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SANDS CHINA SEES MACAU RECOVERY
Sands China's Wilfred Wong expects Macau's casino industry to halt a losing streak as early as this month

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LOCAL WATER CONSUMPTION RISES
Water consumption increased by 1.7 percent in 2015, Macao Water revealed yesterday

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

WORLD BRIEFS



UNITED NATIONS The U.S. and China have reached agreement on a U.N. resolution that would impose tougher sanctions on North Korea as punishment for its latest nuclear test and rocket launch, U.N. diplomats say. The council will likely discuss the draft today. *More on p11*

CHINA A Chinese media report says a detained Christian human rights lawyer has confessed to breaking the law by disturbing social order, endangering state security and engaging in unprofessional behavior. The report by a semi-official news website in the eastern city of Wenzhou accuses Zhang Kai of numerous instances of stirring up trouble, although it didn't appear that he has been formally charged.

USA-SOUTHEAST ASIA President Barack Obama signs a bill that includes a provision banning U.S. imports of fish caught by slaves in Southeast Asia, gold mined by children in Africa and garments sewn by abused women in Bangladesh. *More on p14*



NORTH KOREA is urging its people to hunker down and work harder with a "70-day campaign of loyalty" before a major meeting of its ruling Workers' Party in May.

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15 barred due to 'Republic of Taiwan' stickers

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30 years after Marcos' demise his son eyes vice presidency

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Who's got Oscar's bait?

EXTRA times

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INSIDE

Volleyball Grand Prix returns to Macau this June



Pun Weng Kun



A Volleyball Grand Prix in Macau

Renato Marques

The president of Macau Sports Development Board (ID), Mr Pun Weng Kun, confirmed that the FIVB Volleyball World Grand Prix would return to the territory this year after a year of absence. Pun was speaking on the sidelines of the press conference for the 2016 Macau International Dragon Boat Races.

According to information released by the Volleyball International Federation (FIVB), the event in Macau is set to happen between June 17 and 19, and will feature the na-

tional teams of China, Brazil, Serbia and Belgium, playing for the Pool D1 of Group 1.

The opening game will occur on June 17 at 4 p.m. when

Brazil will take on Serbia. The official opening ceremony is set to be staged ahead of the second game of the day (China vs Belgium) at 8 p.m.

The tournament will close on Sunday afternoon (June 19) following the game between China and Brazil. All the games will be played at

the Macau Forum.

The return of the Volleyball World Grand Prix is one of the major events planned for the year and is the fulfillment of one of the three major goals for the newly appointed president of the ID. Pun's two other goals are the organization of the Macau Grand Prix and the expansion of the public sports facilities' network.

"Besides our traditional sports activity, this year's Macau Grand Prix will be organized by the ID and we will do the best we can, hoping to reach great achievements," Pun said. "Regarding the public sports facilities' network, we are planning to expand it, adding more facilities into this network," he commented.

When questioned by the Times regarding which of the goals would represent a bigger challenge, the president of ID said: "I feel no pressure with any of them since I have a good team at the ID, and independently of which activity we have to work with I know that everyone will do the best to [make each a] success."

The fact that it will be the first time that ID organizes such a major event as the GP doesn't seem to intimidate Pun Weng Kun: "I trust our team in this matter."

Dragon boat races with 'cultural parade' boost

The 2016 edition of the Macau International Dragon Boat Races, set to take place on June 4, 5 and 9 at the Nam Van Lake Nautical Centre, will be slightly different this year. A "cultural parade" is planned to occur during the event to complement it.

The president of ID, Pun Weng Kun said on the sidelines of the press conference that the bureau is currently



"contacting the foreign teams [in order to get their confirmation]. We hope in the beginning of March we can confirm their names."

The dragon boat races organizing committee is led by the ID with the support of the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) and Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau (SAFP). Team registration will open on March 1.

CROWN Resorts' USD2 billion six-star hotel and casino, will experience an 18 month delay in its opening, pushing the launch of the Crown Sydney to 2021. This delayed construction raises the possibility of an increase in the construction budget.

The company, controlled and owned by billionaire James Packer, who is also a stakeholder in

GAMING

Crown Resorts suffers Sydney casino construction delay

Melco Crown Entertainment, seems to appear increasingly hamstrung by the planning process, which has seen developer Lend Lease submitting a broader proposal

for the larger Barangaroo South development, according to the Sydney Morning Herald. Packer has reportedly named the casino complex as his most important glo-

bal project.

"We can't lodge our approval until Lend Lease lodge their approval for Barangaroo South and all of that is complicated for a stand-

alone project. Progress is being made, but it is self-evident, compared to the original planning for opening, it is going to be running late," said Crown CEO Rowen

Craigie.

Although Craigie hopes he can expedite the construction schedule, he believes that the budget for Crown Sydney may increase nonetheless. "It is still four to five years away so we will be trying to catch up as much as possible," he said. "The broad answer [on costs] would be yes. Construction costs can rise, but your revenue projections rise as well."

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Sands China sees Macau recovery as Parisian opening looms

SANDS China Ltd.'s new chief, hired by billionaire Sheldon Adelson for his experience in government, expects Macau's casino industry to snap a losing streak as early as this month as the company prepares to open the USD2.7 billion Parisian Macao resort by September.

"It's scary that Macau's gross gaming revenue has seen declines for 20 months but I have confidence the drop could end in February," Wilfred Wong, who took over as president and chief operating officer in November and is the first Chinese in those roles at the company, said in an interview in Macau.

The world's biggest gambling hub saw a "satisfying perfor-

Some Macau officials already know my name, which makes my work much easier in the city.

WILFRED WONG



Wilfred Wong, president and COO of Sands China

mance" during the Lunar New Year period earlier this month, as more tourists from mainland China visited Macau, boosting both the mass market and VIP segments, Wong said this week.

Gambling revenue in Macau, the only place in China where casinos are legal, have been in a downward spiral since June 2014 when the country's slowing economy and campaigns against corruption led high-stakes VIP gamblers to avoid the city. Sands China, one of Macau's biggest operators with four casinos, has seen revenue slump for six quarters.

Sands China's results in 2016 are expected to be relatively flat compared with last year as the

casino industry starts to recover, Wong said, without specifying. Analysts expect the company's revenue this year to decline 2.5 percent from 2015, and for net income to drop 8.5 percent, according to estimates compiled by Bloomberg.

Echoing Wong on an expected recovery for Macau, Galaxy Entertainment Group Ltd. Deputy Chairman Francis Lui said yesterday the company "feels quite positive" about gambling revenue in February, after it reported fourth-quarter earnings that were better than analysts expected, boosted by its new casinos [see page 6].

Casino shares mostly closed lower yesterday, with Galaxy

dropping 2.3 percent and Sands China down 0.8 percent amid a broader sell-off in Hong Kong and China stock markets. The benchmark Hang Seng Index lost 1.6 percent.

Sands China's Parisian, which is targeted to start operations in September, could see some facilities such as a replica half the size of Eiffel Tower open beforehand, as part of a promotional push to draw tourists, according to Wong.

The 82-year-old Adelson had said in December he hoped to get government approval for 250 new gambling tables for the Parisian. Sands "won't complain" if it was allocated that amount, but hoped to be allowed to set up more tables, taking into account the project's investment into its non-gaming facilities, said Wong, a 15-year veteran of China's top lawmaking body the National People's Congress.

His job interview with Adelson took place over 30 minutes in Macau, Wong said, during which the pair discussed his background with the Chinese government and previous job as chief executive officer of Hong Kong-based Hsin Chong Construction Group Ltd., which has been involved in the construction of Sands China's casinos, Wong said.

