

FOURTH QUARTER RETAIL SALES DOWN



P3

BUILDING A 'MORE AUTHENTIC' PERSONAL BRAND



The topic of "personal branding" was the theme of yesterday's France Macau Business Association breakfast meeting

P5 MDT REPORT

'LAWMAKERS NOT UP TO THE TASK'



Political commentator Eric Sautedé assesses the government's performance over the past year

P6 INTERVIEW

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS



FIJI A 10-month old baby is among those missing and presumed dead in the cyclone after the boy's parents told a local television station they lost hold of him amid ferocious winds and floodwaters that rose to their necks. The death toll from Cyclone Winston rose to 42.

More on p13

CAMBODIA Meet the Hero Rats: intelligent, surprisingly adorable creatures with some of the most sensitive noses in the animal kingdom. They've successfully cleared minefields in Mozambique and Angola, and this month began doing the same in Cambodia. More on p12

INDIA Amnesty International has criticized Indian authorities for contributing to a climate of growing intolerance for dissent by carrying out or supporting a series of arbitrary arrests, caste-based discrimination, extrajudicial executions and attacks on freedom of expression.



JAPAN Honda's president is sticking to its stance that the Japanese automaker plans no independent financial bailout for supplier Takata, which is embroiled in a massive recall crisis over air-bag inflators that may explode.

More on backpage

HONG KONG

Tsang says political turmoil hurts economy

P11



Challenges faced by local media debated at the University of Macau

P3 MDT REPORT

CAM FORECASTS

Airport to stay more convenient than HKZMB

THE chairman of the executive committee of the Macau International Airport Company Ltd. (CAM), Dr Deng Jun, led a delegation to pay a visit to the Civil Aviation Authority of Macau (AACM), where they discussed with Simon Chan, president of AACM, how to enhance cooperation between the two organizations.

According to a press statement from CAM, both parties exchanged ideas about the opportunities of MIA

regarding the current air traffic situation in the Pearl River Delta region, the launch of the Macau Light Rapid Transit (LRT) project and the completion of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge (HKZMB).

The parties agreed that the additional traffic permitted by the completion HKZMB would not outpace the growth trends seen in travellers and, with the completion of the LRT system connecting the Macau airport, it will remain

more convenient for nearby tourists and locals to travel via MIA.

They concluded that as the number of passengers using MIA is approaching the facility's maximum capacity, the bridge would help alleviate an undersupply of infrastructure until CAM's northern expansion of the terminal is completed.

A further southern expansion will be taking place at a later stage, the press statement added.



Lifestyle website to host charity wine event

LUXURY lifestyle website Ladybird of Leisure will host a charity wine tasting event on Saturday to raise funds for local animal charity, the Macau Association for Stray Dogs and Animal Welfare (MASDAW).

MASDAW, a non-profit animal welfare organization, rescues and provides homes for stray dogs and other animals in Macau. MASDAW spends over MOP500,000 annually on vet bills alone. Staffed by volunteers, the animal charity seeks to make Macau an animal-friendly city.

According to a press relea-



se, #MASDAWMACAU will be used as the social media hashtag to raise awareness

of both the event and the issue of animal welfare in Macau.

As part of the event, local artists, jewelry-makers, ceramic artists and photographers have donated pieces that will be up for auction. The silent auction started earlier this month and will continue until the evening of the event. Bids can be placed online through the Ladybird of Leisure website.

Volunteer performers from the Macau community will perform musical acts and other performances at the event alongside a raffle draw. A few of the

MASDAW dogs that are up for adoption will also be joining the event.

The charity winetasting event will be held at the Macau Design Centre on February 27 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. The entrance fee is MOP200, which includes the wine tasting. There will also be raffle tickets on sale for MOP25 each, with Ladybird of Leisure promising a free drink for every MOP100 spent. Tickets can be purchased at The Blissful Carrot, The Roadhouse and Macau Design Centre.

MASDAW and Ladybird of Leisure encourage the public to use #MASDAWMACAU on social media platforms to share their experiences with their own animals, interactions with MASDAW, and any animal welfare issue in Macau up to and beyond the date of the wine event. **Staff reporter**

Civil servant chief forced to retire

TENG Si Un, the former chief of the Urban Planning Department of the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau, has been forced into a mandatory retirement after being found guilty of counterfeiting documents to secure a pension, a notice published in the Official Gazette yesterday indicated.

Teng has been under investigation since 2010 after suspicions were raised over his involvement in the Ao Man Long corruption scandal. Disciplinary proceedings against Teng began shortly afterwards.

He has been found guilty of counterfeiting a statement in order to secure a retirement pension. According to TDM, he also allegedly approved a change of plans for a Taipa plot of land one day after being promoted to the head of the Urban Planning Department in 2004.

First 'UNWTO Depository Library' in town

THE Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT) Multimedia Library has recently become the first World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Depository Library in Macau.

Launched by UNWTO in 2003, the Depository Library program aims to foster access to research findings and reports which are published by UNWTO to a public audience.

Currently there are approximately 60

libraries in 30 countries and regions that have joined the program and are listed as depository libraries.

According to a press release issued yesterday by IFT, the library will receive all UNWTO's official English publications and will be accessible to the public to provide a broad range of complete tourism-related information to support research in tourism for Macau and neighboring regions.

IFT Multimedia Library also welcomes those affiliated with other higher education institutions to borrow books and publications with their Macau Academic Library Alliance Card. Practitioners within the tourism and hotel industries are eligible to apply for an Industry Library Membership in order to borrow resources from the Library, while scholars and researchers are welcome to use the resources on site through application.



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Challenges faced by local media debated at the UM

A mass media symposium was held yesterday at the University of Macau (UM), where various scholars and organization representatives discussed the development of local media.

Organized by Professor Hao Zhidong, Director of the Social Science Research Centre on Contemporary China, the discussion featured presentations from Agnes Lam of UM; Tam Chi Keung of Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST); Che Hio Ieong, editor of InmediaHK; José Carlos Matias, a member of the board of directors of the Portuguese and English Press Association of Macau; and Yip Ching Man, a PhD candidate at MUST.

Agnes Lam highlighted the current state of Macau's media and compared it to that of 10 years ago, using statistics collated from telephone interviews with around 1,000 respondents. "More than 90 percent of people in Macau [respondents in the survey] read at least one Hong Kong newspaper," she said.

Lam also revealed insights into the local readership of MSAR media through stratified groupings of Macau's population. According to her research, online readership has surpassed print circulation locally. All of the respondents under the age of 29 said that they read at least some online news.

Lam added that Apple Daily is the most popular newspaper among readers under the age of 29. Those who are



Hao Zhidong



José Carlos Matias

more educated, she said, are more likely to obtain their news from this source. Conversely, Macao Daily is more widely read among locals over the age of 50.

MUST's Tam discussed the image of Macau perpetuated in Hong Kong news media and film, referring to the theory of "media imperialism." He said that Hong Kong decides, and often romanticizes, Macau's image by almost exclusively portraying local gaming culture.

José Carlos Matias discussed the challenges that Portuguese and English language media face in Macau, including the reliance of some on government subsidies and advertising revenue from casino operators, as well as staffing challenges. "The government provides subsidies to Chinese and Portuguese newspapers if

they meet certain criteria," he explained.

Asked whether non-Chinese media has any effect on the Chinese community, Matias replied that Portuguese and English media in Macau are probably more pervasive than first imagined. He explained that non-Chinese media is often translated for government officials and policymakers, and read by senior executives – many of whom are English-speaking expatriates – in the private sector.

A presentation by Dr Che explored media bias through a case study of Macao Daily's coverage of animal rights activism. She shed light on some tactics allegedly employed by the newspaper, including the higher priority placed on government sources and the purposeful manner in which information is

laid out. Che's presentation led to a brief but passionate discussion of censorship and self-censorship in local media.

Professor Hao asked the panel whether they thought the local media's reference to Taiwan's president as "Taiwan's leader" implied the adoption of censorship, despite the relative press freedom in both Macau and Hong Kong. The panel exchanged various views but failed to reach a consensus.

The presentations concluded with research by PhD candidate and Hong Kong reporter, Yip Ching Man, who shared her research on Macau's traditional media. She posited that Portuguese newspapers were in decline, though this was met with some disagreement from other panel members and symposium attendees. **Staff Reporter**

Chui 'upholds freedom of the press and freedom of publishing'



The Chief Executive stated yesterday that the media plays a significant role in connecting the government and the public by providing information on policies and social issues. He added that the contributions of the media toward the development of Macau are widely recognized by the community. Mr Chui made the comments during yesterday's lunch which he hosted for representatives of local news outlets that report in Portuguese and English. "The government strictly upholds the freedom of the press and freedom of publishing," he declared.

Chan continues as gov't spokesperson



Victor Chan's position as government spokesperson has been renewed. According to a notice published in the Official Gazette yesterday, Mr Chan will continue his role as the spokesperson until February 22, 2018. U Man Fong will also continue as the deputy spokesperson. Victor Chan also holds the position of Government Information Bureau (GCS) director.

UM scholar receives APA award



The American Psychological Association (APA) has awarded Dr Brian Hall, of the Department of Psychology of the University of Macau (UM), the Theodore Blau Early Career Award for Outstanding Contribution to Professional Clinical Psychology. APA's Society of Clinical Psychology gives out the award to honor clinical psychologists for their professional accomplishments within the first ten years of receiving their PhDs. According to a UM press release, Hall is currently involved in a collaborative multidisciplinary research project designed to improve the health of people in the Greater China region.

RETAIL

Q4 sales down 11 percent year-on-year

THE value of retail sales for the fourth quarter of 2015 amounted to MOP15.59 billion, down by 10.5 percent year-on-year and up by 6.8 percent compared with the revised figure of MOP14.59 billion in the third quarter.

According to information released by the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) yesterday, retail sales of clocks and jewelry (MOP3.37 billion) accounted for 21.6 percent of the total, followed by department stores sales (14.4 percent), adults clothing (13 percent), leather goods (9.8 percent), motor vehicles (7.1 percent) and goods in

supermarkets (6.6 percent).

According to DSEC, the total value of retail sales for the whole year of 2015 amounted to MOP60.89 billion, down by 10.4 percent year-on-year.

Besides the quantitative data, DSEC also collected retailers' comments. About 60 percent of those interviewed stated that sales volume in the fourth quarter of 2015 decreased from the previous quarter.

In terms of retail prices, about 61.1 percent of those interviewed reported stable prices while 34.3 percent noted a decrease and 4.6 percent stated an increase. Moreover, about 68.8 percent

of the retailers expressed that stock levels remained stable compared with the fourth quarter of 2014, while 21.6 percent indicated that the stock level had decreased.

