criticism, it has balked at imposing the kind of tough economic sanctions that the U.S. wants, fearing it could threaten the stability of North

Top diplomats meet at fraught time between US, China



U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry (right), shakes hands with China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi

Korea, a neighbor and traditional ally of Beijing.

In the meantime, the U.S. has taken tougher steps of its own.

Congress passed the most stringent U.S. sanctions yet that aim to restrict North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's access to hard currency. The restrictions could hit Chinese banks and companies that do business connected to the North's nuclear and missile programs

and its human rights abuses. President Barack Obama signed the bill into law last week.

And on the security front, the U.S. and close ally South Korea have begun talks on deploying a missile defense system that China fears could be used against it as well North Korea.

The U.S. and China are expected, eventually, to fashion a compromise over a U.N. resolution, as

both sides oppose North Korea's development of nuclear weapons and the missiles to deliver them.

But they appear leagues apart on the South China Sea.

Washington and Beijing have been trading accusations of "militarizing" those waters, an important thoroughfare for world trade where six Asian governments have competing territorial claims.

The accusations intensified last week following reports that China had deployed anti-aircraft missiles on Woody Island in the Paracel chain, which is occupied by China but also claimed by Taiwan and Vietnam.

The U.S. and its Asian allies are watching now whether China puts military assets on artificial islands it has built in the Spratly island chain, further south.

The Obama administration is under congressional pressure to step up the U.S. response. Lawmakers are expected to raise

their concerns at a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing Tuesday with the commander of U.S. forces in the Pacific.

State Department spokesman Mark Toner said Monday that the U.S. would continue to press China to stop its militarization in the South China Sea. He called for a diplomatic process to settle territorial claims peacefully.

A couple of U.S. Navy operations close to disputed land since October have already riled Beijing.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said this week that "reconnaissance" by U.S. ships and planes, not China's actions, were responsible for stoking tensions in a region where the U.S. is not a claimant.

"The deployment of defense facilities on China's own territory is no different from what U.S. does in Hawaii," she said. **AP**

SOUTH CHINA SEA

Report cites new Chinese radars in disputed Spratly Islands

CHINA'S Foreign Ministry yesterday reasserted Beijing's right to develop its South China Sea island outposts following a U.S. think tank's report that China has built new radar facilities in the disputed Spratly Islands.

Citing commercial satellite imagery, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, or CSIS, said the radars on the outposts of Gaven, Hughes, Johnson South and Cuarteron reefs could be key to helping China establish effective control over the strategically vital area's sea and airspace.

China has been building islands on top of reefs and atolls it controls, then adding air strips, harbors and other infrastructure that would help consolidate its control. Five other governments also hold maritime claims that overlap with Beijing's, and the U.S. has said it is concerned about China's militarization of the area.

Beijing rejects the accusations, saying it is merely installing defensive measures on islands, primarily for civilian purposes.

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said she had no specific information about the CSIS report, but said China had undisputed sovereignty over the area.

"It's within China's sovereignty to carry out constructions on its own territories," Hua told reporters at a regularly scheduled news conference. "By deploying some



necessary defensive facilities on the relevant islands and reefs it defends in the South China Sea, China is exercising the right of self-preservation that every country enjoys according to international law, which is beyond reproach."

Hua reiterated charges that international media were paying too little attention to China's construction of lighthouses, weather stations, fishermen's shelters and other civilian infrastructure that Beijing portrays as public goods and services for the benefit of the international community.

She said China's pursuit of peaceful development and good neighborly relations shouldn't be called into question. "China wants to make joint efforts with each side to keep the South China Sea peaceful and stable," Hua said.

CSIS said the new radars would significantly bolster China's ability

to keep an eye on ship and aircraft traffic in the southern portion of the South China Sea, complementing its monitoring of the sea's northern areas from existing facilities.

"Improved radar coverage is an important piece of the puzzle — along with improved air defenses and greater reach for Chinese aircraft — toward China's goals of establishing effective control over the sea and airspace" throughout China's South China Sea claims, the CSIS report said.

The report comes a week after it was revealed that Beijing had deployed surface-to-air missiles on an island in the Paracel group, northwest of the Spratlys. The U.S. said the presence of missiles provided increasing evidence of militarization of the area by China.

China subsequently accused the U.S. of militarizing the region, saying patrols by U.S. Navy vessels and military aircraft had escalated tensions and raised concerns about stability in the area.

The South China Sea and ongoing tensions on the Korean Peninsula dominated talks yesterday in the U.S. between Secretary of State John Kerry and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

In an editorial yesterday, China's official Xinhua News Agency said divisions over Korea and the South China Sea had been "amplified thanks partly to Washington's hidden agendas and recklessness."

"It is also noteworthy that it is Washington that is fanning up the flames by flexing its muscles in the South China Sea and by emboldening nations in their territorial disputes with China," the editorial said. **AP**

Cambodian navy to hold training exercise with Chinese ships

CAMBODIA is holding its biggest-ever joint naval training exercise with China this week, a senior Cambodian officer said yesterday.

Deputy navy chief Vice Admiral Vann Bunneang said 70 Cambodian sailors will join 737 Chinese counterparts on three Chinese warships that have already docked at Cambodia's Sihanoukville port.

He said the exercises today and tomorrow will cover rescue activities and emergencies at sea.

China is eager to project its influence in Southeast Asia as it presses its extensive territorial claims in the South China Sea. Cambodia, which has close economic and political ties with Beijing, has offered little support for rival claims made by its Southeast Asian neighbors.

The Chinese naval visit follows by just a few days a goodwill visit by three ships from Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force. Japan has maritime disputes of its own with China, with which it competes for influence throughout Asia.



Chinese navy ship (CNS) Zhenghe entered the Sihanoukville Port of Cambodia

"The arrival of the Chinese warships and the Japanese vessels was a matter of pride for Cambodia, and shows that our country has peaceful and good relations and cooperation with all countries," Vann Bunneang said.