Wong, who also served as a member of the Hong Kong Basic Law Consultative Committee, said he spent his first few months with Sands China calling on all the Macau government departments related to the casino industry.

"As Macau and Hong Kong work quite closely with each other, some Macau officials already know my name, which makes my work much easier in the city."

Bloomberg

Raymond Tam to head DSPA



Raymond Tam Vai Man, the former head of Civil and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM), has been appointed to head the Environmental Protection Bureau (DSPA). According to a statement issued yesterday by the Secretary for Transport and Public Works, a notice of the appointment will be published soon in the Official Gazette. Tam was put under trial and found not guilty after being accused of involvement in the irregular granting of cemetery grave plots.

MTEL to cover 70pct of the city's network

MTEL Telecommunication Company Ltd, recently announced that it expects to reach 70 percent of the network coverage of Macau by the end of 2016, MTEL, Journal Va Kio reported. The fixed line operator's chairman Michael Choi stated that the company has been transmitting data to some governmental departments, organizations and residential buildings.

MSAR promotes business tourism in Australia



The Macau Government Tourism Office (MGTO) participated this week in the Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo 2016 (AIME 2016) in Melbourne. According to a statement, MGTO is striving to diversify the scope of Macau tourism to cater to different tourist markets. Through various tourism incentive schemes, MGTO hopes to encourage more visitors, organizations and enterprises to choose Macau as a destination of choice for weddings and student tours, among other events.

Talk on film festivals

The Cinematheque Passion is hosting its second talk this year, titled "How film festivals are organized." Conducted by Hong Kong filmmaker Jonathan Hung, the event will be held tomorrow from 3 to 5 p.m.

Hung's 'ultra-luxury' hotel named 'The 13'

THE "ultra-luxury" Louis XIII hotel expected to open later this year has been named "The 13," according to a press statement from the Louis XIII Holdings. The company has also released the first images of the property's interiors.

"As the business and the brand have developed, we felt that the name 'The 13' most accurately reflected our Macau hotel's combination of Baroque inspiration and contemporary accents," said co-chairman Stephen Hung in a press release issued yesterday.

"Thirteen is my lucky number and the new name along with the new logo fit perfectly with my vision," he added. "There is a hint of tradition while also suggesting a chic and fun edginess."

The company has also announced its intention to change its corporate name to "The 13 Holdings Ltd," subject to approval by its shareholders and other relevant authorities.

Released photos of the hotel's interior reveal intricate design details that evoke the Baroque style. According to the company, almost every design detail in the hotel is bespoke, including sculptures, fabrics, wall coverings, furniture and tableware.

"Our brand represents a unique vision



"Diamond Series Furniture - Living Room"



"Royal Bedroom"

of a global luxury lifestyle based on strong bespoke traditions while embracing modern elements that enhance these traditions," said Stephen Hung. "We are proud that Macau will be establishing a new world standard for ultra-luxury hotels through its native brand, 'The 13'."

Of the 'all-villa' hotel's 200 rooms, most will be Villa du Comte suites, or the luxury property's entry-level accommodations. Each of these rooms will be approximately 2,000 square feet in gross floor area.

The Villa du Comte rooms will be split-level one-bedroom suites, the company says, furnished with a range of luxury features and facilities. Among these luxury features are a private elevator lobby, a roman bath, a stained glass and marble-decked

bathroom, and 24-hour butlers certified by the Guild of Professional English Butlers.

As reported by the Times in 2014, Stephen Hung purchased 30 Rolls-Royce Phantoms, with the luxury resort in mind. Each has subsequently been custom-designed by his team of designers. "The team and I put every ounce of creativity and passion we had into this project to ensure every detail was perfect," said Hung.

The Rolls-Royces are expected to be used for the complimentary transfer of hotel guests to and from Macau transportation hubs, the company said in a statement. The fleet of Phantoms will be the world's largest and will provide guests with "limousine service, with chauffeurs specially trained in England." **Staff reporter**

15 refused entry due to 'Republic of Taiwan' stickers

SINCE the beginning of the year the Macau police has denied entry to 15 Taiwanese citizens holding passports with "Republic of Taiwan" stickers attached, the China Post reported. The stickers are considered to be a politically controversial and sensitive matter.

A diplomatic source told Taiwanese media that a woman had been denied entry in Macau twice in a few days. She first arrived at the local airport this month to attend the wedding of a friend and consented to the removal of the offending stickers after being denied entry. However, authorities proceeded to deport her, despite her willingness to see the stickers removed. Two days after the incident, the woman, now carrying a passport without any stickers, was denied entry into Macau a second time. In response, police reportedly claimed that "since the authenticity of the pass-

port was still under a process of validation, the document holder cannot be allowed to enter Macau."

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China (Taiwan) advised members of the public not to change their passports. In 2014, three Taiwanese residents were reportedly denied entry to Singapore for holding passports with the aforementioned stickers.

According to the China Post, the ongoing campaign to alter passport covers with tailor-made Republic of Taiwan stickers (that replace the R.O.C. emblem on the document's cover) was launched by Taiwanese pro-independence groups.

"Chen Chih-hao, the initiator of the sticker campaign, previously said the idea was launched last year and more than 300,000 of the stickers have been produced so far," the Taiwanese newspaper reported.

Pai calls for revitalization of traditional Chinese opera



Pai Hsien-yung

WRITER Pai Hsien-yung, a recent recipient of the Doctor of Letters honoris causa degree from the University of Macau (UM), delivered a lecture titled 'My Kun Opera Journey' this week at the UM's new campus.

Pai Hsien-yung, son of China's former Kuomintang (KMT) General Bai Chongxi, discussed the decade of his life that he devoted to promoting Kun opera, a traditional form of Chinese opera. "I took our artists abroad to perform in the U.S., U.K. and many other countries, it is so heartwarming looking at the people who praise Kun opera," he said.

Pai discussed the need to revitalize Kun opera, which has declined in popularity since the ravages of the Cultural Revolution, and the challenges in accomplishing this task in an age where people crave constant change.

According to him, similarly to Beijing Opera, Kun opera has been fading away from Chinese memory. "British people see Shakespeare as the greatest man in their history. It is not the political figures that people remember over there, but the artist himself. I sincerely hope that one day, the Chinese traditional art could experience its own renaissance, like the

European one," he said.

The writer has always shown a particular enthusiasm for love stories. He recounted how he was touched when he first watched Peony Pavilion, a masterpiece of Kun opera.

The Chinese traditional performance promoter is one of the most famous literary gurus to have been granted an honorary title by UM. According to Wei Zhao, UM Rector, the school is showing a strong preference to make the Chinese language and literature key areas of study. "One of our most established, strong and academically influential disciplines is Chinese. A top university can't go without a strong program of language and literature studied in the mother tongue of that place, and in our case, Chinese."

Pai Hsien-yung, born in Guangxi, moved to Chongqing, to Nanjing and to Hong Kong before finally settling down in Taiwan. His novels focus on sophisticated narratives that introduce controversial and groundbreaking perspectives. They additionally portray images of the Chinese living in the U.S. His most famous fiction "Taipei People" ranks seventh in the 100 best Chinese language novels of the 20th century. **Staff reporter**

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STATISTICS

Number of overnight tourists growing

TOURIST arrivals totaled 2,445,876 in January 2016, down slightly by 0.8 percent year-on-year and down by 7.1 percent month-to-month.

According to information from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC), the number of overnight visitors has increased by 5.3 percent year-on-year to 1,145,902. Same-day visitors dropped by 5.6 percent leaving the total number at 1,299,974 over the duration of January. The average length of stay of visitors increased by 0.3 of a day year-on-year, to 1.2 days.