In regards to the business outlook for the first quarter of 2016, 48 percent of the retailers anticipate that sales volume will decrease over the fourth quarter of 2015, 39.4 percent expect sales volume to remain stable, while 12.6 percent predict an increase. Concurrently, 70.9 percent anticipate stable retail prices, 21.4 percent expect a decrease and 7.7 percent are predicting an increase.

HERITAGE

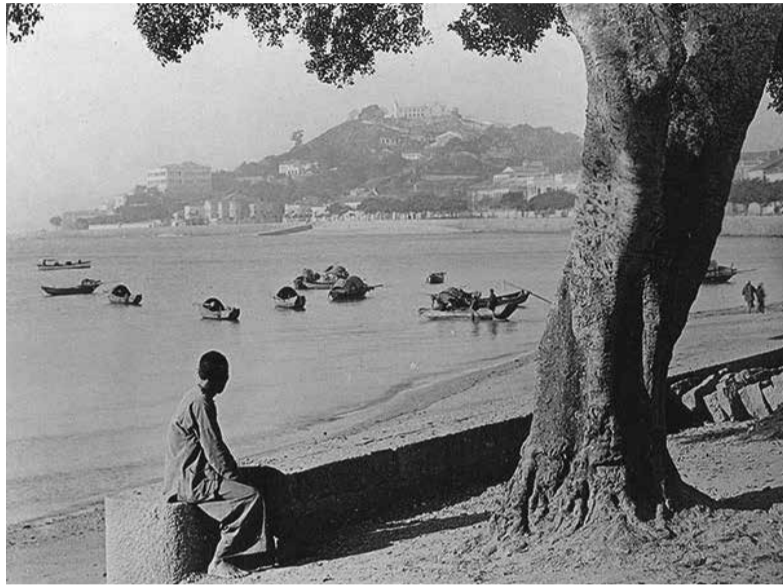
1930s photo depicts local buildings 'lifted from Lisbon'

THE Chinese embassy in Washington received a set of 24 black-and-white historical photographs of 1930s China last week, presented by a retired U.S. Foreign Service officer. The photos, published by Keystone View Company, show day-to-day street life and sites of historical importance in 1930s China, and include informative descriptions and predictions from the perspective of an unidentified American.

One photo in the collection, entitled "On the promenade of Macao," captures a tranquil scene from a by-gone era.

"The city occupies a peninsula three miles long and a mile wide with the harbor spread out in the shape of a crescent at the foot of a great hill," the photo's caption reads. "Old world buildings that look as though they have been lifted from the streets of Lisbon cover the hill and from the colorful and fragrant gardens rise red roofs and walls of every color."

The caption even pays tribute to Macau's early gaming ori-



"On the promenade of Macao," a scenic photo taken in the 1930s

gins, describing the peninsula as being "notorious as a gambling center" and "called the Monte Carlo of the East."

"Because of its night life it attracts also the tourists who come to observe and who will probably chance some of their smaller coins just so they can say they have wooed Dame Fortune and Macao," the caption

continues.

Richard Garrison, a former Foreign Service officer, has traveled to China four or five times, according to China Culture, and says he marvels at the changes the country has experienced. Garrison presented the deputy chief of mission of the Chinese embassy, Wu Xi, with the gift last week.

MUSIC

Renowned horn player plays local debut

THE Macau Orchestra will present a rendition of "Horn Concerto by Radovan," at the Cultural Center's Grand Auditorium on March 5 at 8 p.m.

The concert, which is part of the Shining Virtuosos Series, features the international horn player Radovan Vlatković who lends his name to the concert's title. It will be Radovan's Vlatković's debut performance in Macau.

"Horn Concerto by Radovan" will be conducted by the Music Director of the Macau Orchestra, Lü Jia, and features Richard Strauss's "Horn Concerto No. 2 in E-flat Major" played by Radovan's Vlatković. It is regarded as an exceptionally challenging piece to play, according to the IC.

The musician was Principal Horn of the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra and received the First Prize at the ARD International Competition in Munich. His recording of the Mozart concertos



Radovan Vlatković

was awarded the German Recording Critics' Prize and he received the Croatian Porin Award for his life's work in 2012.

The orchestra will also perform Ludwig Van Beethoven's famous "Symphony No.5 'Fate'."

Tickets for the concert are priced at MOP200, MOP150 and MOP100, and various discount plans are available.

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CAREERS

Personal branding to be 'more authentic'

THE France Macau Business Association (FMBA) held its first breakfast meeting of the year yesterday at the Sofitel Macau, together with the Founder and Director of Alchemy Consulting, Nidhi Kush Shah.



Nidhi Kush Shah speaks during yesterday's meeting

Kush Shah discussed the topic of "Personal Branding for Corporate Professionals" as a way to identify and build a unique place for each individual in the business world.

"A lot of us associate personal branding with values, our character, with what we stand for and that's correct because personal branding is a sum of all these components," she said.

During yesterday's seminar, she gave advice about confidence and body language, tone of voice, physical presence, active listening, and building connections with people.

Based on her experience of living in and traveling to di-

fferent countries, as well as working with people from diverse cultures, Kush Shah believes that it is vital to identify an individual's unique strengths and accomplishments to stand out from the rest and connect with one's clients, colleagues and leaders.

"If I had to say one thing to Macau professionals, I would say it doesn't matter where we are, personal branding is really important and we can do it in a way which is authentic to our culture," said the speaker to reporters on the sidelines of the event. "The

key to realize is that we can brand ourselves in a way that is more authentic."

When asked how the audience can apply the discussed factors, she declared: "The key to starting is to commit to one thing," adding that "it's a continuous process."

FMBA members and guests in attendance said they appreciated the talk, particularly the reminders about effective leadership.

"It's very straightforward and the message is simple. The message was about being yourself and being authentic,"

commented FMBA board member Kevin Thompson.

FMBA Chairman Rutger Verschuren believes that inviting more keynote speakers could open up similar training opportunities for FMBA leaders.

"I think it's a very interesting training exercise. There are things that I feel we could amplify in our character or appearance that will be good for us," he said.

"I think it's all about personal development. It's a natural development that we like to do; having these sorts of guest speakers who train our members with new things in life."

FMBA also shared updates on activities and events for the year at the meeting, such as a behind-the-scenes visit to the House of Dancing Water and a tour of the new Heng-qin area.

The association also presented a recap of last month's FMBA Charity Gala Dinner held at the MGM Macau ballroom, with the theme: "Shanghai: Le Paris de L'Orient." The Times reported earlier that the gala dinner raised a total of MOP68,300, which was used to support two charities: Architecture Sans Frontiers - Macau and Cradle of Hope. **Staff reporter**

Sporting to host open day



Sporting Clube de Macau will host its Sporting Open Day from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday at the Synthetic Hockey Field annex to Taipa Stadium Complex. Five of Sporting's professional players will attend the open

day and will monitor attendees across a range of specialized positions, including goalkeeping, defense, midfield and attack. The event aims to determine the level of interest from young players and their parents in participating in a football skills development clinic to be launched by Sporting Macau. Admission to the open day is free.

Artists Association re-elects president

The Macau Artists Association (MAA) held their second induction ceremony this week. The election of a new board of directors and supervisors resulted in Terence Chui continuing as head of the association. Chui, singer and co-founder of Chessman Macau, was appointed president last year. During his speech, Chui assured those gathered that MAA will persist in bringing local artists together while also maintaining focus on charity work and the promotion of local cultural creations. Local pop singers and dancers performed throughout the event.

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Q&A ÉRIC SAUTEDÉ
POLITICAL COMMENTATOR

Gov't assessment: 'There is a big change when it comes to communication'

ÉRIC Sautedé, a political commentator and Times columnist, assessed the government's performance over the past year. Sautedé, who was involved in a controversy relating to freedom of speech when he was sacked from the University of Saint Joseph in 2014 over alleged political motivations, stresses that the new government has brought with it a new style and comments on the recent events in Hong Kong. Here is an excerpt of what he told the Times:

Macau Daily Times - Can you give a brief assessment of the government's performance in 2015? In your opinion, what were the biggest achievements and biggest failures from last year?

ÉRIC Sautedé (ES) - The biggest achievement for me is that the new government has managed to re-establish some kind of political bond between government and society, meaning that the government is now perceived as governing and not only managing the affairs of the state. The image of the previous government was more one of caretakers, and being on the job far too long had a lot to do with it. Now, goals have been set with



Éric Sautedé

priorities, and with the notable exception of the secretary for administration and justice, we now associate each and every secretary with some kind of reformative plan: quality healthcare for Alexis Tam, public transportation and land grants for Raimundo do Rosário, street security for Wong Sio Chak, and support to the SMEs for Lionel Leong. Overall, there has been a big change when it comes to communication with the public, with a lot more reactivity and sometimes proactivity, leading almost to a sense

of competition between the secretaries as to who is going to be the most trigger-happy as far as reactivity is concerned when dealing with the public.

MDT - Do you think that lawmakers are paying close enough attention to the needs and demands of residents?

ES - Well, to me, unfortunately, most of the lawmakers are absolutely not up to the task of making this city a better place. The indirectly elected ones as well as the ones designated by the

chief executive, with the exception of one or two, are caricatures of vested interests and do bear a lot of responsibility in dragging down the legal framework of this city. Too many legislators are in this assembly just as a reward for being successful businessmen and heading a vast network of supposedly grassroots associations. Most of them have been on the job far too long. [...] The only ones who are a bit different are of course the ones directly elected, and out of those 14, a good 9 or 10 are doing a good job, although one can disagree with their choices, of course.

MDT - What should the government focus on this year?

ES - Starting to deliver on its promises made in early 2015 regarding healthcare, education, public transportation, housing, diversification, etc. Also, after the opening of communication, a new opening regarding solutions should be sought by bringing in new blood, and outsiders with new methods in terms of policy design.

MDT - What do you think about the Hong Kong riots that occurred last week? Are they more than what

they seem or just a protest?

ES - They are much more than just a protest, and clearly it is a symptom of the stiffening of the relationship between Beijing and Hong Kong which has led to a growing sense of estrangement regarding the mainland. Up until 2014, nobody in Hong Kong was really talking seriously about real autonomy for Hong Kong or even some form of independence. It is a movement of resistance that has mainly grown from the inability of the present Hong Kong government to understand its own society. At the end of the day, this is more of a resistance (to salvage an identity) movement than a real search

Most of the lawmakers are absolutely not up to the task of making this city a better place.

ÉRIC SAUTEDÉ

for independence. But the issue has changed, and now patriotism has taken a whole new meaning in Hong Kong. Attacks on the press and journalists, and then the kidnapping of booksellers have been triggering factors, translating into the Occupy and then Umbrella Movement, and then these so-called riots.

MDT - What is the state of residents' political apathy in Macau? Why is it more muted than in Hong Kong?