When asked whether China was making a show of strength to project its influence, he said it was not strange for powerful countries to show off their modern military equipment.

"It is like a clothing company: After they make a new product, they often advertise. So the presence of Chinese warships in Cambodia or other places is because China is a big country and wants to show off to the world their modern technology," he said. **AP**



North Korean performers entertain customers at the Okryugwan restaurant in Beijing

N. Korean restaurants feel the pinch amid standoff with South

Gerry Shih, Beijing

SHORTLY after 7:30, the servers at China's biggest North Korean restaurant become singers. They emerge for their nightly performances in orange and purple satin dresses and stiletto heels, belting out ballads with their arms extended, would-be divas shimmering under hot lights.

On some other night, when the house is packed and the soju flowing, this might set off a drunken singalong, with tables of South Korean tourists clapping wholesomely in the front and smoky huddles of their expat businessmen compatriots leering not-so-wholesomely from the back. But not tonight.

In the northeast corner of Beijing, the Okryugwan restaurant is feeling the far-flung effects of the latest standoff on the Korean Peninsula. Since the North conducted a nuclear test in January and went ahead with a rocket launch earlier this month, Seoul has instructed its citizens to not patronize the government-affiliated North Korean restaurants that usually pull in a steady stream of curious South Korean travelers, and their precious foreign currency.

"We usually have many tables of South Korean tourists, but business is not good," North Korean waitress Han Ahn Min said as she poured tea at

■ **S. Korean intelligence estimates N. Korea runs about 130 overseas restaurants that generate more than USD100m annually**

one of just a handful of occupied tables in a high-ceilinged dining hall capable of welcoming visitors by the busload.

"The weather is bad," she said in smooth Mandarin and smiled. "There are the other factors right now, too." That was as close as Han, a talkative 24-year-old with a ready routine of questions and answers, would get to discussing the South or politics. But there is little question that Seoul's government has targeted restaurants that North Korea operates in other Asian countries, mostly in China. The Okryugwan is an offshoot of a well-known eatery on the bank of the Taedong River in central Pyongyang.

South Korean intelligence estimates North Korea runs about 130 overseas restau-

rants that generate more than USD100 million annually, a figure that would approach what 45,000 North Korean laborers made last year at the jointly-run Kaesong industrial park near the border between the two neighbors. The South believes the North's overseas businesses bring in critical foreign currency for its weapons program, among other things, and recently shut down the Kaesong complex while calling for more stringent economic sanctions.

Seoul's campaign to starve the North's restaurant business appears to be well-communicated, if not always well-heeded. A wholly unscientific survey of the Okryugwan clientele one recent night showed that two of the five occupied tables were seated with South Koreans, all of whom knew about the government warning. Elderly Chinese lined another table, while yet another was seated with several North Koreans, wait staff said, including, briefly at one point, one of the cooks.

Despite the small, tepid crowd, the performers powered through several songs and wardrobe changes, swapping form-fitting satin dresses for flowing traditional choson-ot robes. They launched into Korean and Chinese songs and showed off — or at least mimicked — dazzling technique on accordions, guitars

and saxophones, all against a looming, painted backdrop of turquoise waves crashing against cliffs.

Over thin applause, the soprano who gamely closed out the night's show received a bouquet of flowers from what appeared to be another employee who shuffled over from the back.

A cursory peek this week into a cozier, second-floor bar and restaurant popular with hard-drinking South Korean businessmen suggested other North Korean locations in town weren't better off. Branches in Bangkok and Phnom Penh were relatively deserted, too.

The Bangkok show was a half-hour of skilled performances and lightning-fast costume changes, from traditional hanboks to sparkly short dresses in the style of K-pop girl bands. A slideshow in the background depicted flowers, landscapes, tundra and a river full of dead fish.

The server/performers played instruments including a guitar, saxophone and a 12-stringed, zither-like gayageum with cool precision. When off stage, as they engaged elderly patrons in conversation, their smiles vanished as soon as they turned around.

Known for highly attentive service and decent food, the restaurants have long been a popular stop for South Ko-

rean travelers seeking a glimpse into their isolated neighbor and a modicum of open dialogue with well-trained servers who give straightforward answers to many questions while skillfully eluding sensitive ones.

The establishments serve as listening posts and cultural outposts, experts say. Well-educated employees like Han, who studied business and must return to North Korea after a three-to-four-year stint, gauge local sentiment as they aggressively push domestic products like Daedongjiang beer (\$6 a bottle), Daedongjiang cigarettes (\$5 a pack), and collectible stamp books (\$100 each).

The menu, while not terribly expansive, wasn't cheap either, featuring \$20 sushi platters, \$10 dog meat stews and pricey grilled steak cuts calculated by weight.

"What do Chinese think of North Korea?" Han asked — a typical question — once the lights went up. After the audience responded she exclaimed, "Korean-Chinese friendship!" and touted the stamp collection, with illustrations of North Korean founder Kim Il Sung and China's Mao Zedong, two old Communist allies.

Lee Seunghyun, a 25-year-old who works in the furniture business in Beijing, was sitting at a rear table with a friend on a weeklong visit from Seoul. Despite government warnings, the friend made a point of checking out the restaurant because Lee's grandparents had left North Korea before the split.

"We saw the warnings but he was very curious," Lee said as her friend pulled out his smartphone to show a series of cautionary text messages sent by the South Korean foreign ministry to citizens traveling in China.

Although they found the experience "interesting," the Seoulites said they were ready to leave after their waitresses, who initially spoke relatively openly about the slow business and agreed to take selfies together, turned cold after the pair declined to buy entire cases of beer or whole cartons of cigarettes.

After that, there was only one table of South Koreans left.