The number of visitors from mainland China decreased slightly by 0.7 percent year-on-year to 1,658,634 in January 2016. Within this statistic, overnight visitors (757,426) rose by 3.1 percent. Mainland visitors origina-

ted primarily from Guangdong Province (764,835), up by 8.2 percent, followed by Fujian Province (67,210) and Hunan Province (60,618). Mainland visitors travelling under the Individual Visit Scheme increased by 2.6 percent to 784,958, with 73.6 percent coming from Guangdong Province. Hong Kong visitors (448,193) decreased by 5.3 percent, and yet overnight visitors (207,271) rose by 9.3 percent. Visitors from the Republic of Korea (69,233) and Taiwan (85,939) increased by 0.6 percent and 11.6 percent respectively. Long-haul visitors from the United States (14,009) and the United Kingdom (4,003) increased by 3.5 percent and 4.5 percent year-on-year, while those from Australia (9,425) declined by 6.6 percent.

BLOOMBERG



Local water consumption rises

THE supply demands of large-scale entertainment facilities and infrastructure construction projects has led to an increase in water consumption by 1.7 percent over the last year, stated Macao Water executive director, Kuan Sio Peng, at a media luncheon yesterday held in honor of the Chinese New Year (CNY).

During her speech at the luncheon, Kuan said that 2015 "was a year of significance for Macao Water," as it marked the 80th anniversary of the modernization of the region's local water supply.

It was also a significant year because the newly constructed MSR III Water Treatment Plant commenced operations in September. This has increased local water production from 330,000 cubic meters per day to a total capacity of 390,000 per day.

"[This] is sufficient to cope with the development needs [of Macau] for the next five to 10 years," Kuan said, especially as a fourth water treatment plant is scheduled to commence construction this year.

The fourth plant will be based in Seac Pai Van to secure the supply of water to Taipa and Coloane, in conjunction with a fourth raw-water pipe co-constructed by Macau and Guangdong authorities.

According to an agreement signed between the two local authorities in November, the Macau government will pick up the estimated RMB528 million tab for the project, while Zhuhai authorities will oversee its construction and future maintenance.

"We are endeavoring to commence the construction of pha-



Kuan Sio Peng

se one by the end of this year and aim to put it into operation in 2019," said Kuan. "By then, there will be raw-water pipes connecting [the] mainland and Macau, which stabilizes local water supply services and lays a solid foundation for the future development of Macau."

The executive director also said that last year's water fee

adjustment has "effectively eased the pressure on our operation," despite Macau's slowdown in economic growth. In 2015 the government agreed to increase the subsidy to Macao Water by 4.28 percent to MOP5.12 per cubic meter of water in order to compensate for inflationary changes in the cost of supplying water. **Staff reporter**

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GAMING

Galaxy earnings decline less than expected on new casinos

Daniela Wei

GALAXY Entertainment Group Ltd.'s fourth-quarter earnings fell 7 percent from a year earlier, less than the decline analysts expected, as the opening of new Macau resorts last year boosted its non-gambling sales and casino market share.

Adjusted earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization, or adjusted EBITDA, was HKD2.5 billion (USD322 million), compared with the HKD2.36 billion median estimate of five analysts surveyed by Bloomberg. That was also more than the HKD2.1 billion earned in the third quarter.

"Profit improvement for Galaxy can be sustained in 2016 because it has among the best non-gaming products in Macau, especially its hotel and retail offerings," CLSA Ltd. analyst Aaron Fischer said before the results. Galaxy has focused on improving the tourist-oriented Galaxy Macau Phase 2 and Broadway projects since they opened in May, he said.

Macau's gambling revenue plun-



Lui Che Woo, chairman and founder of GEG, center, waves as he stands for photographs with Francis Lui, deputy chairman, second right, and Michael Mecca, president, right, during a news conference in Hong Kong

ged a 20th straight month in January amid China's economic slowdown and crackdown on corruption, which led high-end VIP gamblers to avoid the world's largest casino hub. Still, revenue declines in the mass market gambling sector have eased, as operators shifted their focus to draw more tourists.

Galaxy shares have risen 6.5 percent this year through Wednesday, making it the only gainer among Macau casino stocks and the best performer in the Hang Seng Index.

New projects helped Galaxy boost

its share of mass market table games revenue to 19 percent in the fourth quarter, up from 16 percent in the second quarter, Deutsche Bank AG analyst Karen Tang wrote in a note dated Jan. 20.

Galaxy is "cautiously optimistic" that the Macau gaming market is stabilizing and "remains confident in the long term potential of China," it said in a statement yesterday. Its billionaire Chairman Lui Che Woo has said the company will see stable growth as it actively develops the non-gaming business.

Bloomberg

Green fair focuses on waste management

THE 2016 Macao International Environmental Co-operation Forum and Exhibition (MIECF) will be held at the Venetian Macao Resort Hotel from March 31 to April 2.

Themed "Green Economy - Opportunities for Waste Management," the event serves as a multilateral platform for exchanges on eco-friendly commerce and technology in the Pan-Pearl River Delta Region and international markets.

According to a statement by the organizers this week, the fair will feature various activities, seminars and presentations to strengthen commercial and technological exchanges on regional advances in environmental protection. This will promote cooperation and development in international environmental protection, publicize environmental protection concepts, and create business opportu-



nities in the environmental industry.

Last year, the MIECF Green Showcase took place in an area of around 16,900 square meters and attracted more than 9,600 visitors over three days.

More than 3,600 people from nine countries attended the forum, which featured talks by more than 50 environmental pioneers, leaders of multi-national environmental enterprises and regional policymakers.

The event will be hosted by the local government and coordinated by the Environmental Protection Bureau and the Macau Trade and Investment Promotion Institute.

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REAL ESTATE MATTERS

The Challenges Facing Macau

What is it going to take to restore confidence?

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Anyone living in this part of the world is familiar with the extraordinary pace of change that has become a trademark of Macau over the past ten years.

Macau residents (and by resident we mean 'anyone living in Macau') have seen an evolution that has been nothing short of spectacular, and of course it is mostly, if not completely, a product of the opening of the gaming licenses.

What lies ahead for Macau?

The new integrated resorts on the Cotai strip from Sands (The Parisian) and Wynn are due to open this year, whilst MGM and SJM are scheduled for some time in 2017.

Then there is the bridge linking Macau with Hong Kong and Guangdong, and something that we cant help feeling does not get as much attention as it should, the growth of the 'MICE' or convention business.

Sands alone will have 12,000+ rooms on the Cotai strip within 2016, and with critical mass achieved Macau has a golden opportunity to become the venue of choice for regional conventions, shows and exhibitions.

Overall, and despite the current slow down in gaming industry revenue, the long-term future for Macau looks positive. But Macau is facing some serious challenges, and these challenges will almost certainly affect property prices either directly or indirectly.

One of the most telling surveys recently was the exit poll of mainland Chinese tourists, asking thousands of visitors whether or not they will return to Macau. The result? Approximately 1 person in 12 or just 8 percent of those asked said they would return.

When 92 percent of your customers don't want to repeat the exercise, it does not take an economist to figure out that any business would be in trouble! Over the coming weeks we will look at some issues that Macau must address and ask what can be done. If Macau is going to prosper long-term and enjoy a healthy property market, hard questions have to be asked and hopefully answered.

It is worth bearing in mind that it's easy to be critical, especially in hindsight when every-

thing becomes 100 percent clear. Forecasting and solving issues proactively is far more difficult and goes mostly unnoticed since 'problems' are solved before they hit the radar of the general public.