ES - I would not call that apathy. That it is a word that was used for Hong Kong up until 2002/2003, and look at the results today. It is a far more traditional society, with a civil society that is very much channeled through very richly and conservative-thinking associations. On top of that, only 40pct of the population is born in Macau with less than 20pct having gone on to tertiary education: in Hong Kong, a majority of the population was born there as early as the 1960s, so today some form of 'mainlandization' is perceived as a threat, and of course people are much more educated (formally), politically savvy and aware of their own individual power. **Staff reporter**

corporate bits

VENETIAN MACAO INCLUDED IN FORBES TRAVEL GUIDE LIST



Forbes Travel Guide has named The Venetian Macao a Four-Star Hotel in recognition of the hotel's service and facilities.

The Venetian Macao is one of the instantly recognizable properties on the Cotai Strip, attracting millions of visitors every year. The resort boasts

over 650 duty-free shops, the 15,000-seat Cotai Arena and the 1,800-seat luxury Venetian Theatre for guests' entertainment.

A press release stated that the Sands Resorts Cotai Strip Macao hotels have been awarded a total of 18 stars by the Forbes Travel Guide.

MGM RESORTS AMONG 'WORLD'S MOST ADMIRABLE' CORPORATIONS

MGM Resorts International has been named among Fortune's 2016 list of the "World's Most Admired Companies". The annual list, a leading report card on corporate reputations, is compiled on behalf of Fortune by the Korn Ferry Hay Group, a global management consulting firm.

"Our focus is delivering premium guest experiences through iconic resort environments, with employees who are passionate for excellence," said Jim Murren, chairman and CEO of MGM Resorts International.

"The recognition that we are a Fortune 'Most Admired Company' encourages us to endlessly strive for continuous in-



Jim Murren

novation and to be a leader in socially responsible behavior in all we do," added Murren.

UNIQLO COLLABORATES WITH ARTIST

Uniqlo has announced collaboration with the artist Kaws on their line of UT (Uniqlo T-shirts). Since its launch in 2003, UT has featured an array of pop culture graphics in similar collaborations with SPRZ NY and on the Shochiku Kabuki Series.

The new Kaws collection celebrates UT's fusion of fashion with pop culture.

Kaws is a New York-based artist who has his artwork displayed across well-known museums and galleries with "his subversive images winning him considerable notoriety," reads a company statement.

As part of LifeWear, the UT concept was introduced in 2003, and embodies a quest to enhance individual lifestyles



by delivering quality clothing that is functional in design and versatile to wear.

Guangdong plans to include new industries in Carbon Exchange

CHINA'S southern province of Guangdong is planning to expand the number of industries to be included in its carbon-trading exchange amid steps to integrate the regional trading program into planned national emissions exchange.

China Emissions Exchange, which oversees carbon trading in every part of the province except the city of Shenzhen, has finished looking at the greenhouse gas emissions of six industries including ceramics, civil aviation and papermaking ahead of possibly including the industries in the program, President Ye Jun said.

Next, economic-planning authorities at both the provincial and national levels will determine the number of new industries and key emitters to be added, he said in a phone interview yesterday. The exchange currently covers more than 180



AP PHOTO

companies in four industries including power, cement, steel and petrochemicals, Ye said.

The additions would be a way of preparing ahead of the national carbon-trading program which the government said will cover eight sectors. China wants to start the national pollution-trading system in 2017 to cut global-warming emissions.

The national system will be developed using a cap-and-trade rule, under which the biggest corporate polluters buy credits from those that don't pollute as much. The idea is that the emissions-trading system prompts companies to cut their emissions so they can sell their unused allocations.

The exchange is one of seven pilot projects initiated by China. China Beijing Environment Exchange, another pilot, expects to more than double the number of companies included in the city's market.

China Emissions Exchange is also planning to push carbon-trading cooperation in the Pan-Pearl River Delta region, including nine Chinese provinces along with Hong Kong and Macau, said Ye.

Bloomberg

WuXi said to tap banks for spinoff of USD1.5 billion biologics arm

WUXI PharmaTech (Cayman) Inc., China's biggest contract medical researcher, has picked banks for an initial public offering of its biologics unit that could value the business at about USD1.5 billion, people with know-

ledge of the matter said. WuXi PharmaTech hired Bank of America Corp. and Morgan Stanley to arrange a Hong Kong share sale for the unit, according to the people, who asked not to be identified because the information is private. The

offering could take place as soon as the second half of this year, the people said.

A listing of the biologics business would give investors access to one of the fastest-growing areas of the pharmaceutical industry. Biopharmaceuticals,

which are more complex to research and manufacture than other drugs, usually contain live ingredients and can address previously untreatable conditions with higher efficacy and fewer side effects.

WuXi PharmaTech, which

previously traded on the New York Stock Exchange, is also considering a domestic listing of the entire group some time after 2016, according to one of the people. Plans are still at an early stage, the person said. Aaron Shi, a

spokesman for WuXi, declined to comment.

The offerings would add to the \$57.5 billion of first-time share sales in greater China over the past 12 months, according to data compiled by Bloomberg.

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SCIENTISTS hired by the auto industry have determined that multiple factors — including moisture and high humidity — can cause some Takata air bags to inflate with too much force and hurl shrapnel at drivers and passengers.

The Independent Testing Coalition, which has been investigating the cause for the past year, announced its findings yesterday [Macau time].

Air bags made by Japan's Takata Corp. have caused at least 10 deaths and 139 injuries worldwide. The exact cause of the problem has eluded investigators for more than a decade, although more recent probes have focused on Takata's use of a mixture of ammonium nitrate and other chemicals to create a small explosion and inflate the air bags in a crash.

The rocket science company Orbital ATK, which was hired by the coalition, determined that three factors, working together, can cause the air bags to explode.

An ammonium nitrate compound that doesn't include a moisture-absorbing substance is more likely to explode after long-term exposure to heat and moisture, the company found. Takata does not

Scientists find cause of Takata air bag explosions



The Takata building in Auburn Hills, Michigan

include a moisture-absorbing substance. Orbital ATK also found that Takata's inflator assembly might allow moisture to seep in under very humid conditions.

The coalition said its findings

apply to around 23 million of the 28 million Takata air bag inflators that have been recalled by the U.S. government. All of those air bags use specially formulated ammonium nitrate without a drying agent.

David Kelly, a former acting administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the coalition's project manager, said that while humidity and ammonium nitrate have been discussed as factors, this is the first time scientists have determined all the factors that combine to cause the explosions. Kelly also said the design of the inflator is coming under more scrutiny than it has in the past.

Kelly said determining exactly what was causing the explosions was a critical step. Now, he said, investigators will focus on the performance of all of the inflators that are being used as replacement parts in ongoing recalls of Takata air bags. He said owners whose vehicles have been recalled should continue to get their air bags replaced while the investigation continues.

"If you don't have the root cause, you're just throwing stuff up on the wall," he said.

"You may never get to a situation where you can have an end game."

Takata has given multiple explanations for the problem, including quality control problems at manufacturing facilities and exposure of the air bags to high humidity.

Frustrated by the numerous explanations and the slow pace of the investigation, 10 of Takata's customers — Toyota, BMW, Fiat Chrysler, Ford, General Motors, Honda, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Nissan and Subaru — formed the Independent Testing Coalition and hired Orbital ATK in February of last year. Orbital makes rocket propulsion systems, small arms ammunition, warhead fuses and missile controls.

Kelly said he's not sure how long the next phase of the investigation will take. Scientists need to replicate the behavior of air bags over a period of several years, which will take time, he said. **AP**

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Beijing overtakes NYC as 'Billionaire Capital of the World'

MOVE over, New York City: Beijing is the new "Billionaire Capital of the World."

The Chinese capital has overtaken the Big Apple as home to the most billionaires — 100 to 95 — according to Hurun, a Shanghai firm that releases yearly rankings and research about the 1 percent.

The study, which comes months after reports suggested China now has more billionaires than the United States, highlights how China's elite are continuing to accrue vast wealth despite a wobbling stock market and tepid economy.

Beijing took the title from New York after minting 32 new billionaires last year, while New York gained four. Moscow came in third place, with 66 billionaires, while Hong Kong and Shanghai came in fourth and fifth with 64 and 50, respectively. **AP**

China's top phone maker Xiaomi unveils new Mi 5



CHINA'S leading smartphone maker, Xiaomi, has unveiled its new flagship device, the Mi 5, which it says is particularly fast and lightweight.

Xiaomi presented its newest phone yesterday on the sidelines of the Mobile World Congress trade show in Barcelona.

The Mi 5 comes in three versions. The Mi 5 Pro, with more memory and a ceramic body, will cost 2,699 yuan (USD354). The cheapest version will cost 1,999 yuan (\$262). They will go on sale in China on March 1.

Hugo Barra, Xiaomi's vice president of international operations, says the Mi 5 is "faster and lighter than you ever imagined."

Xiaomi (pronounced schow-MEE) led China in smartphone sales in 2015, according to research firm IDC.

It sells its phones in China, India and a few other countries. **AP**



California state Sen. Leland Yee

CHINATOWN CRIME

Sentencing set for ex-state senator in racketeering case

Sudhin Thanawala, San Francisco

FORMER California state senator Leland Yee is expected to be sentenced today after acknowledging in a plea deal that he accepted thousands of dollars in bribes and discussed helping an undercover FBI agent buy automatic weapons from the Philippines.

Yee's attorneys have called for no more than five years and three months behind bars, saying Yee has a history of public service and his wife is ill. Prosecutors recommended an eight-year sentence, saying that would reflect the extent of Yee's crimes and deter others from committing such crimes.

Senior District Court

Judge Charles Breyer also has the option of imposing a different prison term at the hearing.

Yee, 67, is a long-time politician who also served in the state Assembly and on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

He pleaded guilty in July to one count of conspiracy to engage in racketeering. The charge was filed as part of an organized crime investigation in San Francisco's Chinatown that led to charges against more than two dozen people.

The probe also snared Raymond "Shrimp Boy" Chow, a flamboyant leader of a Chinese fraternal organization — the Ghee Kung Tong.

Federal agents say one of Chow's associates was

Keith Jackson, a former San Francisco school board president and well-known political consultant who raised money for Yee's unsuccessful mayoral run in 2011 and his bid for secretary of state.

Yee was trying to pay off the debt from his mayoral campaign with the money he solicited, according to prosecutors.

Jackson led authorities to Yee and pleaded guilty to a racketeering charge. He also is expected to be sentenced today.

Yee has remained free while awaiting sentencing. He acknowledged accepting USD11,000 in exchange for setting up a meeting with another state senator, \$10,000 for recommending someone

for a grant, and \$6,800 for providing a certificate on California State Senate letterhead honoring the Ghee Kung Tong.