Puffing on a cigarette outside the restaurant, a local assistant to a South Korean broadcaster confided that the table was a crew filming a program in China, all well aware that they shouldn't be patronizing the establishment. He grimaced once he learned he was speaking to a reporter but kept talking. Finally he pleaded, forget this conversation.

"Come on, do a favor for a fellow journalist," he said as he walked back into an empty restaurant. "We're really not supposed to be here." **AP**

Nick Perry, Wellington

TEN people have died on a single small island in Fiji as the total death toll from a powerful cyclone climbed to 29, officials said yesterday.

Government spokesman Ewan Perrin said the death toll on Koro Island had reached double figures and that most buildings there had been heavily damaged or flattened.

He said a relief vessel with about 30 people aboard had arrived at the island with medical supplies, food and water, and teams were helping build temporary shelters for the 4,500 residents.

"It's one of the worst hit," Perrin said.

He said officials also have fears about nearby Taveuni Island, home to about 12,000 people, because they've managed to have only limited contact with people there.

Winds from Cyclone Winston, which tore through the Pacific Island chain Saturday and early Sunday, reached 177 miles (285 kilometers) per hour, making it the strongest storm in Fiji's recorded history.

Getting emergency supplies to the group's far-flung islands and remote communities has been the Fiji government's top priority.

Alice Clements, a spokeswoman for UNICEF, said the aerial footage coming in showed a corridor of destruction over places like Koro Island.

"The imagery is heartbreaking," she said. "You're looking down and expecting to see a village and instead you're seeing a field of debris."

Fiji cyclone death toll reaches 29 after island leveled



Camaged buildings at Nakama settlement in Fiji

She said one priority is to ensure children get back to school because studies have shown it helps them recover faster emotionally.

United Nations Under-Secretary-General Stephen O'Brien said in a statement he was concerned by the devastating impact the cyclone was having on Fiji.

"Whole villages have been destroyed, homes and crops have been damaged, power lines have been cut and more than 8,100 people are currently sheltering in over 70 evacuation centers," O'Brien

said.

said.

O'Brien said Fiji was leading the response and had asked for international help. Australia has so far pledged 5 million Australian dollars (\$3.6 million) in aid and New Zealand has pledged 2 million New Zealand dollars (\$1.3 million).

Perrin said France, the U.S. and China have also provided or pledged support. He said relief agencies, including Oxfam and the Red Cross, have been helping with humanitarian efforts and that the Fijian government has set up a disaster relief fund.

Home to 900,000 people, Fiji has more than 100 inhabited islands, and authorities are having difficulty communicating with some of the more remote islands in the wake of the cyclone.

Phone communications have been rapidly restored in many areas but in other areas the damage was severe and would take longer to fix, Perrin said.

He said the electricity network across Fiji remained patchy, and in some cases power had been deliberately cut to prevent further damage. He said clean water was also a challenge, and people were being asked to boil their water, treat it with chemicals or drink bottled water. **AP**

Standoff ends between doctors and Australian government

Rod McGuirk, Canberra

A one-year-old baby of an asylum-seeking family from Nepal was discharged from an Australian hospital on Monday, ending a 10-day standoff between medical staff and the government over whether she should be sent back with her parents to the Pacific island nation of Nauru.

Australian-born baby Asha was flown from an Australia-run immigration camp on Nauru 3,300 kilometers to a hospital in the Australian city of Brisbane in late January for treatment of scalding burns from hot water.

She was treated at the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital, but doctors said on Feb. 12 that they would not discharge her if she was to be immediately sent back to Nauru.

Immigration Minister Peter Dutton said Monday that the baby had been released from the hospital to live temporarily with her parents in private rental accommodation paid for by the government. Dutton said they were in community detention, which usually means asylum seekers are able to move freely in the community but must reside at a designated address every night.

The government still intends to send the family back to Nauru after a court hears their challenge against deportation, Dutton said.

"We are not going to allow the message to get out that people can come to Nauru, come to Australia for medical assistance, and that will be their ticket out into Australian society — that is not going to happen," Dutton told Nine Network television.

The family is among 267 asylum seekers facing deportation to Nauru after coming to Australia for medical treatment or to support a sick relative. The family's name has not been released.

Hundreds of protesters calling for Australia to accept these asylum seekers have maintained a vigil outside the hospital since the doctors announced they would not send Asha back to Nauru.

Australia has all but stopped asylum seekers from the Middle East and Asia attempting to reach Australian shores on boats from Indonesia in the past three years by refusing to allow boat arrivals to ever settle in Australia. They are sent to immigration camps on Nauru and Australia's closest neighbor, Papua New Guinea. **AP**

PHILIPPINES

Muslim militants attack troops, more than 20 dead



Filipino Muslims pray at the gates of the Philippine Congress during a protest on Feb. 3

A Philippine military official says up to 20 Muslim militants are believed to have been killed in three days of sporadic clashes that also left three soldiers dead in the country's south.

Military spokesman Brig. Gen. Restituto Padilla said the fighting broke out when about 40 militants from a still unspecified group opened fire late Saturday on an army camp in Butig town in Lanao del Sur province. Soldiers defended the camp in on-and-off clashes.

Padilla said the military deployed additional troops, bomber planes, helicopter gunships and artillery to the area.

The attackers may have come from a group affiliated with an Indonesian terror suspect who was killed in the region in 2012. **AP**

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DONALD Trump is betting that his unorthodox campaign will come up a winner for the third straight primary contest in Nevada's Republican caucuses today [Macau time], while senators Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz battled to emerge as the main challenger to the billionaire businessman.

The enthusiasm for Trump was on display yesterday at Trump's caucus-eve event at Las Vegas's South Point Arena, which drew an estimated crowd of more than 6,000. Trump is coming into Nevada with growing momentum following his primary victories in South Carolina on Saturday and New Hampshire earlier this month.