SMALL BUSINESS GROWTH OR 'DIVERSIFICATION'

'Diversification' seems to be a difficult word to understand for a lot of people.

Is staging a sports event at a Casino 'diversification'? No, it most certainly is NOT. This is 'Vertical Integration', another economic term for adding a supply chain to an existing business. In this case it is the supply of customers into the hotels and casinos.

Companies use vertical integration in all walks of life and there is nothing wrong with it. But it is important to understand the difference. Diversification in Macau means creating services and products not directly dependent on or related to Casinos.

Make no mistake, diversification in Macau is almost impossible under the current circumstances. Why? A small business needs four things:

- 1. An entrepreneur to conceive, create and launch the business
2. Money to fund the business
3. A place to start the business
4. People to work in the business

Anyone who has ever tried to start a business knows how hard it is.

Want to start a restaurant in Macau? Well you may be confident that, as an award-winning chef, you stand a better chance than most. Now you have to find the money.

In other countries, go and talk with the bank. In Macau, the banks will not fund a new business. They already know what the outcome will be in 95 percent of the cases, so they don't lend money to new business.

But, money is arguably relatively easy to solve in Macau, and credit where it's due, the government do support small businesses financially.

Anyway, lets say that you find someone who has more money than sense, and likes your cooking. He agrees to put up some money.

Now the fun really starts. You need premises. Rents are very expensive, and landlords know that once you have spent a small fortune fitting out the place, they have you over a barrel. Every renewal the rent is going up. In business school across the world, a rule of thumb is that rent should be a maximum of 10 percent of your revenue. Good luck.

If you overcome this hurdle, you still have the most difficult challenge. You need people. Where are they going to come from? The 1.7 percent unemployed? No. What about some work permits? Sure, how many Macau ID holders do you already employ?

The energy of the entrepreneur should be on the business. In Macau, it is fighting bureaucracy.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

In no particular order;

1. Use public land to create a subsidized retail and commercial space to allow new business to launch and test for a finite period of time, two years for example. Business must move after the fixed period, and if it cant work in that period of time, there is no chance of it going further.

2. Spouse-dependent work permits. Macau has so few resources, why let those at its disposal go to waste? Secondary work permits for spouses would allow those people who are currently here going crazy, to work. Making the work permit on the primary permit will mean that the person cannot stay independently, but at least they can work whilst they are here.

3. Realize that poor service is a major reason for non-returning customers. When staff are not motivated to do a great job, the company and service levels both suffer. Over protection of jobs creates a dangerously indifferent workforce and service levels suffer. Instead, why not operate a dual tax and benefit system that heavily favours Macau ID holders and encourages employers to look for ID holders FIRST, but also makes it easier to employ work permit holders at a higher cost?

To be continued...

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China facing pressure to reassure on economy at G-20 meeting

Joe McDonald, Beijing

CHINA faces pressure to reassure nervous world markets about its economic and currency management at today's gathering in Shanghai of finance ministers and central bankers from the United States, Europe and other major nations.

Such meetings of the Group of 20 major rich and developing economies tend to yield no major policy changes. But with anxiety rising over lackluster global growth, investors are looking for reassurance from Beijing.

Chinese leaders want a bigger role in guiding global finance and trade but their reputation for economic competence has been battered by turmoil in their financial markets. Economists and other governments complain Beijing has fueled global market volatility by failing to communicate policy changes clearly.

A collapse in Chinese stock prices last year wiped out some USD5 trillion in paper wealth, and the country's main market index fell by an unusually large daily margin of 6.4 percent yesterday.

Beijing has allowed its yuan to decline against the dollar since August, sparking concern, despite repeated Chinese denials, that the currency will be weakened further to boost exports. That has driven an outflow of capital from China that spiked to a record \$135 billion in December.

In a report ahead of the Shanghai meeting, the IMF



A Chinese investor naps in front of electronic displays at a brokerage house in Beijing

urged G-20 leaders to support China's economic reforms but also called on Beijing to "ensure clear communication of their exchange rate policies."

Companies and investors want at least a statement that "makes it possible to reduce uncertainty" about Chinese industrial and currency policy, said Tim Condon, head of Asian research for investment bank ING.

"The global economic issue of the day is China's industrial restructuring and the consequences of the slow pace at which it is proceeding," Condon said.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew said in an interview broadcast Wednesday by Bloomberg Television that the meeting would likely produce "a more stable understanding of what the future may look

like," including greater clarity from Beijing about its plans.

However, Lew said he did not expect the discussions to produce specific plans of "what each country is going to do and how."

Other officials due to attend include U.S. Federal Reserve Chairwoman Janet Yellen; China's finance minister, Lou Jiwei, and its central bank governor, Zhou Xiaochuan, and

their counterparts from Europe, Japan, South Korea, India and South Africa.

The global economy is growing at its slowest rate in two years and private sector forecasters say the danger of a worldwide recession is rising.

"Global growth is at a highly precarious point," Citigroup economists Ebrahim Rahbari, Willem Buiter and Cesar Rojas said in a report yesterday.

"The longstanding fragilities in the world economy relate to the structural and cyclical slowdowns in China and its unsustainable exchange rate regime, the excessive level of debt across many countries and sectors and ongoing regional and geopolitical uncertainty."

At the Shanghai meeting, U.S. officials will urge G-20 countries to avoid altering "exchange rates for competitive purposes," a senior U.S. Treasury official told reporters in Washington.

Chinese officials meanwhile are trying to downplay attention on the yuan and their economic policies.

"The G-20 should not discuss a specific country's currency policy at its gathering," said a Finance Ministry official quoted in the state-run China Daily newspaper. The meeting should "only touch on principles, not specific national policies."

Japan's finance minister, Taro Aso, and European Union officials have expressed hope for "policy coordination" to reassure global markets. But they have yet to say what they might ask for at the Shanghai meeting. **AP**

corporate bits

SANDS CHINA VOLUNTEERS REACHED OUT TO ELDERLY



A group of China Care Ambassadors spent an afternoon recycling soaps and preparing gift packs for live-alone elderly on Tuesday, at an event co-organized with Clean the World and the Family Integrated Community Service Center of Seac Pai Van of the General

Union of Neighborhood Associations of Macao.

The Care Ambassadors began by receiving an introduction to the Clean the World recycling program and its partnership with Sands China and parent company Las Vegas Sands Corp. (LVS). Clean the World and LVS have recycled more than 50 tons of waste from LVS properties worldwide into more than 550,000 bars of soap since 2011, benefiting groups in need in Macao and around the world, states a press release.

In addition, the volunteers also prepared Chinese New Year gift packs for members of the center, many of whom are live-alone elderly.

'MONSTER HUNT' AT THE ASIAN FILM AWARDS



"Monster Hunt" has emerged as the highest-grossing Asian film of 2015 and will receive the AFA's award for Highest-Grossing Asian Film of the year at the 10th Asian Film Awards (AFA) at The Venetian Macao on March 17, according to a press release.

The film is also competing for awards in the "Best Visual Effects" and "Best Sound" categories in the coming awards ceremony. The 3D fantasy adventure film set in a world

of humans and monsters is a skillful blend of live action and animation.

Upon its release in July 2015, "Monster Hunt" became a huge commercial success, breaking numerous box office records, leading to an accumulated box office earning of USD382 million in China. It surpassed Hollywood blockbusters, such as "Furious 7" and "Transformers: Age of Extinction," to become the highest-grossing film in China of all time.