He also acknowledged that he discussed helping an undercover FBI agent buy automatic weapons from the Philippines that were intended to be brought to the U.S. for distribution.

Prosecutors say Chow and some other members of the fraternal group engaged in drug trafficking, money laundering and the sale of stolen cigarettes and top-shelf liquors. The case against Chow was largely the work of an undercover FBI agent who posed for years as a foul-mouthed East Coast businessman with mafia ties. **AP**

Kelvin Chan, Hong Kong

HONG KONG

Finance chief says political turmoil hurts economy

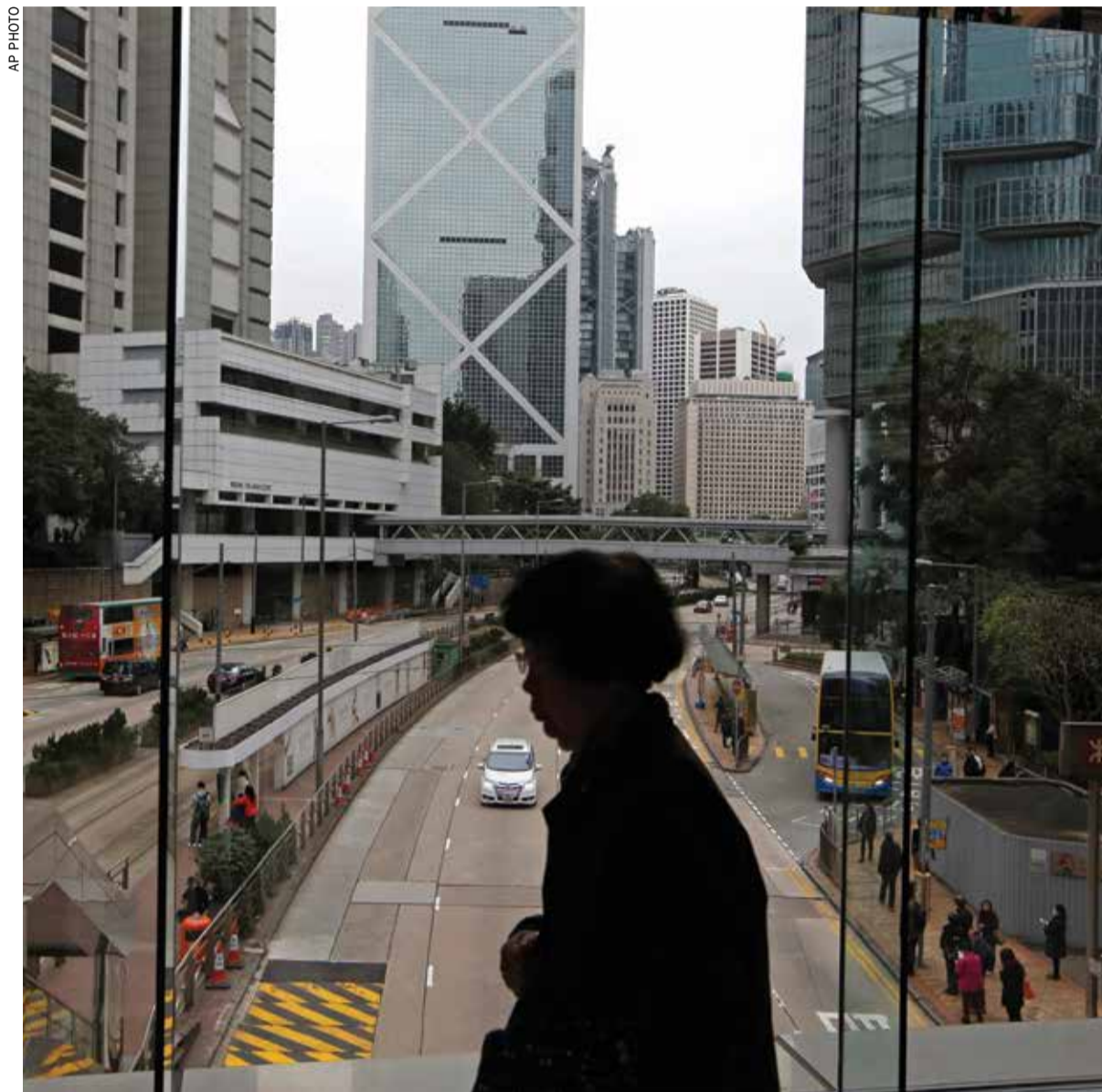
RISING political turmoil in Hong Kong could hurt economic growth in the freewheeling southern Chinese business hub, the city's finance chief said as he unveiled measures yesterday to counter the impact of global weakness.

Financial Secretary John Tsang's blunt comments in his annual budget speech highlight simmering tensions in Hong Kong, which has been increasingly polarized following the unsatisfactory resolution of pro-democracy street protests in late 2014.

"Acute social conflicts will add uncertainties to the already adverse economic environment" in Hong Kong.

Tsang said tensions would remain high as Hong Kong prepares for Legislative Council elections later this year and a by-election in four days, which will pit pro-democracy candidates against pro-Beijing supporters for seats in the former British colony's legislature.

"We anticipate that political disputes will only intensify over the coming months," he said. "Politics and economics are closely intertwined. Poli-



A woman walks on a bridge near the Central district of Hong Kong

ticers. There were 72 arrests from the confrontation with activists' angry over authorities' attempts to crack down on holiday food vendors selling fishballs and other local delicacies. Protesters viewed the clampdown as an assault on local culture and evidence of Beijing's tightening hold on the city.

"Many of us feel suffocated by and, indeed, helpless with the tiresome confrontations day in and day out," Tsang said. "Confrontations have not eased, and worse still, our society has become even more polarized. Political disputes are spreading both inside and outside the Council Chambers, setting off a spiral of intensifying struggle between rival factions."

He warned that if the problems are not resolved, there will be "greater chaos, and our future generations will grow up in the midst of hatred and malice."

Tsang said the city's economy expanded 2.4 percent last year, its fourth straight year of below-average growth, weighed down by a slowdown in mainland China, weak global conditions and rocky financial markets.

He forecast that Hong Kong's economy, a major hub for trade with China, would grow 1-2 percent in 2016, which would be the lowest rate since 2012, when it expanded 1.7 percent. **AP**

Confrontations have not eased, and worse still, our society has become even more polarized.

JOHN TSANG
HK FINANCIAL SECRETARY

tical volatility will unavoidably impact on our economy."

To bolster flagging growth, Tsang rolled out 38.8 billion

Hong Kong dollars (USD5 billion) in relief measures for businesses and tax cuts.

Tsang said he was "shocked"

by a riot during the Lunar New Year holiday earlier this month, which left 130 people hurt, including 90 police of-

Yuan falls a fourth day as fix cut after data suggests outflows

CHINA'S yuan fell for a fourth day as the central bank cut its daily fixing and a report suggested outflows persisted in January.

The People's Bank of China set its reference rate at the lowest level in almost three weeks after figures from the nation's foreign-exchange regulator released Tuesday afternoon showed banks net sold overseas currencies to their clients for a seventh straight month in January. The data indicate outflows were still significant but not as rapid as some had feared,

Goldman Sachs Group Inc. economists led by MK Tang in Hong Kong wrote in a note.

The yuan fell 0.1 percent to 6.5328 a dollar as of 4:44 p.m. in Shanghai, according to China Foreign Exchange Trade System prices. It dropped to 6.5332 earlier, the weakest level since Feb. 15, and has lost 0.24 percent in a four-day streak. The central bank cut the reference rate by 0.04 percent to 6.5302 following a 0.17 percent reduction on Tuesday.

"Sentiment hasn't fully recovered, and there's

still depreciation pressure in the long run considering China's fundamentals and capital outflows," said Tommy Xie, a Singapore-based economist at Oversea-Chinese Banking Corp. "The PBOC will likely keep the yuan stable against a basket, leading to greater two-way volatility of the currency against the dollar, before the G-20."

Officials from the world's biggest economies will meet in Shanghai tomorrow and Saturday to discuss the recent turmoil in China's markets and ways to bolster a safety

net for the global financial system, according to people familiar with the agenda for the talks.

Chinese banks sold a net 454.8 billion yuan (USD70 billion) of overseas currencies to their clients in January, according to the State Administration of Foreign Exchange. That compares with 568.3 billion yuan in December. The data show that stabilization attempts that Chinese authorities took last month, such as verbal defense of the exchange rate and and stricter capital controls, might have been effective, accor-



ding to the Goldman note. A Bloomberg replica of the CFETS RMB Index, which measures the yuan against 13 currencies,

fell for a second day. The offshore yuan declined 0.04 percent to 6.5363, data compiled by Bloomberg show. **AP**

CAMBODIA

Smart rats sniffing out vast mine fields



Cambodian team member So Malen plays with Cletus after he scampered across a field believed to be sown by mines in Trach

Denis D. Gray, Trach

IT'S been a busy morning for Cletus, Meynard, Victoria and others of their furry band. Tiny noses and long whiskers twitching, they've scurried and sniffed their way across 775 square meters of fields to eliminate a scourge that has killed thousands of Cambodians: land mines.

Meet the Hero Rats: intelligent, surprisingly adorable creatures with some of the most sensitive noses in the animal kingdom. Sent from Africa, where they successfully cleared minefields in Mozambique and Angola, they began the same task in northwestern Cambodia early this month and have already scored tangible results.

Two hectares have been declared mine-free around this village where more than 15 people have been killed or wounded by the explosives, forcing some to abandon their homes and rice fields and seek jobs elsewhere.

One villager, Khun Mao, says the rats have been sniffing for suspected mines in a rice field he had been afraid to cultivate for years. He says that while it is too soon to say whether the

rodents can remove every mine, "To me, these rats are wonderful."

"The villagers have started to get excited about farming their land again. You can see the light in their faces," says Paul McCarthy, Cambodia program manager for the Belgian nonprofit organization APOPO, or Anti-Personnel Land Mines Detection Product in English.

On a recent morning, the African giant pouched rats were working two suspected, taped-off minefields. Each rodent wore a harness connected to a rope strung out in a straight line between two handlers standing about 5 meters apart and outside the danger zone. The rodents then darted from one handler to the other, constantly sniffing the ground and only taking time out to scrub their bodies with tiny front paws or to answer nature's call. The handlers moved a step or two down the field to repeat the process, and a second rat was later sent over the same terrain to double check.

Two-year-old Victoria proved particularly swift — "very active," one team member calls her. She stars in APOPO's "adopt-a-

rat" fund-raising drive.

At the second field, Merry and Meynard were completing three hours of effort as a midday sun beat down on the parched earth. The duo had earlier nosed in on an explosive, halting just above it and scratching the ground — the learned response when a rodent detects TNT inside a land mine. A deminer with a detector followed and the mine was dug up and detonated.