Trump told supporters he isn't in love with the caucus system of choosing delegates to the party's national nominating convention. The real estate mogul said he plans to visit numerous caucus sites and expects to see his supporters there. He said, "If you're not there, I'm going to be so angry. Don't make me have a miserable evening."

Trump is leading by a huge margin in the few preference polls taken in Nevada. But he also led in polls ahead of the lead-off Iowa caucuses, only to finish second behind Cruz. Because Nevada's caucus model demands more of a time commitment from voters and takes place on a Tuesday night, Cruz and Rubio hope that what they feel is a superior ground game will pay off against Trump.

Trump's efforts to build a get-out-the-vote effort in Nevada don't appear to match those put together by his main rivals. The real estate mogul's Nevada operation is based at two offices opened late last year. Only one state lawmaker has endorsed him. Trump has made several trips to the state, drawing crowds thousands-strong at campaign rallies, and is relying on a groundswell of working-class Nevadans who don't run

USA ELECTIONS

Trump is betting on unorthodox campaign to pay off in Nevada



Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks at a campaign rally Monday in Las Vegas

in the usual political circles to propel him to victory.

In the days leading up to the caucuses, Rubio's campaign office in Las Vegas buzzed with activity. The campaign has been phoning voters, knocking on doors and organizing caucus training sessions for months in a state where he freshman senator from Florida spent several years of his childhood.

"We feel like we're the best-organized campaign in Nevada right now," said Nevada Lt.

Gov Mark Hutchison, who is Rubio's state chairman.

Rubio is trying to set himself up as the candidate of the party establishment after former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush quit the race after a disappointing fourth-place finish in South Carolina. Establishment heavyweights have moved to back Rubio, with many saying they see the Florida senator as the candidate who can unite a disharmonious Republican Party. Since Friday, Rubio has added 12 new

Congressional or gubernatorial endorsements, while Trump and Cruz have added none.

Cruz's campaign showed signs of struggle following his third-place finish in South Carolina. The Texas senator faces a critical test on March 1, or Super Tuesday, when primaries are held in multiple states, including his home state of Texas and other southern states.

Cruz told reporters yesterday that he had asked his campaign spokesman, Rick Tyler, to re-

sign for tweeting a story that falsely alleged Rubio had insulted the Bible.

"We are not a campaign that is going to question the faith of another candidate for president," Cruz said.

Cruz's campaign has repeatedly been accused by rivals of using questionable tactics.

"It's every single day something comes out of the Cruz campaign that's deceptive and untrue, and in this case goes after my faith," Rubio told reporters during a campaign stop in Elko, Nevada.

Trump also lashed out at Cruz at Monday night's rally in Las Vegas, telling the crowd, "This guy is sick. There's something wrong with this guy."

Ohio Gov. John Kasich showed no signs of quitting the race, frustrating efforts by party leaders to coalesce around an anti-Trump alternative. Kasich is hoping to make an impact later in March when Ohio and other Midwestern states hold their primaries.

Trump heads into the Nevada caucuses with 67 delegates. His closest opponents, Cruz and Rubio, have a total of 11 and 10, respectively. It takes 1,237 delegates to capture the nomination at the convention.

In the Democratic race, Hillary Clinton took the lead in the competition for delegates after winning Saturday's caucuses in Nevada. She now has a total of 52 caucus and primary delegates out of the 2,383 needed to win the nomination at the Democratic national convention. Her main rival, Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders has 51.

The former secretary of state is expected to pad her lead with a victory in Saturday's Democratic primary in South Carolina, where polls show her enjoying strong support among African-Americans. That bodes well for her prospects in primaries in several southern states on Super Tuesday where blacks make up a large part of the Democratic electorate.

Sanders, a self-declared democratic socialist, vowed to fight on, saying that he has no plans of leaving the race anytime soon. He says his campaign has plenty of time to make up lost ground.

"This is about a slog, state by state," he said. He held a rally Monday in Massachusetts, one of the Super Tuesday primary states where he is running strongest. **AP**

WSJ: two votes to watch at Nevada caucuses - Sheldon Adelson and his wife

AS Nevada Republicans gather for their caucuses night, the most important votes may come from one couple: Sheldon and Miriam Adelson, who donated more than USD100 million to GOP candidates and committees in the 2012 presidential contest, The Wall Street Journal reported.

Four years ago, the Adelsons dropped \$15 million into the super PAC backing Newt Gingrich, a personal friend, creating a financial lifeline that kept the former House speaker in the race until he conceded to eventual GOP nominee Mitt Romney.

This time, the billionaire casino owner and his wife are keeping their cards closer to their chests. Mr. Adelson, preoccu-



Sheldon Adelson (center left) and wife Miriam Adelson pose for photographs as they leave a news conference during the opening of the Sands Cotai Central resort in Macau

pied with business matters, hasn't been meeting with the candidates fanning out across the Silver State to drive turnout

for the caucuses, a person familiar with his plans said.

He and his wife are still hoping to attend a caucus, where they could publicly declare their support. It is a blessing most candidates have angled for, but one that may carry risks, as GOP front-runner Donald Trump is decrying the influence of big donors and special interests.