CAM HELD SPRING DINNER 2016

The Macau International Airport Co. Ltd. (CAM) held its 2016 Spring Dinner last week at Grand Hyatt to celebrate the Year of the Monkey. Chairman of the General Assembly Charles Lo Keng Chio and Chairman of the Board of Directors Ma lao Hang, expressed their

appreciation for the trust and support from shareholders. They also praised their staff's persistent effort to cooperate and adhere to the development strategy of CAM in 2015, "Growth-Oriented Innovation and Market Expansion," said a statement.



opinion

Editorial excerpts

THE NEW YORK TIMES ON CHINESE MEDIA RESTRICTIONS

The Chinese media have never had much freedom to pursue muckraking stories, or even to dutifully report the facts. Now, President Xi Jinping is going to extraordinary lengths to rein the press in even further.

Mr Xi recently visited the three main newsrooms in the country to convey in unmistakable terms that journalists are expected to behave like apparatchiks. That message, which predictably received fawning coverage, came a few days after the government announced it would further restrict foreign media, too.

Under rules Beijing says it will start enforcing next month, foreign companies will be barred from publishing online content — including text, videos, maps and games — in China without prior approval from the government. The regulations, which could affect major American companies including Amazon, Microsoft and Apple, are intended to “promote core socialist values.”

Those stifling steps will add to the information barriers Chinese people already face. Major sites, including Google, Facebook and Twitter, which hundreds of millions of people around the globe use, are already blocked in China. The Chinese government began blocking access to the English and Chinese websites of The New York Times in 2012, in retaliation for an article that exposed the hidden wealth of relatives of Wen Jiabao, who was then prime minister.

Mr Xi may feel pressure to restrict the worldview of his citizens at a time when the Chinese economy is under strain. An article on Monday in the country's official English-language newspaper, China Daily, said news organizations were “essential to political stability.”

“It is necessary for the media to restore people's trust in the party, especially as the economy has entered a new normal and suggestions that it is declining and dragging down the global economy have emerged,” the article said.

It is during trying times, of course, that societies benefit most from a press that is free to scrutinize questionable policies and expose ineffective leaders.

Mr Xi's new guidance is likely to make the official press even more docile than it traditionally has been. But the approach will be self-defeating for the government in the long run. In an increasingly interconnected world, it is harder to control the flow of information across borders and within countries. New mechanisms of Internet censorship are typically met with creative tools to bypass them. And each new effort to keep Chinese people ignorant about their government and the outside world will make them only more determined to learn.

The New York Times, Feb 24 (via AP)

SOUTH CHINA SEA

Beijing accuses US commander of using smears to seek funds

Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

CHINA'S Defense Ministry says the commander of U.S. forces in the Pacific smeared China while seeking additional defense funding from Congress, in the latest accusation in a war of words accompanying rising tensions in the South China Sea.

Ministry spokesman Col. Wu Qian yesterday strongly criticized Adm. Harry Harris Jr.'s testimony before Congress, in which Harris said China was militarizing the economically and strategically vital waterway and seeking “hegemony” in East Asia. China

adamantly denies such accusations and says Washington and its allies are responsible for raising tensions. “I have noted that according to media reports, Adm. Harris made his remarks while seeking additional defense budget funds from Congress,” Wu told reporters at a monthly news briefing. “We don't interfere in your seeking defense budget funds, but you can't carelessly smear China while asking for more money,” Wu said. In his testimony before the House of Representatives yesterday [Macau time], Harris commented on the Chinese armed forces' construction and extension of islands in the highly disputed South China Sea. China is also adding airstrips, harbors, radar stations

WU QIAN
DEFENSE MINISTRY SPOKESMAN



Adm. Harry Harris, Jr., US Navy Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, testifies on Capitol Hill in Washington

and other infrastructure and deploying surface-to-air missiles on some.

Harris described Chinese militarization as being “as certain as a traffic jam” in Washington, D.C. On Tuesday, he told senators that to believe otherwise, “you have to believe in a flat Earth.”

He has also dismissed as “tone deaf” a Chinese government official who compared China's deployment of defense facilities on land features in the South China Sea to what the U.S. does in undisputed Hawaii.

In all, China has reclaimed more than 1,200 hectares of land in the South China Sea as it looks to assert what it contends is its historical right to sovereignty over most of those waters.

Five other Asian governments have territorial claims there.

Harris' use of the term “hegemony” in his testimony is especially grating to Beijing, which has long made its self-avowed aversion to that goal a centerpiece of its foreign policy message.

China claims it is entitled like any other nation to deploy whatever defensive systems it sees fit on its island claims. Despite that endorsement of the sovereign rights of nations, Wu reiterated China's strong opposition to the potential deployment in South Korea of a defensive missile

Adm. Harris described Chinese militarization as being ‘as certain as a traffic jam’

defense system against North Korea.

China says the system's radar coverage would extend into China, harming its national security interests. Harris said it was “preposterous” that China would try to “wedge itself” between South Korea and the U.S. over the issue.

Despite raising fears of a confrontation at sea, the recent frictions don't appear to be having a lasting effect on U.S.-China military exchanges. Wu said China remained fully committed to taking part in this June's Rim of the Pacific naval drills that the U.S. Pacific Fleet hosts every two years.

“U.S.-China military-to-military relations are maintaining stable development momentum,” Wu said. AP

Vietnam protests Chinese actions in contested waters

VIETNAM is protesting recent actions by China in the disputed South China Sea, saying they threaten peace in the region.

The commander of U.S. forces in the Pacific, Adm. Harry Harris Jr., said this week that China has installed new radar on Cuarteron Reef in the Spratly Islands, and media reports say Beijing has sent fighter jets to Woody Island in the Paracels, where it has deployed anti-aircraft missiles.

Asked about the reports, Foreign Ministry spokesman Le Hai Binh said yesterday that China is conducting activities that seriously violate Vietnamese sovereignty and threaten peace,

security and freedom of passage in the region.

“Despite protests and concerns by Vietnam as well as the international community, China has continued with actions that not only seriously violate Vietnam's sovereignty, escalate militarization of the East Sea, but also threaten peace, stability in the region, and maritime and overflight security, safety and freedom,” Binh said in a statement on the ministry's website. East Sea is the Vietnamese name for the South China Sea.

He said Vietnam is protesting the actions and urging China to act responsibly to maintain peace and stability.

Binh said Vietnam has “undisputable” sovereignty over the Paracels and Spratlys.

Vietnam, China and Taiwan claim all of the Paracels, and the three along with the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei claim all or parts of the Spratlys.

Massive land reclamation by China in the Spratlys and its other recent actions have caused concern among countries in the region and in the United States.

U.S. officials say they take no side in the territorial disputes, but support freedom of passage through the area, one of the world's busiest sea lanes. AP

UN DIPLOMATS

US and China agree on new North Korea sanctions

Edith M. Lederer, United Nations

THE United States and China have reached agreement on a U.N. resolution that would impose tougher sanctions on North Korea as punishment for its latest nuclear test and rocket launch, U.N. diplomats say. The council likely will discuss the draft today [Macau time].

One Security Council diplomat called the draft resolution "significantly substantive" and expressed hope that it will be adopted in the coming days. Another said the draft had been circulated on Wednesday to the three other permanent council members — Russia, Britain and France.

The council is scheduled to hold closed consultations yesterday on compliance with the North Korean sanctions resolutions, and the U.S.-China draft could be discussed then with the 10 non-permanent council members.

Both diplomats spoke on condition of anonymity because all discussions on the proposed resolution have been private.

Their comments follow a flurry of activity in Washington, including meetings between China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi and U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, and with National Security Adviser Susan Rice this week.

National Security Council spokesman Ned Price said Rice and Wang agreed "on the importance of a strong and united international response to North Korea's provocations, including through a U.N. Security Council resolution that goes beyond previous resolutions."