Unlike standard mine detectors, the super-sniffers pick up only TNT and not other metal objects. And unlike wage-earning humans, the rats work for peanuts — and their other favorite, bananas.

Theap Bunthourn, operations coordinator for the 34-member team, cited other advantages of using rats: They are cheaper to acquire and train than mine-sniffing dogs and easier to transport. Rats, averaging one kilogram are also too light to detonate a pressure-activated mine, though dogs avoid that danger by staying a few feet away from the explosives they detect.

Each rat can clear an area of 200 square meters in 20 minutes, something a technician

with a mine detector would take 1 to 4 days to complete. Their sense of smell is so keen that in Africa they are also used to detect tuberculosis in human sputum samples at a rate much faster than the standard laboratory method.

Unlike dogs, the rats don't get attached to their handlers and thus can be rotated among many, Theap Bunthourn says. But McCarthy, an ex-British Army demolitions expert, recalls watching the student rats "following their trainers like puppies, stopping when they stopped."

Critics say that rats may offer a lower level of guarantee that an area is mine-free than man-and-machine techniques, that the animals cannot search well in thick vegetation and can only work for relatively short periods in the heat.

"I would never discard any asset that could prove useful, but I can't envision hordes of rats wiping out minefields in Cambodia," says Greg Crowther, who heads the U.K.-based Mines Advisory Group in South and Southeast Asia. One of half a dozen demining outfits operating in Cambodia, MAG employs Belgian shepherds and a variety of mechanical devices.

"I don't think they can add a whole lot to what dogs can do. But if they can speed up the pace of demining, great. Let's wait and see," Crowther says. He adds that there is plenty of work to go around: It will take up to 15 more years to clear the country's explosives.

McCarthy notes that there was skepticism about using dogs to detect landmines decades ago, "and look at them now."

■ Sent from Africa, where they cleared minefields in Mozambique and Angola, [the smart rats] began the same task in northwestern Cambodia early this month

"As we accumulate more data, the more we break down the skepticism," McCarthy says APOPO, the only organization using rats, doesn't have the total solution for mine-clearing but just "one fantastic tool in the tool box."

The group was founded in 1997 by Belgian Bart Weetjens, who bred rats, hamsters and other rodents as a boy and de-

veloped the idea of using rats to find mines while at university.

Even Mark Shukuru was skeptical when he joined APOPO in 2001 at the group's headquarters in Tanzania. "At first I thought: 'Rats finding mines? It's impossible.' But they proved they could do it," he says, noting that in Mozambique they cleared more than 13,000 mines without a single injury, to humans or rats.

Shukuru shepherded the Tanzanian-born rats to Cambodia, one of the world's most heavily landmined countries, with up to six million mines or pieces of unexploded ordnance still left in the ground from decades of war. The mines at Trach were laid in the 1980s by Khmer Rouge guerrillas fighting the Vietnamese army.

Countrywide, about 67,000 people have been killed or injured since 1979, and with more than 25,000 amputees Cambodia has highest ratio of mine amputees per capita in the world, according to de-mining organizations. A mine accident occurs every two and a half days on average.

Training the Cambodian rat contingent — eight males and six females — began at age 4 weeks by getting them accustomed to humans. This was followed by a rigorous, nine-month-long boot camp in Cambodia with APOPO, supported by the Cambodian Mine Action Center, one of a half-dozen demining outfits in the country.

The rats learned to associate a click with a food reward before being taught to respond to the scent of TNT. When they indicated TNT by scratching, a click was sounded and food followed. Eventually the click became unnecessary.

Before going into the field, the recruits are tested: One missed mine, and they don't graduate to Hero Rats, registered as the trademark HeroRATs.

Now, they are falling into an operational routine, usually working six days a week and being somewhat pampered when off-duty, sleeping indoors in roomy individual cages on wood shingles and kept healthy by regular exercise walking on a leash or on a running wheel. They are given multivitamins and weighed twice a week (a fat rat is a lethargic rat, one keeper says).

On weekends there's a special feast of apples, potatoes, watermelon and carrots. But what really drives their mine-sniffing are bananas and peanuts.

After the morning session, Victoria, Cletus and the others rested in portable cages near the mine fields while handlers offered them bananas, which they grabbed and greedily devoured. Grateful villagers gathered round the cages.

"It's not often you hear people say that they love rats," McCarthy says. **AP**

RESCUERS found the wreckage of a small plane carrying 23 people that crashed in bad weather yesterday into a mountain in central Nepal, police said. All those aboard, including two foreigners, were confirmed dead.

Police official Harihari Yogi said the wreckage of the plane, which was on a scheduled 18-minute flight, was still burning and all the bodies were charred. He said the aircraft appeared to have flown directly into the mountain.

The Twin Otter aircraft operated by domestic Tara airlines had taken off from Pokhara, a resort town 200 kilometers west of Kathmandu, and was heading north to Jomsom, the starting point for trekkers going into mountainous areas. Airport official Yogendra Kuwar said it lost contact shortly after takeoff.

Only small planes can fly the route, which goes between mountains.

The foreigners were from Hong Kong and Kuwait. All others on the plane were Nepali citizens, including two children.

Wreckage of missing plane found in Nepal; all 23 aboard dead

Ying Mak-siu, a female tourist from Hong Kong, was among the travellers who died on a Tara Air flight, according to a passenger manifest. Ying used a Hong Kong passport to book her flight, the South China Morning Post understands.

Helicopters searched the route for hours after the plane was reported missing, but were hampered by poor weather, Kuwar said. Searchers were finally able to locate the wreckage after residents of Rupshe, a small village, reported having heard a loud explosion.

Jomsom is popular among foreign tourists visiting the Mount Annapurna and Mustang region for trekking, and also among Hindu pilgrims visiting the Muktinath temple.

MDT/AP



Family members of a plane crash victims break down while they wait for the information about the accident in Pokhara Domestic Airport

FIJI

10-month-old baby among those presumed dead in cyclone

A 10-month-old baby is among those missing and presumed dead yesterday from the massive cyclone that hit Fiji after the boy's parents told a local television station they lost hold of him amid ferocious winds and floodwaters that rose to their necks.

The death toll from Cyclone Winston has risen to 42. Another four people are listed as missing, including the infant on Koro Island, where at least 10 people have died.

The cyclone tore through the Pacific Island chain over the weekend with winds that reached 285 kilometers per hour, making it the strongest storm in Fiji's recorded history.

The boy's father Alifereti Samu told Fiji One Television that they ran from the coastal home where they were sheltering and were expecting the winds but not the huge seas.

"When the winds began to rise, we then ran for safety," he said, adding they tried to keep their son above water.

"The water level was up to my neck," Samu said. "The house began to fall and wa-



Sanjogeeta Kiran (right) with her sister Sulva Kiran (second left) and her children Shivendera (left) and Raajeen, sit amid the debris of their home in RakiRaki

ves began to pound on us."

He said their son was their firstborn.

"We still haven't found him. We believe he has been taken out to sea," he told the network. "We are at peace with the thought that he has found eternal life."

Government spokesman Ewan Perrin confirmed the parents' account.

"Basically the baby was lost during the flooding," Perrin said. "One of the parents was unable to hold onto the child and it was washed away."

Perrin said authorities have a good grasp now on the extent of the destruction from Cyclone Winston after getting aerial images from the Royal New Zealand Air Force. He said they hope to begin

distributing 20 satellite phones soon to places still without communication links.

He said that within a few days of flooding, mosquitoes start to breed so authorities are urging people not to leave standing water anywhere in order to prevent an increase in illnesses such as dengue fever.

Fiji's Disaster Management Minister Inia Seruiratu said in a briefing that the government was working to restore electricity and running water to many areas. He said a lack of reliable communications had proved to be a serious challenge.

"Fiji has suffered a terrible blow, and this rebuilding process won't happen overnight," he said. AP

AUSTRALIA

School criticized for allowing cross-dressing

AN Australian high school has been criticized for allowing students to wear boy or girl uniforms regardless of gender.

The Newtown High School of Performing Arts in inner Sydney changed its uniform policy last week to allow all students to "wear any part of the available uniform options," the New South Wales state education department said in a statement yesterday.

Several parents and students hailed the change as a boon for transgender students, who previously needed parental approval and a psychologist's report to gain the school's permission to cross-dress.

The change was condemned as radical by the Australian Christian Lobby, an influential conservative advocacy group.

"It's a deeper problem than just boys choosing to wear a girl's skirt to school," ACL spokesman Wendy Francis said. "What they're trying to do in schools is make boys' and girls' gender disappear."

A number of federal government lawmakers this week backed the ACL's call to remove federal funding from a national program aimed at preventing bullying in schools of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students.

Almost 500 schools have signed up to the Safe Schools Coalition Australia, which runs the program that also advocates that schools allow students to cross-dress. It

is not known how many schools adopted that uniform policy, but the education department said Newtown High was not the only one in New South Wales, Australia's most populous state. Newtown High declined to comment.

Maya Saric, who has two children aged 15 and 13 at Newtown High, described the change as progressive and responsive to students' needs.

"All the parents I mentioned it to didn't bat an eyelid and thought it was perfectly reasonable," Saric said.

Prime Minister Malcom Turnbull bent to pressure from government lawmakers by agreeing Tuesday to review the continuation of 8 million Australian dollars (USD5.7 million) in federal funding for the Safe Schools program, which teaches students about gay and lesbian issues.

Turnbull was criticized by opposition lawmakers and the national teachers' union for launching the review.

Safe Schools Coalition Australia said it welcomed the opportunity to demonstrate to the federal government the positive impact of its program.

The group's website says it is a national coalition of organizations and schools working to create safe school environments for same-sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse students, staff and families. AP

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Steve Peoples & Nancy Benac,
Las Vegas

USA | ELECTIONS

Donald Trump notches 3rd straight win in Nevada caucuses

DONALD Trump decisively won Nevada's Republican caucuses for his third straight victory yesterday [Macau time] as his two main rivals, senators Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz, battled for second place in an increasingly urgent effort to slam the brakes on the Trump juggernaut.

The billionaire businessman now can claim victories in the West, the South and Northeast — a testament to his broad appeal among the mad-as-hell voters making their voices heard in the 2016 presidential race. His rivals are running out of time to stop him.

"We're winning, winning, winning the country," Trump declared. "Soon, the country is going to start winning, winning, winning."

Ticking off a list of upcoming primary states where he's leading in preference polls, Trump predicted he'll soon be able to claim the Republican presidential nomination. "It's going to be an amazing two months," he told a raucous crowd at a Las Vegas casino. "We might not even need the two months, folks, to be honest."