According to the WSJ, the Adelsons so far have made small donations to Texas Sen. Ted Cruz and South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham, who dropped out of the race in December. The newspaper they recently bought, the Las Vegas Review-Journal, endorsed Florida Sen. Marco Rubio early this month, which many have interpreted as an Adelson endorsement. **MDT/WSJ**

what's ON

CONCERT

TIME: 8pm

VENUE: Venue: Macao Cultural Centre,
Avenida Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE

ADMISSION: Free

AGE: 6 years old

ENQUIRES: (853) 2856 8832

ARTIFACTS OF EXCELLENCE – SEAL CARVINGS BY
LUO SHUZHONG FROM THE MAM COLLECTION

TIME: 10am-7pm

(Closed on Monday, no admission after 6:30 pm)

UNTIL: February 28, 2016

VENUE: Macao Museum of Art,

Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE

ADMISSION: Adult MOP5

(Free admission on Sundays and public holidays)

ENQUIRES: (853) 8791 9814

I HAND-MADE, THEREFORE I AM

TIME: 10:30am-6:30pm

(Closed on Mondays and public holidays)

UNTIL: February 28, 2016

VENUE: Calçada da Igreja de S.Lázaro, 10, Macao

ADMISSION: free

ENQUIRES: (853) 2835 4582

ONE CENTURY OF AUSTRIAN ART 1860-1960

TIME: 10am-7pm

(Closed on Monday, no admission after 6:30 pm)

UNTIL: April 3, 2016

VENUE: Macao Museum of Art,

Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE

ADMISSION: Adult MOP5

(Free admission on Sundays and public holidays)

ENQUIRES: (853) 8791 9814

Offbeat

JOBS WANTED IN AUSTRALIA - BUT NOT
IF THEY CLASH WITH GOLF

The Australian government is tired of unemployed people declining a job because it may interfere with their golf plans or dreams of becoming an actor.

The government plans to tighten its rules on who qualifies for unemployment benefits to encourage the jobless — including some with creative excuses to stay off the job — to go to work.

“Australia’s income support system is there as a safety net for people who genuinely cannot find a job — not as an option for those who simply refuse to work,” Employment Minister Michaelia Cash said in a statement.

The penalty for refusing a job offer without a good excuse is eight weeks without a welfare check, but three out of four unemployed Australians who refused jobs last year managed to keep their checks. Australia’s jobless rate is 6 percent.

The Employment Department yesterday released samples of reasons job hunters have given for remaining unemployed. They include:

— A 58-year-old man was not prepared to work for three hours on Sundays because that was when he played golf.

— A 19-year-old man turned down a job “to follow his dream of becoming an actor.”

— A 26-year-old man refused a job because “he doesn’t work with chickens.”

— A 50-year-old woman declined a receptionist position because of a “bad smell” in the office.

— A 33-year-old man rejected car washing as “too difficult.”

— A 23-year-old man refused to become a driver’s assistant because he wanted to drive.

The basic unemployment benefit in Australia is 261.70 Australian dollars (about USD190) a week. It’s higher for those with dependent children and in need of rent assistance.

The government wants to close a loophole that allows the unemployed to refuse jobs while continuing to collect a welfare checks, but the Senate is resisting the changes.

The opposition argues that the government already has the discretion to withhold checks from people without reasonable excuses for refusing to work. It says the government’s proposal would remove any discretion in cases where withholding the benefit could leave a person homeless or suffering other harm.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
17:30	Castle S.5
18:10	Trail of Lies (Repeated)
19:00	TDM Entreview (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Montra do Lilau
21:30	Criminal Minds Sr.9
22:10	Trail of Lies
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Champions League Highlights
23:45	Drama
00:40	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:15	RTPi Live

cinema

CINETEATRO

18 FEB - 24 FEB

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: ROAD CHIP_

ROOM 1

7.30 pm

Director: Walt Becker

Starring: Jason Lee, Jesica Ahlberg, Josh Green

Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)

Duration: 92min

MERMAID_

ROOM 1

2.15, 4.00, 5.45, 9.30 pm

Director: Stephen Chau

Starring: Deng Chao, Show Lo, Zhang Yu Qi

Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)

Duration: 92min

FROM VEGAS TO MACAU III_

ROOM 2

2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Andrew Lau, Wong Jing

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

Jacky Cheung

Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)

Duration: 112min



CROUTCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON:

SWORD OF DESTINY_

ROOM 3

2.15, 4.00, 5.45, 9.45 pm

Director: Yuen Woo-Peng

Starring: Donnie Yen, Michelle Yeoh

Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)

Duration: 120min

THE MONKEY KING 2_

ROOM 3

7.30 pm

Director: Pou-Soi Cheang

Starring: Aaron Kwok, Gong Li, Feng Shaofeng

Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)

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

1981 PRINCE CHARLES AND
LADY DI TO MARRY

The Prince of Wales and the Lady Diana Spencer have ended months of speculation with the announcement they are to be married.

At 1100GMT Buckingham Palace made the engagement official.

Lord Maclean, the Lord Chancellor made the following statement at an investiture at the Palace: “It is with greatest pleasure that the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh announce the betrothal of their beloved son the Prince of Wales to the Lady Diana Spencer, daughter of the Earl Spencer and the Honourable Mrs Shand Kydd.”

Prince Charles proposed to Lady Diana three weeks ago at a private dinner at Buckingham Palace before she went to Australia.

He wanted her to use the trip to think over his proposal but she accepted immediately and he gave her a diamond and sapphire engagement ring.

Despite the intense public interest, they managed to keep their news a secret.

Lady Diana, who is 19, will leave her job as a kindergarten teacher and move out of her flat share in Kensington to live in Clarence House until the marriage.

The couple will then move to the Prince’s house in Highgrove, Gloucestershire.

In a BBC interview, the 32-year-old Prince said he was “delighted and frankly amazed that Diana is prepared to take me on”.

Looking shyly up through her long blond fringe and giggling occasionally, Lady Diana said she too was “delighted and thrilled, blissfully happy”.

Asked how she would cope with a dramatic change to her life she said: “With Prince Charles beside me I cannot go wrong.”

Tributes to the couple were made in both Houses of Parliament. The Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, said the news brought “great pleasure” to government and MPs.

They will be married in late July, but exactly when and where has yet to be decided.

Earl Spencer, Lady Diana’s father, said he was also very happy for the couple.

Speaking outside Buckingham Palace with his wife Raine, daughter of novelist Barbara Cartland, he said his daughter had handled the pressures of constant media attention over the last six months very well.