"They agreed that they will not accept North Korea as a nuclear weapons state," Price said.

Earlier on Wednesday, Kerry told a Congressional hearing: "We're on the brink of achieving a strong United Nations Security Council resolution."

North Korea started off the new year with what it claims was its first hydrogen bomb test on Jan. 6 and followed that up with the launch of a satellite on a rocket on Feb. 7 that was condemned by much of the world as a test of banned



South Korean protesters shout slogans during a rally to oppose the possible deployment of the United States' advanced defense system THAAD in Seoul

missile technology.

Over the past 10 years, North Korea has conducted four nuclear tests and launched six long-range missiles — all in violation of Security Council resolutions.

South Korea's U.N. Ambassador Oh Joon has urged the Security Council to adopt "extraordinary" measures to make clear to the North "that it will no longer tolerate its nuclear weapons development."

The U.S., its Western allies and Japan, also pressed for new sanctions that go beyond the North's nuclear and missile programs. But China, Pyongyang's neighbor and supporter on the council, is reluctant to impose measures that could threaten the stability of North Korea and cause the country's economy to collapse.

Wang said earlier in the week that a new U.N. resolution alone cannot resolve the North Korean nuclear issue and that dialogue was needed.

He said China was urging a "parallel track" in which there were both talks on denuclearization — the top priority of the United States — and replacing the armistice that ended the 1950-53 Korean War with a formal peace treaty, a key demand of Pyongyang.

While the U.S. and China were discussing a new U.N. resolution, the United States took tougher steps of its own against North Korea, tightening sanctions and announcing it will hold formal talks with South Korea on deploying a missile defense system that China fears could be used against it as well North Korea.

South Korea and Japan have also announced new measures against Pyongyang. AP

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PHILIPPINES

30 years after Marcos' fall, his son aims for vice president

Jim Gomez, Manila

THREE decades after a "people power" revolt ousted his dictator father, Sen. Ferdinand Marcos Jr. was wooing voters on the campaign trail this week in his bid to become the Philippines' next vice president.

He has a decent shot at fulfilling that ambition — polls show he is in second place among six rivals. If he wins, that would put him one step away from the presidency his father and namesake lost in the army-backed public uprising in February 1986 amid allegations of plunder and widespread human rights violations.

Thirty years ago yesterday, Ferdinand Sr. and Imelda Marcos and their family fled the country after four days of massive street protests that saw rosary-clutching nuns and ordinary citizens kneeling before tanks and protesters sticking yellow flowers into the muzzles of assault rifles of pro-government troops.

At a ceremony yesterday attended by President Benigno Aquino III, protest leaders and others re-enacted events from that historic revolt near a monument commemorating it.

Aquino condemned the abuses, including the 1983 assassination of his father, opposition leader Benigno Aquino Jr. He criticized the younger Marcos for refusing to even acknowledge his family's misdeeds.

"If he couldn't even see what was wrong in what their family did, how can we expect that he won't repeat these?" Aquino said.



Vice presidential candidate Sen. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. waves to supporters during his campaign sortie in Muntinlupa city, southeast of Manila

Marcos Jr. made no mention of the uprising when he addressed listeners earlier this week in a poor village near Manila where supporters of his father live.

Instead, he talked about how people have suffered under leaders since his father's departure, tapping into disillusionment over persistent poverty and corruption that plague the country, as well as an ongoing Islamic insurgency in the south. He did not utter the name of Aquino, a scion of a political clan whose longstanding rivalry with the Marcoses has shaped the country's political scene for decades.

"Our leaders, instead of nurturing and helping us, sowed infighting and divided us into groups," Marcos told the crowd of a few hundred villagers, many of whom chanted his nickname, Bongbong, and wore red, the co-

lor associated with his family.

"I'm fighting to start a movement to unite the Filipino people," he said on a sparse stage where he stood with a handful of local town officials, a far cry from the scenes of his family's heyday.

Marcos, 58, appears to have a strong following among younger people who did not witness abuses during the 1972-81 period of martial law under his father or the popular revolt that overthrew him. When asked if he would eventually seek the presidency, he refuses to answer categorically.

Filipino voters cast separate ballots for president and vice president, so often candidates from different parties are elected. The vote is May 9.

"I am perplexed by the viability of Bongbong's candidacy for vice

president," said Gerard Finin of the East-West Center in Hawaii. "The longing for a stronger and more effective Philippine state has not faded."

Still, sidestepping the past is daunting in a country that still celebrates the Marcoses' downfall each year as a national reminder of how Filipinos once stood up to a dictatorship.

In 1986, years before the era of Facebook, Twitter and cellphones, unarmed Filipinos rapidly massed along a highway in Manila by word of mouth and anti-government radio broadcasts to protect the defense minister, the military deputy chief of staff and their forces who defected from an ailing Marcos.

The Marcoses lived in exile in Hawaii for several years and Ferdinand Sr. died there in 1989.

Imelda Marcos returned to the Philippines in 1991. Her husband's remains were brought home later to his northern hometown of Batac, where his glass coffin has become a tourist attraction.

Imelda, now 86, went to a popular Roman Catholic church in suburban Baclaran district of Manila in a wheelchair Wednesday to hear Mass with her aides, apparently unaware that a group of Marcos-era human rights victims were inside holding a program and recalling how they were tortured and abused by troops. Imelda Marcos, who appeared stoic, quietly left after the communion, according to witnesses.

Despite her reputation for extravagance, best exemplified by

the 1,220 pairs of shoes she left behind in the presidential palace after her husband's downfall, she and her children enjoy a degree of popularity, particularly in her late husband's northern political stronghold of Ilocos Norte province.

She has faced some 900 civil and criminal cases in Philippine courts since 1991 but has never served prison time. Many of the cases have been dismissed for lack of evidence and a few convictions were overturned on appeal.

Nearly 10,000 Filipinos won a U.S. class-action suit in 1995 against the Marcos estate for torture, summary executions and disappearances with jurors awarding USD1.9 billion to the victims. More than 7,000 have been compensated after years of waiting.

Imelda Marcos twice ran unsuccessfully for president but won seats in the House of Representatives, where she is running for re-election to a third and final term in May 9 elections while a daughter is running unopposed as Ilocos Norte governor.

Left-wing activists, including those detained during the period of martial law, gathered at a university Monday to launch a coalition against Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s vice presidential run, dubbed the Campaign Against the Return of the Marcoses to Malacanang, or CAR-MMA. Malacanang is the presidential palace in Manila.

Coalition leader Bonifacio Ilagan, who was imprisoned and tortured during martial law, warned that if the young Marcos was elected, he would be tantalizingly close to capturing the presidency, which would give him a chance to redeem his family's name by rewriting history.

"He's the number one defender of his father's regime," Ilagan said. "If he wins as vice president, it's almost a complete reversal of what was won in 1986." AP

INDONESIA

Top court finds two guilty of sex abuse of students

INDONESIA'S Supreme Court has overruled the acquittals of two teachers, a Canadian and an Indonesian, on charges they sexually abused three children at a prestigious international school, and ordered longer prison terms for them, a court official said yesterday.

Canada and the United States both expressed shock and dismay over the verdict.

Neil Bantleman and Ferdinand Tjiong had been sentenced to 10 years in prison last April by the South Jakarta District Court. They appealed to the High Court, which acquitted them in August, ruling there was insufficient evidence to support their conviction.

Supreme Court spokesman Suhadi said a three-member panel of judges handed down a verdict Wednesday based on the prosecutors' appeal.

"The judge panel concluded that the defendants were proven to have viola-

ted the 2007 Child Protection Law," said Suhadi, who uses a single name. "It did not only reinstate the District Court's verdict but also lengthened the sentence to 11 years."