Entrance polls captured the sentiment propelling Trump's insurgent campaign: Six in 10 caucus goers said they were angry with the way the government is working, and Trump got about half of them.

After winning in New Hampshire, South Carolina and Nevada, Trump has built up momentum heading into March 1, or Super Tuesday, when Republicans hold



nominating contests in a dozen states.

In the Democratic race, front-runner Hillary Clinton was looking for a commanding victory over Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders in Saturday's South Carolina primary to give her a boost heading into Super Tuesday. Polls show the former secretary of state with a huge advantage among African-Americans which bodes well for her prospects in South Carolina and then the Southern states which vote on Super Tuesday where blacks make up a large segment of the Democratic primary electorate.

Nevada was a critical test for Rubio and Cruz, who are battling to emerge as the clear alternative to

Trump. Rubio was out to prove he can build on recent momentum, while Cruz was looking for a spark to help him recover from a particularly rocky stretch in his campaign.

Lagging far behind the two senators in the Nevada vote were Ohio Gov. John Kasich and retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson.

Rubio, already campaigning in Michigan as caucus results rolled in, was projecting confidence that he can consolidate the non-Trump voters who have been splintering among an assortment of Republican candidates, saying, "we have incredible room to grow." Rubio and Cruz have been attacking each other viciously in recent days, an indication they know Trump can be stopped only

if one of them is eliminated.

But after finishing third in Iowa, fifth in New Hampshire and second in South Carolina, Rubio needs a win soon to support the idea he can beat Trump. Republican establishment heavyweights have been flooding to Rubio in recent days, including several senators and governors, but that might not help win over an angry Republican base looking for a political outsider like Trump.

Cruz, a fiery conservative popular among voters on the Republican right, finished a disappointing third in South Carolina after spending much of the past two weeks denying charges of dishonest campaign tactics and defending his integrity. Another disappointing finish in Nevada would raise new questions about his viability heading into a crucial batch of Super Tuesday states on March 1.

In a more muted address, Cruz gave Trump his due for winning in Nevada and then pressed the argument that he's the only candidate who can stop the real estate mogul.

Harking back to own win in Iowa's leadoff caucuses, Cruz told supporters "the only campaign that has defeated Donald Trump is this campaign."

Then, looking for opportunities

that lie ahead in his home state of Texas and elsewhere, he added: "One week from today will be the most important night of this campaign: Super Tuesday."

The election calendar suggests that if Trump's rivals don't slow him by mid-March, they may not ever. Trump swept all of South Carolina's 50 delegates, giving him a total of 67 compared to Cruz and Rubio who have 11 and 10, respectively. There were 30 delegates at stake in Nevada, and a whopping 595 available one week later on Super Tuesday bonanza.

Nevada's caucusing played out in schools, community centers and places of worship across the state — a process that's been chaotic in the past.

The Republican field that included a dozen candidates a month ago has been reduced to five, with former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush the latest to drop out after a disappointing finish in South Carolina. Kasich and Carson could play spoilers as Trump, Cruz and Rubio, battle for delegates with an increasing sense of urgency.

The entrance poll survey was conducted for The Associated Press and the television networks by Edison Research as Republican voters arrived at 25 randomly selected caucus sites in Nevada. AP

MIGRANT CRISIS

Austria wants a full stop to people influx along Balkans

AUSTRIA wants not only to crimp the influx of migrants pouring into Europe but to fully stop it, its interior minister declared yesterday as she convened a meeting of ministers from Western Balkan nations. Greece — which was not invited — blasted the gathering as "hostile."

Minister Johanna Mikl-Leitner's comments reflect Austria's defiance of EU criticism and concern about the thousands of asylum-seekers that have pushed daily against the country's southern border.

Austria's immigration problems are minor, however, compared to fellow EU member Greece, which has seen more than 102,500 people cross the sea to its islands so far this year. More than one million people reached Europe last year —

more than 80 percent of them landing in Greece first.

Austria has recently capped the number of asylum-seekers it will accept daily at 80 refugees and limited the number of refugees it will let pass through the country — creating a bottleneck of refugees that is hurting nations further south, such as Greece.

Greece was highly critical of yesterday's meeting in Vienna, which was attended by the interior and foreign ministers of EU members Slovenia, Croatia and Bulgaria, as well officials from Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

"Our country's non-invitation to this meeting is perceived as a non-friendly act, as it creates the impression that some, in our absence, want to initiate decisions

that affect us directly," Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Kotzias said. "[This is] yet another extra-institutional initiative that violates the letter and the spirit of the treaties of the European Union and international law on refugees."

Athens objects to what it sees as Austrian-led attempts to leave it alone to handle the burden of those arriving in Greece by boat and setting off northwards through Macedonia, Serbia and Slovenia in search for a better life in Austria, Germany and other prosperous EU nations. The EU says Austrian caps on refugee numbers are illegal.

Germany — the economic powerhouse of the 28-nation EU — is sending conflicting signals on the subject. Its interior minister says his country won't put

up in the long term with other nations simply waving migrants through to Germany, and is objecting to the number that neighboring Austria is allowing to transit.

But German Chancellor Angela Merkel remains focused not on border controls but on Turkey, from where hundreds of thousands have crossed to Greece, as key to resolving Europe's immigration crisis.

Mikl-Leitner shrugged off the concerns from Greece and the EU. She told reporters Austria is still in favor of a common EU solution to the migrant problem but the EU needs short-term "national measures" in the interim to stanch the flow.

"It is important and necessary to stop the flow of migration along the Balkans,"



Austrian Interior Minister Johanna Mikl-Leitner and Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz (from left) speak to press while waiting for the participants of the western Balkans conference in Vienna

she told reporters. "We need measures that can be implemented together with the Balkan states."

Defending the need for the meeting, Austrian Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz told reporters the Greeks "are only interested in transporting the refugees as fast as possible to central Europe."

Along with Austria, countries on the migrant route to western Europe already have introduced stricter transit rules in the past weeks. Greece's migration minister said he expects the number of stranded immigrants in his country to reach "tens of thousands"

because of those moves.

Minister Ioannis Mouzalas said the Greek government was looking at additional sites to set up temporary transit camps by the end of the week.

"It's not something we can do in one or two days, but we are trying to keep people in humane conditions," he said.

Greece, he said, was applying diplomatic pressure on EU and NATO allies to limit unilateral actions by EU member states to restrict entry to asylum-seekers and to make recently deployed patrols by the military alliance in the Aegean Sea more effective. AP

what's ON



MA-BOA / LIS-CAU, DRAWING AND LITHOGRAPHY EXHIBITION
 TIME: 2pm-7pm (Closed on Sundays)
 UNTIL: March 19, 2016
 VENUE: G/F Macau Cultural Centre Building, Xian Xing Hai Avenue, Macau.
 Free Admission
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2875 3282

BEYOND 9AM TO 6PM FERNANDO WONG PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION
 TIME: 12pm -8pm (closed on public holidays)
 UNTIL: March 30, 2016
 VENUE: Rua de Abreu Nunes 14B
 Edf. San Pou R/C - A
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 6307 3797

PAINTINGS AND CALLIGRAPHY DONATED BY JAO TSUNG-I
 TIME: 10am-6pm Daily (No admission after 5:30 pm; Except on Mondays, open on public holidays)
 VENUE: Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida, No. 95 C-D, Macau
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2852 2523

MANUEL CARGALEIRO-PINTURA: 1954-2006
 TIME: 10am-7pm (Closed on Mondays)
 UNTIL: March 3, 2016
 VENUE: Casa Garden Orient Foundation
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2855 4691

CHILDREN'S PARADISE - CELIA LEI SOLO EXHIBITION
 TIME: 10:30am-6:30pm
 (Closed on Mondays and public holidays)
 UNTIL: March 6, 2016
 VENUE: Calçada da Igreja de S.Lázaro, 10, Macao
 ADMISSION: free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 4582

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

Offbeat

MEERKAT EXPERT CLEARED OF ASSAULT IN ZOO LOVE TRIANGLE SPAT

A former meerkat expert at London Zoo was cleared this week of assaulting a monkey handler in a love spat over a llama-keeper.

Two High Court judges said Tuesday that Caroline Westlake had not "recklessly" injured Kate Sanders.

In October a lower court found Westlake, 30, guilty of assaulting Sanders, who suffered a cut cheek from a wine-glass after the two women argued at a zoo Christmas party in 2014. Both had dated colleague Adam Davies.

Westlake had said she did not remember hitting her colleague with the glass. Westminster Magistrates' Court found she had struck Sanders "recklessly but not intentionally."

The High Court said that magistrates had applied the wrong legal test for recklessness and quashed the conviction.

Westlake was fired by the zoo after the incident. Her lawyer, Suzanne Kelly, said earlier this week that "Ms. Westlake's life has been destroyed by something that was no more than an unfortunate accident."

"Justice has now been served and Ms. Westlake would now appreciate the opportunity to put this matter behind her and rebuild her life," Kelly said.

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	Montra do Lilau
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:40	Comedy
22:10	Trail of Lies
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Champions League Highlights
23:45	350 Meters
00:35	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
01:10	RTPi Live

cinema

CINETEATRO

25 FEB - 02 MAR



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

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: ROAD CHIP
 ROOM 1
 7.30 pm
 Director: Walt Becker
 Starring: Jason Lee, Jessica Ahlberg, Josh Green
 Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)
 Duration: 92min



THE FINEST HOURS
 ROOM 2
 (2D) 2.30, 4.45, 9.30 pm
 (3D) 7.15 pm
 Director: Craig Gillespie
 Starring: Chris Pine, Casey Affleck, Ben Foster, Eric Bana
 Language: English (Cantonese)
 Duration: 117min

THE SECRET
 ROOM 3
 2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm
 Director: Barbara Wong ChunChun
 Starring: Leon Lai, Wang Luodan, JJ Lin
 Language: Mandarin (Cantonese/English)
 Duration: 107min

MACAU TOWER

04 FEB - 02 MAR

THE GOOD DINOSAUR
 2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm
 Director: Peter Sohn
 Language: English (Cantonese)
 Duration: 93min

this day in history



1956 KHRUSHCHEV LASHES OUT AT STALIN

The Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev, has denounced Joseph Stalin as a brutal despot.

In a sensational speech to the 20th Congress of the Communist Party Mr Khrushchev painted a graphic picture of a regime of "suspicion, fear, and terror" built up under the former dictator who died three years ago.

He said he wanted to break the "Stalin cult" that has held Soviet citizens in its thrall for 30 years.

The prime minister described the purges during the period of 1936-38.

He implied that one of Stalin's most trusted aides Kirov had been assassinated in 1934 at the leader's behest.

Stalin then initiated a series of trials of members of the politburo and had some executed for Kirov's murder, including Zinoviev, Kamenev and Rykov.