“It will be easier now. She will be under some protection whereas before she had to face the music on her own,” he said.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

It was the wedding of the century and a national holiday was declared for the occasion on 29 July 1981.

Prince Charles and Lady Diana married in St Paul’s Cathedral watched by 3,500 invited guests and an estimated 750 million people around the world on live television.

The sumptuous ivory taffeta and antique lace wedding dress was created by young British designers David and Elizabeth Emanuel and had a 25-metre train.

Their first child, William, was born less than a year later on 21 June 1982.

After Prince Harry’s birth on 15 September 1984 it was clear the fairytale marriage was falling apart.

The couple separated in 1993 and officially divorced in 1996.

Diana spoke publicly about her own and her husband’s infidelities in a BBC Panorama documentary in November 1995.

Diana was stripped of the title of Her Royal Highness but was never far from the front pages of the tabloid newspapers.

She became actively involved with charities for children, the homeless, the disabled and those with HIV and AIDS.

She campaigned for a ban on the use and manufacture of landmines.

Her death in a car crash in Paris on 31 August 1997 shocked the world.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19
Flesh things out. Being short and sweet is counterproductive, today. The devil is in the details, and so is the profit, so spell things out.

Taurus April 20-May 20
If others wonder why you're not being cautious, it's because they can't read your mind. Your thoughts are racing ahead of you. Don't make any long term plans based on your present state of mind.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21
Ugh, yet another meeting. What's the point of getting ideas generated if there is no follow-through? Wait until there is something more concrete going on.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22
Something has you wanting to drop it all and walk on the wild side. Are you overwhelmed by work? Do your projects have too many aspects to get a grip on? Figure it out before you bail.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Socializing with friends gave you an excellent skill -- namely, being good at teamwork. But don't confuse the two. Keep the problems at home and the brainstorming at the office.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22
You know the drill: Work issues require cold logic. But when a hot temper is involved, it's time to rethink your own approach. Be extra-careful when communicating.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22
Everyone around you is done intellectualizing, but you're still eager to discuss. You'll discover plenty of other colleagues ready to communicate with you, if you widen your circle.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
Reading the fine print finally pays off when a minor detail is uncovered. Whether it's a diamond in the rough or a deal breaker depends on the strength of your prescription.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Busy work is boring work. But that's more philosophical than the people around you care to be. Keep the complaining to yourself, and avoid communicating it to others.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19
Thinking things over is wise but don't go overboard. When the details just swirl and swirl around your head, it's time to call it a day. You'll get clarity of thought tomorrow.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18
Creativity is useful all across the board, but especially when it comes to communication. You'll have to come up with just the right words to express something sensitive.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20
An office decision is much like breaking up with a partner-in-love. You vow to do it, but once you see them, clarity dissolves. Luckily for you, this is a much less critical decision, so put it off until another day.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Easy+

9x9 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Medium

9x9 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Hard

9x9 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

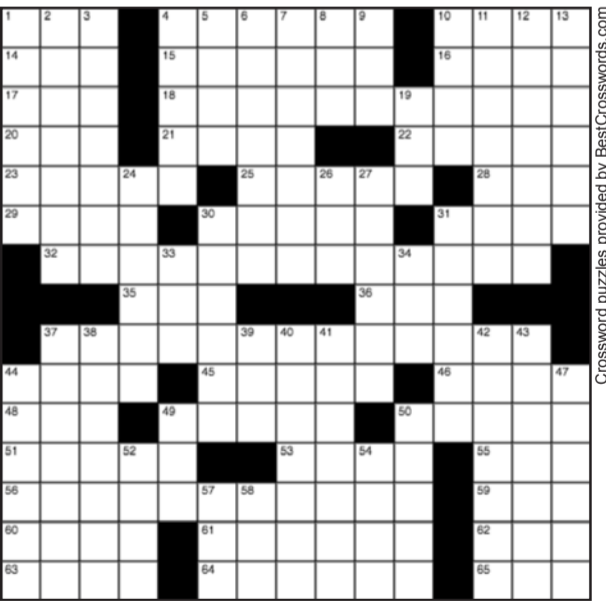
WEATHER

Table with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION. Rows for CHINA (Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, etc.) and WORLD (Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, etc.).

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- ___ rule; 4- Isolate; 10- Lacking slack; 14- Religious sch.; 15- Virgil epic; 16- Mont Blanc, par exemple; 17- Pale; 18- Epic poem of India; 20- Admiration; 21- "___ Tu" ('70s hit); 22- Office notes; 23- Reposes; 25- Crinkly; 28- Compass point opposite WSW; 29- Gola of Israel; 30- One in a cab, say; 31- Bustles; 32- Wife of one's son; 35- GI mail drop; 36- Poivre's partner; 37- Heliozoan; 44- Search thoroughly; 45- Lace mat; 46- Social standing; 48- UK honor; 49- Parsonage; 50- Birthplace of Muhammad; 51- Verbal exams; 53- Thus; 55- Craggy hill; 56- Give the illusion of three dimensions; 59- Altar constellation; 60- Italy's Villa d'___; 61- She's a Dahl; 62- A collection of articles; 63- Stadium cheers; 64- Call for help; 65- End for Siam;

DOWN: 1- Teeming; 2- Kelp; 3- Loss of memory; 4- Chair designer Charles; 5- Close by; 6- Receive by succession; 7- Shore; 8- Women's ___; 9- Old English letter; 10- Shipping deduction; 11- Oakland's county; 12- So far; 13- Tantalizes; 19- Actress Brennemar; 24- Idle; 26- ___ Rosenkavalier; 27- Gruesome; 30- Girl in a Beach Boys song; 31- Attract; 33- Student stat; 34- Japanese computer giant; 37- Secretly; 38- Dig up; 39- Electrically charged particle; 40- Stingy; 41- Warned; 42- Yeast enzyme; 43- Curtain calls; 44- Tap dancer; 47- Self-defense method; 49- Ed.'s pile; 50- Medium of exchange; 52- Dregs; 54- Actress Rowlands; 57- Stage hog; 58- Man-mouse connector



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
Tourism 28 333 000
Airport 59 888 88



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Photo shown here may be different from Macau specifications.