The two teachers at the Jakarta International School, now called the Jakarta Intercultural School, also were ordered to pay a fine of USD7,440 each or serve six more months in jail, Suhadi said.

Chandra Saptaji, head of the general crime section at the South Jakarta Prosecutors' Office, said Tjiong was taken from his house yesterday and is now serving his sentence at Cipinang Prison in eastern Jakarta.

"We are still looking for Bantleman, who is actually under a ban to leave the country," Saptaji said.

The Canadian government said it was "deeply dismayed and shocked" by the court's ruling.

"This decision is unjust, given the many grave irregularities throughout the various proceedings in this case and the fact that all evidence presented by the defense has systematically been rejected," Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion said in a statement.

"Mr. Bantleman and Mr. Tjiong were not provided the opportunity to demonstrate their innocence. Despite Canada's repeated calls for due process, this case was not handled in a fair and transparent manner," Dion said.

U.S. Ambassador Robert O. Blake also expressed shock and disappointment over the verdict, saying it would impact international views about the rule of law in Indonesia.

Bantleman and Tjiong were arrested in July 2014 following allegations from the parents of a six-year-old student that he had been sodomized.



Canadian teacher Neil Bantleman (right) walks with Indonesian teaching assistant, Ferdinand Tjiong prior to the start of their trial hearing at South Jakarta District Court in Jakarta

Four male janitors at the school were already sentenced to eight years in prison in that case and a woman received a seven-year sentence as an accomplice. Police said a sixth suspect killed himself in custody by drinking bathroom cleaner.

Under Indonesian law, both Bantleman and Tjiong still could challenge the sentence by filing for a judicial review by the Supreme Court if they have new evidence. AP

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For a few Oscar doc nominees, films incite change

WHEN it came to gaining the trust of the subjects featured in her latest Oscar-nominated documentary, Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy had an advantage.

"It helps to be an Academy Award winner," joked Obaid-Chinoy, who won the best documentary Oscar for her 2012 short film "Saving Face" about the suffering of women disfigured by acid attacks in the Middle East.

The Pakistani filmmaker was among the nominated documentarians on hand for this week event at the motion picture academy honoring this year's documentary Oscar nominees ahead of Sunday's ceremony.

Obaid-Chinoy is up for another Academy Award this year for her short documentary "A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness." The film, which is about a girl who was shot and thrown in a river by her father after she



An Oscar statue is seen during setup for the 88th Academy Awards in Los Angeles

married a man he did not approve of, is among this year's documentary nominees affecting change in the world.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif vowed to

act against the "despicable" practice known as honor killing after viewing Obaid-Chinoy's film.

"If you're cynical about the Oscars, think about that for a second," she told the crowd at the motion picture academy's headquarters.

"A Girl in the River" is up against the Ebola clean-up chronicle "Body Team 12," the Vietnamese artist profile "Chau, Beyond the Lines," the behind-the-scenes-of-"Shoah" saga "Claude Lanzmann: Spectres of the Shoah" and the animated post-traumatic stress disorder narrative "Last Day of Freedom."

"The Look of Silence" filmmaker Joshua Oppenheimer similarly raved that his work about Indonesian genocide prompted the government to recognize the mass killings of communists and ethnic Chinese following the release of his previous film, 2012's "The Act of Killing." AP

Obama bans US imports of slave-produced goods

PRESIDENT Barack Obama signed a bill that includes a provision banning U.S. imports of fish caught by slaves in Southeast Asia, gold mined by children in Africa and garments sewn by abused women in Bangladesh, closing a loophole in an 85-year-old tariff law that has failed to keep products of forced and child labor out of America.

An expose by The Associated Press last year found Thai companies ship seafood to the U.S. that was caught and processed by trapped and enslaved workers. As a result of the reports, more than 2,000 trapped fishermen have been rescued, more than a dozen alleged traffickers arrested and millions of dollars' worth of seafood and vessels seized.

Until now, U.S. customs law banning imports of items produced by forced or child labor had gone largely unenforced because of two words: "consumptive demand" — if there was not sufficient supply to meet domestic demand, imports were allowed regardless of how they were produced.

Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, who offered the amendment eliminating that exception, said Wednesday his office is already asking U.S. Customs



President Barack Obama

and Border Protection to ensure they begin enforcing the new rules when the law takes effect in 15 days.

"It's embarrassing that for 85 years, the United States let products made with forced labor into this country, and closing this loophole gives the U.S. an important tool to fight global slavery," he said. AP

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Deepti Hajela, New York

USA

Asian Americans debate support for convicted NYC cop

IN a nation accustomed to demonstrations over police shootings of unarmed black men, this was something completely different: more than 10,000 mostly Chinese-Americans rallying in support of the Chinese-American officer who pulled the trigger.

The rally this past weekend for Peter Liang, a rookie New York officer convicted of recklessly firing a bullet that killed an innocent man in a dark stairwell, marked an unexpectedly large outpouring of activism from an ethnic group that often has to struggle to be heard above the din in the city.

Many said they believe Liang is being made a scapegoat for acts of police brutality largely committed by whites. Demonstrations were also held in Philadelphia, Phoenix, San Francisco and Seattle.

Yan Sun, a political science professor from Queens, said she and other demonstrators believe that prosecutors looking to make a point about police accountability felt free to make an example out of Liang because he comes from a community that isn't thought to carry a lot of political clout.

"We feel of one of our own is sacrificed because we don't make noise," she said.



Protesters attend a rally in the Brooklyn borough of New York in support of former NYPD police officer Peter Liang, who was convicted of manslaughter for the 2014 shooting death of Akai Gurley, in a housing project stairwell

Other Asian-Americans have looked on the protests with dismay, saying Liang is no victim and the demonstrators are taking on the wrong fight.

The officer was on routine patrol in a public housing project when he entered the stairwell with his gun drawn and accidentally fired a shot when he was

startled by a noise. The bullet ricocheted and struck Akai Gurley, 28, killing him. Liang testified it was an accident, but prosecutors said he was reckless to have his gun out and his finger on the trigger, and failed to help Gurley as he lay dying.

A jury convicted Liang of manslaughter on Feb. 11. He could get

up to 15 years in prison, or as little as probation.

"I believe, a lot of people believe, they're using him as a scapegoat," said Steve Chung, a demonstrator from Brooklyn.

Annie Tan, an activist and educator in Chicago, said she sympathizes with those who see injustice in the way so many white officers who have shot black men have been acquitted or have not faced charges. She said Asian-Americans have also been ill-treated by the criminal justice system, citing the case of Vincent Chin, who was beaten to death in Michigan in 1982. The attackers, two white men, were given three years' probation.

"But does that mean we free Peter Liang for what he did? No, absolutely not," she said.

New York City has a long history of fraught racial politics, and complaints by Asian-Americans about being ignored politically are not new. In 1990, Mayor David Dinkins was heavily criticized

for failing to quickly intervene when black activists organized a boycott of Korean grocers.

The city has a large and growing Asian population but still relatively few Asian politicians. Asians make up 13 percent of the population and 6 percent of the New York Police Department's uniformed force of around 35,000 officers. The judge who presided over Liang's trial was born in Korea.

There are likely to be more demonstrations, both for and against Liang, before he is sentenced on April 14.

Steph Yin, 25, said she has had arguments with her parents and family friends who support leniency for Liang. Yes, she said, Asian-Americans are often been unheard and wrongly stereotyped as quiet and passive. But that doesn't make Liang's conviction a cause to rally around, she said.