Stalin meted out humiliation and persecution to those officers and members of the Politburo who fell from favour, said Mr Khrushchev.

He revealed that in 1937 and 1938, 98 out of the 139 members of the Central Committee were shot on Stalin's orders.

The leader also criticised Stalin's foreign policy during World War II. As an ally of Adolf Hitler, Stalin refused to believe Germany would invade Russia - despite warnings from Winston Churchill and Sir Stafford Cripps, the British Ambassador in Moscow, amongst others.

When the attack was launched, Stalin ordered the Red Army not to retaliate saying the raid was merely "indiscipline" on the part of some of Hitler's units.

Mr Khrushchev also condemned Stalin's autobiography as an "odious book" in which Stalin refers to himself as "the workers' genius-leader" and a "shy and modest person".

He also accused Stalin of violent nationalism and anti-Semitism.

He revealed that in his last will and testament Lenin advised against the retention of Stalin as general secretary of the Communist Party.

He said the information he had just divulged should only be made known to the public by degrees.

"You understand, comrades, that we could not spread this information to the people at once," he said. "It could be done either suddenly or gradually, and I think it would be more correct to do it gradually."

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Mr Khrushchev's "secret speech" was not made public until 18 March 1956 and then only in Belgrade and Washington. It had a dramatic effect in Eastern Europe where "de-stalinisation" raised expectations of change, especially in Poland and Hungary. The text of the speech was not published in Russia until 1988, some 32 years later.

Lenin's last will and testament was published in The New York Times in 1926, though it was not made public in the Soviet Union until Khrushchev's announcement.

Party agitators (official propagandists) were sent to Georgia to disseminate revelations about Stalin, where opposition to the new information was anticipated.

In the wake of the denouncement, Mr Khrushchev's pictures were torn down in Georgia, Stalin's home state. Riots occurred for several days in Tbilisi as Georgians reacted angrily to the denunciation of their hero.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Communication is important today - but keep it short and sweet. At least one colleague or family member starts to derail the conversation with digressions and distractions, but you can politely keep them on track.

Taurus April 20-May 20 Focus on today as much as possible - long-term thinking is best put off for a few more days. You may have an emergent problem to deal with, or maybe you just need to learn more before making plans.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 You are in motion today, which is just how you want it. Even your down-time probably involves web surfing or other forms of active entertainment in which you seek out new opportunities.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 You need to deal with a few extra elements you hadn't counted on when handling big projects today - but you can do it! It may be time to call in that favor from a friend or colleague, though.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 You're torn between two equally appealing options - which is a pretty good problem to have! Unfortunately, one key player wants you to hurry up and make up your mind, so get on it.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You can't let your heart make decisions today - it's all about your head and the left-brain logic that sometimes gets you in trouble. Right now, that's your best bet for getting ahead, so go for it!

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 You need to try new things today - even if you'd rather poke around in the garden or just watch that same movie for the hundredth time. Fortunately, your positive mental energy is on the job.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 You can't stop thinking about some weird little detail that seems to be popping out from a spreadsheet or presentation. It's worth following up on, so make sure that you look into it carefully.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 You are thinking hard about things, but you're not really sure what you need to do next. See if you can get your people to offer up ideas, but don't expect much depth to come until time has passed.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Today is all about communication, and even your quiet wisdom is much in demand now. Make sure that you're available for those who need you, and then check out what needs to happen next to make it all work.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Something small but meaningful could spark a new romance today - if you're looking for one, that is! You may find that a stray comment about your favorite author or politician leads to something big.

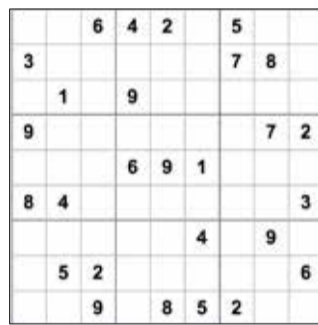
Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 Your creative mind is much more active today, so you may need to find a way to capture all the great ideas that are coming your way. Your friends may be amused, but you know one of these is a winner!

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

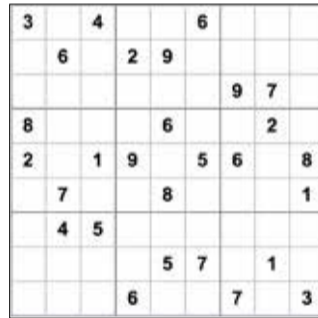
Easy



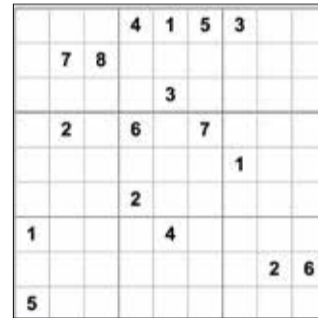
Easy+



Medium



Hard



WEATHER

Table with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION

CHINA

Table listing weather conditions for various Chinese cities like Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, etc.

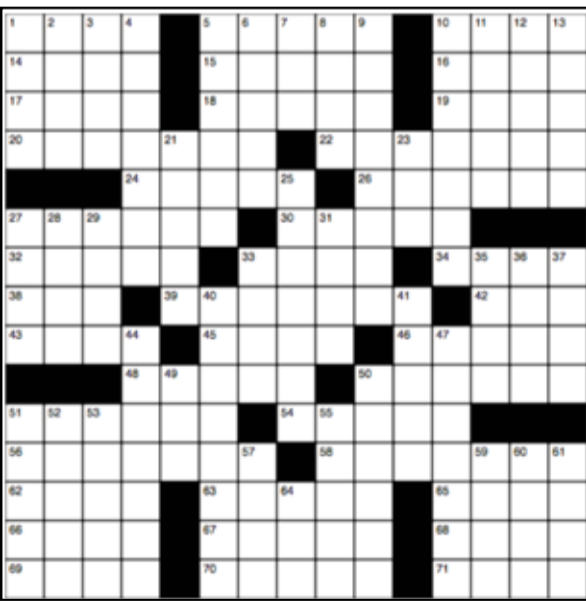
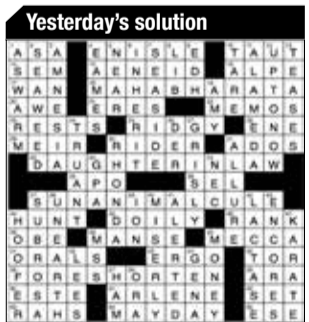
WORLD

Table listing weather conditions for various world cities like Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, etc.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Quickly, quickly; 5- Faint; 10- Attention getter; 14- Entr...; 15- Capital of Egypt; 16- ___-Rooter; 17- Freeway access; 18- Attorney...; 19- Zeno of ...; 20- Get ready; 22- Quadrilles; 24- Movie critic Roger; 26- "That ___ help"; 27- Womb; 30- Listened; 32- Low cards; 33- Bell-shaped flower; 34- Countess's husband; 38- Suffer; 39- Himalayan peak; 42- Arctic explorer John; 43- Georgetown player; 45- Naturalness; 46- Extent; 48- Rupture; 50- Break; 51- Help; 54- You can get a rise out of it; 56- Advisory body; 58- Engage in textual misprision; 62- Fruit-filled pie; 63- The Younger and The Elder; 65- Scottish Gaelic; 66- Affirm; 67- Having wings; 68- Freelancer's encl.; 69- Blood fluids; 70- Tied; 71- Grounded fleet;

DOWN: 1- Seniors' org.; 2- Surgery reminder; 3- Look ___, I'm Sandra Dee; 4- Spicy hot; 5- Frightens; 6- Faucet stuff; 7- Black gold; 8- Unwritten; 9- Currently; 10- Go before; 11- Mends a shoe; 12- Severe; 13- Raise a glass to; 21- Misuse; 23- Neither here ___ there; 25- Parched; 27- Bryce Canyon site; 28- Threesome; 29- Hard to hold; 31- Waiting for the Robert ___; 33- Meadowslands; 35- "Artaxerxes" composer; 36- Torn clothing; 37- Dregs; 40- Upright; 41- Lock of hair; 44- From within; 47- Girl on film; 49- Trojans' sch.; 50- Elevated; 51- Take the role of; 52- Italian white wine; 53- Less doubtful; 55- Act badly; 57- In ___ land; 59- Historical periods; 60- Type of D.A.; 61- Poor grades; 64- Tic-___-toe;



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The ball flies over the head of Manchester United's manager Louis van Gaal, center left, flanked by his assistant Ryan Giggs, center right, as it goes out of play during the English Premier League soccer match between Chelsea and Manchester United at Stamford Bridge stadium in London

Steve Douglas

FOOTBALL

LOUIS van Gaal was signing autographs after Manchester United's victory in the FA Cup on Monday when one voice from a group of mostly young fans wished the Dutchman the best of luck for the rest of the season.

"We need that," Van Gaal replied straight-faced, without looking up to the well-wisher. "Otherwise, I shall be sacked."

Barely a day goes by without fevered discussion about Van Gaal's future at Old Trafford, and it could be on even more shaky ground if United is eliminated by little-known Danish club FC Midtjylland after the second leg of the Europa League's first knockout round today. United lost the first leg 2-1 in arguably the lowest point in Van Gaal's tenure.

Elimination would restrict the chances of United qualifying for next season's Champions League, with a place on offer for winning the Europa League. The only other route for United would be to finish in the Premier League's top four and the team is in fifth place, six points adrift of fourth.

Being in the Champions League is likely a minimum requirement for Van Gaal if he is to stay on for a third season at United.

Anthony Martial's away goal at Midtjylland, which won the Danish league title for the first time last season, has given United a good chance of advancing to the last 16. But an injury list currently containing 14 players, inclu-

Man United looks to avoid embarrassing Europa League exit

ding captain Wayne Rooney, is proving a problem for Van Gaal with United playing three games in six days this week.

Title contender Arsenal visits Old Trafford in the Premier League on Sunday, and Van Gaal risks leaving his team fatigued for that match if he fields a full-strength lineup today. He may, though, have little choice given the injury concerns.

In dominating the second half of the first leg, Midtjylland — founded in 1999, the year United won the Champions League-Premier League-FA Cup treble during its glory days under Alex Ferguson — showed it will be no pushover.

"Midtjylland are very well-organized, we have seen that in the away game," said Van Gaal, whose team was eliminated in the group stage of the Champions League. "But still everything is possible."

Here are some things to watch out for today:

TENSIONS IN MOSCOW

Lokomotiv Moscow's game against Fenerbahce could see unrest in the

stands because of the political tension between Russia and Turkey following the shooting down of a Russian jet by Turkey in November.

While there was no violence in the first leg in Istanbul, which Fenerbahce won 2-0, some Turkish fans were angered when Lokomotiv midfielder Dmitry Tarasov displayed a T-shirt featuring Russian President Vladimir Putin at the end of the game.