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Honda Macau



Tales Azzoni, Barcelona

IT sounds like Formula One has failed in its attempt to bring back loud engine roars.

Some drivers, teams and fans say they did not notice a significant increase in sound when cars made it to the track for the first time this week in pre-season testing in Barcelona.

F1 forced teams to introduce a modified exhaust system to try to boost the engine sound after widespread complaints that cars weren't loud enough, but the effects fell short of most expectations.

■ The new exhausts were among the few regulation changes for 2016

Force India driver Nico Hulkenberg said the car "sounds similar" to what it did last year. Sauber driver Felipe Nasr noticed only "a little" increase in the engine sound.

Red Bull's chief engineer officer, Rob Marshall, said F1 would have been better off without the exhaust changes.

"I think the new exhausts are a waste of time," Marshall told The Associated Press. "I don't think it has made it any noisier. I think it just made the car a bit heavier."

The new exhausts were among the few regulation changes for 2016, along with an increase in the size of the head-protection area in the cockpit. The modification in the cockpit was made to better protect the drivers, while the other was aimed at making the cars noisier to please the fans.

"I think it's a little bit better," McLaren racing director Eric

F1 still quiet despite rule change to boost engine sound



Alfonso Celis of Mexico takes a curve in the new Force India F1 car during a testing session at the the Catalunya racetrack in Montmeló

Boullier said, before pausing to rethinking his answer, "Isn't it?"

Drivers said the improvement, if any, was minimal.

"It's a very small difference, to be honest," Force India driver Sergio Perez said. "I don't think there's a massive difference from last year."

Perez noted that the Circuit de Barcelona may give a false impression of improvement because the track is compact and cars are always racing close by,

so they are heard from nearly everywhere in the facility.

"I think the cars sound the same as they did before, perhaps just a little throatier," said 31-year-old fan Dani Huguet, a regular at the track. "They need to try something else to improve this, either by changing the size of this turbo or going back to the old engines, which is what everybody really wants."

The F1 sound changed dra-

matically after extensive rule changes were implemented two years ago. The series switched from ear-splitting V8 engines to V6 turbo power units, taking away one of the sport's biggest attractions.

Although F1 knew it could not restore the same levels of the V8 engine, it tried to improve the sound by making teams switch from the single exhaust system they used last season to twin exhaust pipes

that theoretically make the sound a bit heavier.

Nasr said cars are still developing and it's too early to say that the change did not really affect the sound of cars.

"I think it's a little higher already," the Brazilian said. "We can't judge right away."

Hulkenberg did not need any more time to reach his conclusion.

"There's no difference," he said, "it sounds similar to me." AP



Presidential candidate Jordanian Prince Ali Al Hussein

FIFA presidential candidate Prince Ali is asking for Friday's election to be suspended after his request for the

use of transparent voting booths was rejected.

The Jordanian prince's lawyers said yesterday they are seeking "provi-

Prince Ali seeks postponement of FIFA presidential election

sional measures" from the Court of Arbitration for Sport to postpone the vote to select Sepp Blatter's successor.

CAS said it received a request from Prince Ali, asking the court to direct FIFA to use transparent voting booths and independent scrutineers "in order to safeguard the integrity of the voting process and to ensure the vote is conducted in secret."

CAS said FIFA has been

asked to submit written answers to the prince's request. CAS said it would issue a ruling no later than tomorrow morning, a day ahead of the scheduled election.

Prince Ali's lawyers said in a statement that FIFA's rejection of his request for transparent voting booths would deny "any right to a fair and transparent voting process."

The lawyers, Francis Szipiner and Renaud Se-

merdjian, said FIFA was only requesting that voters leave their mobile phones behind when they go to the voting booths.

"This request is not sufficient," the statement said. "FIFA remains silent upon the measures to enforce it and sanctions associated with it."

FIFA turned down a demand for an expedited hearing on Prince Ali's request, the lawyers said. "This behavior bears no rationale other than

denying any right to a fair and transparent voting process," the statement said. "As a consequence, we are now seeking provisional measures before CAS to suspend the coming election."

Ali is one of five candidates in the race, along with Sheikh Salman of Bahrain, UEFA general secretary Gianni Infantino, South Africa's Tokyo Sexwale and former FIFA executive Jerome Champagne of France. AP

opinion

Macau Matters

Richard Whitfield



CARING FOR THE ELDERLY - II

My last article (Feb 3) pointed out the growing global problem of support for the elderly and identified some inadequacies in the related healthcare and social services in Macau. I pointed out that we can afford to do much better and that we should demand much better from our government.

However, I did not have space to consider housing issues for the elderly, which I will do here.

Historically, in most parts of the world children have been responsible for looking after their elders. But this approach is breaking down and responsibility for looking after the elderly is shifting to institutions and governments. Smaller families mean that there are fewer children to look after their elders. Moreover, the costs of looking after them are increasing and the duration of care is getting longer.

I live 10 hours by plane from my parents but I am lucky and have three siblings who live very close to my parents and visit them regularly. This situation will be rare in future generations so that governments and community institutions must take a leading role and is an area where the Macau government needs to take a stronger lead.

For example, while I have many other misgivings about Macau's approach to public housing, one major concern is a lack of healthcare and community service support for the elderly in these estates. The local council organises cleaning help and some meal delivery services for many parents, but I have never heard of this kind of support for the elderly in Macau. I am sure that it is, and will increasingly be, needed.