Russia's Interior Ministry, which controls the police, has appealed for Lokomotiv fans to remain calm during the game.

"We are counting on you being able to express not only respectful support for the players in their struggle against the opposition, but also to behave in a law-abiding and appropriate manner, and to properly represent a Russian club and your country," the ministry said in an address reported by the Interfax news agency.

STRONG SPAIN

Spanish clubs have a strong record in the Europa League and there's a good chance all four of this season's representati-

ves could make it through to the last 16.

Defending champion Sevilla travels to Molde protecting a 3-0 lead from the first leg, Valencia has a 6-0 lead over Rapid Vienna, Villarreal heads to Italy with a 1-0 lead against Napoli, and Athletic Bilbao is ahead 1-0 against Marseille.

TOTTENHAM'S PRIORITIES

Tottenham is even with Fiorentina heading into the second leg in London after a 1-1 draw, and it's likely some of the English club's fans won't be too upset if their team is knocked out.

Tottenham is a genuine challenger for the English league title for the first time in a generation, and exiting the Europa League would allow the team to focus purely on the domestic championship for the rest of the season. The path was further cleared over the weekend when Tottenham was eliminated from the FA Cup in the fifth round.

Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino rested some key players, like Harry Kane, for the first leg. **AP**

MOTORSPORT

F1 approves new qualifying for 2016, faster car for 2017



Formula One may have a new qualifying system for the upcoming season, with drivers being eliminated every few minutes. Motorsport governing body FIA says yesterday the proposal has been unanimously approved in a meeting between series stakeholders in Geneva on Tuesday. The new system will be evaluated for introduction at the first grand prix of the year in Australia on March 20. The F1 commission also approves "new measures designed to deliver a faster, more spectacular" F1 championship in 2017. FIA says new bodywork regulations have been adopted "to create more exciting cars" next season. The F1 commission confirms the intention of introducing "some form of cockpit protection" next season.

FOOTBALL

FIFA asks for details of victory speeches ahead of election



Gianni Infantino UEFA secretary general

FIFA asked presidential candidates to provide details of their intended victory speeches ahead of tomorrow's election in a bid to keep them on message while the governing body's tries to repair its scandal-tarnished image. The five contenders, who are to meet at a FIFA gathering, have also been provided with suggested answers to use in the post-vote news conference. FIFA's administration has brought in American lawyers and communications advisers while trying to preserve its victim status in U.S. criminal corruption investigations. But Gianni Infantino (pictured), one of the men in the running to succeed Sepp Blatter as president, said he will resist any attempts by FIFA to control what he says if victorious tomorrow.

FOOTBALL

Melbourne Victory top Shanghai 2-1 in Asian Champions

Sven-Goran Eriksson's big-spending Shanghai SIPG lost its opening match in the Asian Champions League yesterday, falling to Melbourne Victory 2-1. The Australian team scored the winner courtesy of a disputed penalty, converted by Besart Berisha with 20 minutes remaining in the Group G match. Kosta Barbarouses was fouled in the box, but Shanghai claimed contact was made outside the area. Melbourne took the first-half lead when Jai Ingham finished a quick counter-attack. Wu Lei made it 1-1 for Shanghai in the 52nd minute. Melbourne has never made it past the group stage in five previous Champions League appearances but moved into first place in the group after South Korean club Suwon Bluewings held Japanese team Gamba Osaka to a 0-0 draw. Australia's other representative in the tournament, Sydney FC, lost at Urawa Reds 2-0. Goals in each half from Yuki Muto and Shinzo Koroki gave the Japanese team three points in Group H.

opinion

Views on China

Christopher Balding, Bloomberg

CHINA'S CREDIT CONUNDRUM

China has two very good reasons to slow the gusher of cheap money that continues to flood its economy. The first, obviously, is to prevent the kind of financial implosion that's struck down similarly debt-burdened countries. The second is just as important: to clear out the deadwood in the world's second-largest economy.

For Chinese leaders, the need to prop up faltering GDP growth outweighs fears about a rapid buildup in debt. In January alone, banks made a record USD385 billion worth of new loans, more than 70 percent higher than the year before. Debt now tops 230 percent of GDP and could reach as high as 300 percent of GDP if current trends continue. Billionaire investor Bill Gross has joined the chorus of voices calling this trajectory "unsustainable." Even the Bank for International Settlements, a body not known for hyperbole, has warned that Chinese debt is reaching levels that typically trigger financial crises.

The recent surge in credit is merely an extension of policies put into place after the global financial crisis. To fend off a downturn, China launched a massive 2009 fiscal stimulus package focused on infrastructure and investment spending. Simultaneously, policymakers ordered banks to open the credit spigot. Since January 2009, total loans in China have grown 202 percent, for an annualized growth rate of 34 percent.

Local governments and businesses alike have been only too happy to partake in the largesse. The problem is that most of this money has gone into the least efficient, most saturated parts of the economy. Nomura estimates that 40 percent of bank loans to companies go to state-owned enterprises, although they account for barely 10 percent of China's output. The money is being used to prop up companies that probably shouldn't survive: One Chinese securities firm suggests 45 percent of new debt is being used to pay interest on old debt, like using a new credit card to pay off an old one.

Cheap money is also continuing to expand capacity in sectors that already have too much.

The government isn't blind to the dangers. Its 2016 economic plan lists "deleveraging" and capacity reduction as two major priorities for the year. The central bank has imposed limits on certain banks that had been a bit too liberal in their recent lending. But the fact remains that the state-owned giants drawing the bulk of new lending are also the most politically well-connected. Rather than shutting them down and throwing potentially millions of Chinese out of work, the government hopes to keep them afloat while they're merged and overhauled.

There's little reason to think this plan can succeed. No country with a similarly rapid rise in debt levels has escaped either a financial crisis, or like Japan, a prolonged slowdown. Continuing to lend at this pace will only increase the ranks of zombie companies, alive because of government life support. Slowing lending will inevitably mean lower GDP growth, more corporate bankruptcies and higher unemployment. But it will also reduce the buildup of risks that are otherwise certain to come due.

At the same time, Chinese leaders have an opportunity to speed along the transition to a more dynamic economy focused more on services and consumption than old-line manufacturing and investment. Instead of spending money bailing out dud companies, the government should be diverting resources to startups, small- and medium-sized companies and other private-sector businesses with greater growth potential. Money should be spent on retraining workers to find new jobs in these industries, rather than more highways and apartment buildings. Companies that can't survive without additional lending should be allowed to fail.

The longer China waits, the more intractable these problems will become and the fewer options will remain. By any financial metric, Chinese leaders are falling behind in their stated desire to speed up the process of deleveraging. If they don't speed up, the financial markets may well do the job for them – and a lot less pleasantly.

THE BUZZ UBER LAUNCHES MOTORCYCLE RIDE-HAILING SERVICE IN BANGKOK

Smartphone ride-hailing service Uber is placing a bet on motorcycles in the Thai capital, adding motorbike rides to its arsenal of on-demand services.

Uber announced yesterday the launching of its UberMOTO service in Bangkok as a pilot project for services specifically developed for

cities in emerging markets.

The new service is not original in concept or execution. Motorcycle taxis are a long-standing tradition in many Southeast Asian cities, becoming especially popular after the economic boom of the 1980s brought an onslaught of new cars jamming city streets.

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

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

JAPAN A controversial plan to move a U.S. Marine Corps base within Okinawa in southern Japan has been pushed back by two years, America's top military official in the Pacific said.

SINGAPORE's economy expanded moderately last year, amid concerns of a global slowdown and weak manufacturing data, official figures showed.

AUSTRALIA An Australian high school has created a national furor by allowing students to wear boy or girl uniforms regardless of gender. [More on p13](#)



AP PHOTO

USA Donald Trump decisively won Nevada's Republican caucuses as his main rivals, Rubio and Cruz, battled for second place in an increasingly urgent effort to slam the brakes on the Trump juggernaut. [More on p15](#)

USA The Obama administration has deported about 4 percent of the tens of thousands of unaccompanied child immigrants who have been caught crossing the border illegally in the last several years, a Homeland Security Department official told lawmakers yesterday.



AP PHOTO

EUROPE In flashpoints near borders on either side of Europe, authorities try to force back migrants desperate to begin new lives in more prosperous countries. In Greece, 1,250 Afghans are bused back to Athens after countries further up the migrant trail won't let them through. [More on p15](#)



AP PHOTO

SPAIN's Socialist party signed an agreement yesterday with liberal newcomer party Ciudadanos to support the Socialists' bid to form a government next week, but they are still way short of a majority.



AP PHOTO

A Filipino fan has her picture taken beside a poster of Madonna before they go inside the venue where she will be holding a concert in suburban Pasay

Madonna makes surprise visits to Manila children's shelters

POP star Madonna made surprise visits to two Manila shelters for orphans and street children, taking selfies with kids a day before the start of her two-night concert stint in the Philippine capital.

Pictures on her Instagram account showed her carrying a baby in one arm while holding hands with a girl guiding her on a tour of the Hospicio de San Jose orphanage this week. At the Bahay Tuluyan shelter for street kids, she sat on a tarpaulin mat with children.

"Chillin' with my Homies at the Bahay Tuluyan Foundation Inc. giving shelter to orphans street children trafficking/abuse victims in Manila!!" Madonna captioned a

selfie taken with three kids as they lay on the mat.

Officials at the shelter were told earlier that Madonna's dancers were going to visit, but they did not find out that Madonna herself was also coming until an hour before her arrival, said Catherine Scerri, the executive director of Bahay Tuluyan.

She said the children did a couple of dances before being joined by Madonna's dancers. Madonna asked the officials about the center's program and whether the children were going to school, but she spent most of her 45-minute visit with the kids, Scerri added.

Madonna plays again tonight at Manila's Mall of Asia

Arena, the latest stops on her "Rebel Heart" world tour.

An outspoken Philippine Roman Catholic leader, Archbishop Ramon Arguelles of Lipa, a diocese south of Manila, has discouraged Filipinos from attending the concerts.

"Why is the Catholic Philippines the favorite venue for blasphemy against God and the Holy Mother?" he said in a text message to reporters.

He stopped short of calling for a boycott, like he did in 2012 when Lady Gaga held a concert in Manila, but said in the text that "all God-loving people should avoid sin and occasions of sin."

The Philippines has more Catholics than any other Asian nation. **AP**

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

AP Photo/Bullit Marquez



Walls are posted with hundreds of portraits of victims under the 20-year-rule of the late Ferdinand Marcos during the opening of the "experiential museum" to coincide with the 30th commemoration of the "People Power Revolution" that ousted the Marcoses from power and helped install Corazon "Cory" Aquino to the presidency.