Another major concern that I have is nursing home oversight. Where I live some of the commercial spaces in the estate were converted into a nursing home some years ago. I have no problem with having a nursing home in the estate, but I do have great concerns about how it was done and the government oversight of these facilities. The sewerage and other infrastructure in the estate was designed for commercial use of the space and so is not adequate for a nursing home. But the conversion was permitted and major retrofitting works did not seem to be done, which casts serious questions over the competence of the government departments responsible for approving the change of use.

I have not been closely monitoring the situation but I have noticed that the nursing home residents seem to be left alone in the public spaces in the estate quite a bit and the nursing home does not seem to make any efforts to improve these public spaces. In fact they seem to use these spaces as work areas for hanging washing, etc. Thus, I seriously question the quality of life of the residents. I have seen no evidence and no public information to show that the government is monitoring nursing homes to ensure that they are well run.

Finally, I have seen staff from the nursing home wearing gloves and face masks dispose of waste in street-side rubbish bins which seems to be totally inappropriate. Control and safe disposal of medical waste is a serious public health issue and the Macau government does not seem to be doing its job in this area.

I fully agree that governments must take the lead to manage and control residential care and support for the elderly and they must have a general strategy and provide good oversight. This issue is only going to get more important in the future, so that the Macau government should be looking to devote more resources and improve the situation. It is what our elderly deserve.

THE BUZZ THE ATTORNEY: SETTLEMENT REACHED OVER PAINTING STOLEN BY NAZIS

An attorney for a French woman who sued the University of Oklahoma over a painting that the Nazis stole from her family says a settlement has been reached and that the university will return the painting to her.

New York attorney Pierre Ciric told The Associated Press yesterday that the settlement was signed by both parties regarding ownership of the painting "Shepherdess Bringing in

Sheep" by the impressionist master Camille Pissarro.

He says under the settlement, 100 percent of the painting's title will be transferred to his client, Leona Meyers. The agreement also calls for the painting to be displayed publicly at OU's Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art in Norman, Oklahoma, and a museum in France.

Pound plunges as Cameron makes pro-EU case in UK Parliament



Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron addresses Members of Parliament

Jill Lawless, London

A vote to leave the European Union would be "a great leap into the unknown" at a perilous time for Britain and the West, Prime Minister David Cameron said, as uncertainty over the U.K.'s future in the bloc sent the pound plunging on currency markets.

As the political battle for Britain's future entered high gear ahead of a June 23 referendum, Cameron told lawmakers that membership in the 28-nation EU boosted the country's economy and security.

He told the House of Commons that in the face of threats including Russia's muscle-flexing President Vladimir Putin and Is-

lamic State group attackers in the Middle East, "this is no time to divide the West."

"Leaving the EU may briefly make us feel more sovereign," he said, but argued the U.K. would be "stronger, safer and better off" within the EU.

Cameron said a deal he struck Friday with 27 other EU leaders gives Britain "special status," exempting the U.K. from ever-closer political bonds within the bloc and protecting the rights of the pound against the euro currency used by 19 EU countries.

But Cameron's Conservative Party is deeply split on the issue, with as many as half its 330 legislators — and at least six of the 23 Cabinet ministers — in favor of leaving the EU.

In a sign of the uncertainty stirred up by the EU vote, the pound dropped to a seven-year low of USD1.4058 before rebounding slightly, and also sagged 0.5 percent against the euro. Bookmakers shortened the odds on a vote to leave — though betting markets still favor a "remain" victory.

UBS Wealth Management said it put the probability of a British EU exit — known as "Brexit" — at 30 percent.

Simon Smith, chief economist at FxPro, said the next four months "won't be a fun time" for the pound, which has weakened in recent months.

"It's more the uncertainty that will weigh on the currency, rather than investors taking a view on the outcome and the implications for the economy, which are hard to argue either way," he said.

Many big businesses have warned that leaving the EU — with its open internal market of 500 million people — would hammer the British economy. But London Mayor Boris Johnson, a high-profile supporter of an "out" vote, said fears of economic catastrophe were "wildly exaggerated." AP

THE DECISIVE MOMENT



Queen's line. Britain's Queen Elizabeth II formally unveils the new Crossrail roundel sign for the "Elizabeth Line" which will open for passengers from December 2018. The Queen visited the site of the new Crossrail Bond street station in central London which is still under construction.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	30-50 Good
High Density Residential Area	25-45 Good
Ambient	35-55 Moderate

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS

INDIA Engineers work to restore New Delhi's full water supply after protesters damaged a key canal in a neighboring state and disrupted supplies over the weekend, highlighting the extreme water vulnerability faced by the capital's 18 million residents.



INDIA Thousands of students and teachers protest in New Delhi over the death of a student who faced caste discrimination and the arrest of a student leader on sedition charges.

SINGAPORE deports four Indonesians it says were on their way to Syria to join the Islamic State group. The Straits Times newspaper reported that one of them was a 15-year-old boy who was detained Sunday while attempting to enter Singapore from Johor in Malaysia.



JAPAN More than 160 passengers and crew slide down emergency chutes in swirling snow after engine smoke forced a Japan Airlines domestic flight to abort takeoff and smoke entered the cabin, Japanese media report.

USA Florida Sen. Marco Rubio amassed increasing support in his effort to establish himself as the main challenger to front-runner Donald Trump as Republican presidential candidates criss-crossed Nevada on the final day of campaigning ahead of the Western state's caucuses. A crucial point in the Nevada caucuses is the Adelson's endorsement. More on p15



USA Country singer Sonny James, who recorded romantic ballads like "Young Love" and turned pop songs into country hits, has died. He was 87. James, whose given name was James Loden, died yesterday in a Nashville hospice facility.

UK London's Royal Free Hospital has admitted a Scottish nurse who has already recovered from Ebola twice before for another "late complication" from her last infection with the lethal virus.