"At the end of the day, he killed somebody who didn't deserve to be killed," she said. AP

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FRIDAY

13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	RTPi Live
17:30	Castle S.5
18:10	Trail of Lies (Repeated)
19:00	TDM Talk Show (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:15	Documentary Serie
21:45	Miscellaneous
22:10	Trail of Lies
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Europa League Highlights
23:45	UEFA Europa League 2015/2016: Bayer Leverkusen - Sporting (Repeated)

SATURDAY

10:30	Boonie Bears - Sr.2
11:30	Young Adult
12:00	Miscellaneous
13:00	TDM News (Repeat)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:30	Soap Opera
18:20	Fillers
18:25	Contest
19:20	Miscellaneous
19:50	Documentary Serie
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Drama
22:00	Intelligence S.1
22:45	Documentary Series
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Brother's and Sisters S5

SUNDAY

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

offbeat

WOMAN BITES RARE PEARL WHILE DINING AT ITALIAN RESTAURANT



A woman bit down on a rare pearl while eating a meal of clams and other seafood at an Italian restaurant in Washington state.

KOMO-TV reports (goo.gl/oHETuU) Lindsay Hasz and her husband Chris were eating at Montalcino Ristorante

Italiano in Issaquah recently when she bit into something hard in her entree.

Hasz says she wasn't sure what it was but put it in her pocket and went home to do research.

She took it to a gemologist, who determined it was a Quahog purple pearl worth about USD600.

Ted Irwin of Northwest Geological Laboratory says the find is rare, with only one in a couple million being of gem quality.

Montalcino owner Cindy Nardone says she's happy for Hasz. Hasz says she may have the pearl made into a necklace.

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



Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. Robert Runcie talking to Margaret Thatcher

1987 SYNOD SAYS 'YES' TO WOMEN PRIESTS

The Church of England's General Synod has voted by a huge majority to clear the way for the ordination of women priests.

The Church of England has been debating the issue for 10 years and the final go-ahead is still some years away.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, supported the yes vote but was careful to point out the Church would study an inquiry to be carried out by a committee of bishops before it reached a final decision.

He also said those who warned the issue would cause a split the Church were suffering from "premature panic".

The Bishop of London, Dr Graham Leonard, who is against the move retracted earlier threats to leave or divide the Church.

But talk of a split in the Church dominated the debate today in the Synod.

The Government Junior Agriculture Minister John Gummer, a lay member, said: "It would no longer be the church into which I was born, which I love and in which I pray to die."

"That is not a threat, it's a statement."

Sister Carol, a nun from Worcestershire, told those present women had a right to become priests.

She said: "Am I called to walk tall in society and to walk small in the Church?"

A spokesperson for the Movement for the Ordination of Women said members would be "absolutely delighted" by the vote.

The synod is divided into three houses - bishops, clergy and laymen. Overall 317 (68%) voted for and 145 against.

Only the House of Clergy had less than the significant two-thirds majority. The final vote will require a two-thirds majority in all three houses.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The synod voted in favour again in 1992 and the first woman priest was ordained in Bristol on 12 March 1994.

The issue threatened to hamper efforts to forge closer links with the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches and caused prominent Conservative politicians Ann Widdecombe and John Gummer to defect to the Catholic Church.

By April 1998 there were more than 1,700 women priests.

But a survey carried out by the Manufacturing, Science and Finance Union in six out of 44 dioceses found that many complained of bullying and even sexual harassment from male colleagues.

The Church of England set up a working party in 2000 to consider the licensing of women bishops. The general synod will vote on the issue in summer 2005.

Anglican churches in the USA have had women bishops since 1989.

YOUR STARS

Aries

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

Don't dismiss the news that comes early today — things are not going so well, and you need to shore up your position to hold off a decline. The good news is that things are just about to turn in your favor.

Taurus

April 20-May 20

This is the best possible time to implement that crazy scheme you dreamed up with friends recently. Things should shake out so that you have a decent shot at making it all work out!

Gemini

May 21-Jun. 21

You need to consider the changes you want to see in your life — and how to bring them about. Today is all about the contrast between illusion and reality, so turn it to your favor somehow!

Cancer

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Your mind may wander pretty far today, but that's just because you've got so much to think about! Your great personal energy should help you finish up whatever is absolutely vital.

Leo

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Your affinity for art and music is peaking, so seek out something new and lovely. Make a date of it if you can — that is sure to draw you closer together, and you may find new shared interests, too.

Virgo

Aug. 23-Sept. 22

Criticizing is easy — and sometimes vital — but for now, you need to keep your tone light and positive. At least one person is teetering on the edge of despair, and you don't want to push them over.

Libra

Sep. 23-Oct. 22

Have you finally taken on too much? It may seem that way, as your schedule is packed full of things you'd forgotten about or hadn't realized would take so long. Try to bow out of what you can.

Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

You're no stranger to creative endeavors, and you should find that today brings an opportunity to pull off something big! Seize the momentum and find a way to keep it in your favor.

Sagittarius

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

You need a new story to tell about yourself — something that can get people to try things your way. Take all day if you need to, but don't stop until you've got the right frame of mind to make it all work.

Capricorn

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Your psychic prowess is stronger today — which may just mean that you can read people better. Trust your instincts and follow your nose to new opportunities; things are getting really good!

Aquarius

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

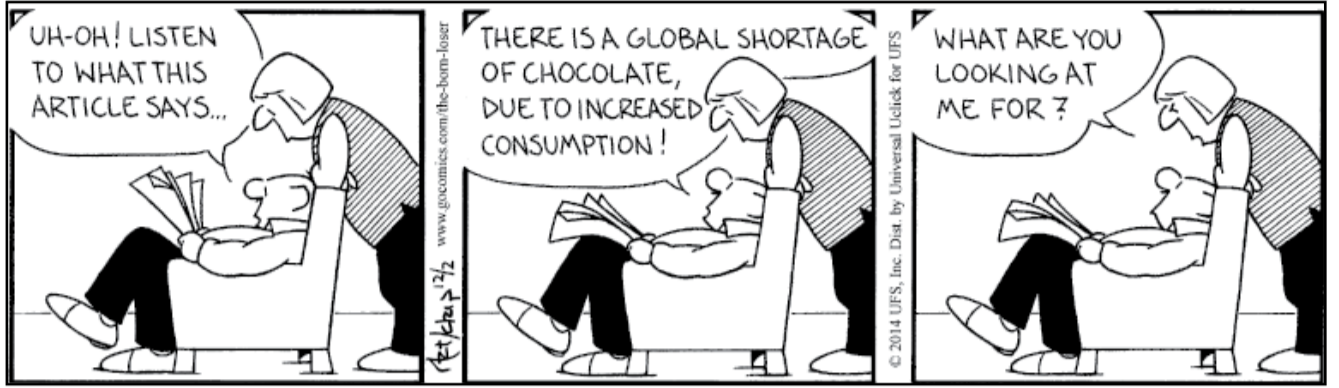
You need to avoid the temptation to reach for your credit cards every time a problem arises today. It's far too easy to just spend your way into deep debt without realizing quite what you're doing.

Pisces

Feb. 19-Mar. 20

Treat yourself to something lavish today — you know you deserve it! This kind of energy is impossible to squander, and you shouldn't feel selfish if you choose to spend some of it on personal stuff.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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		6	4					
	5					3		
						6	2	
4		3						
		1						
				6	5	4		
8							3	
				2				

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	-4	8	cloudy/clear
Harbin	-20	-5	cloudy
Tianjin	-2	3	clear
Urumqi	-14	-7	clear
Xi'an	-1	10	cloudy
Lhasa	-1	17	snow
Chengdu	5	13	drizzle/overcast
Chongqing	8	13	overcast
Kunming	3	9	drizzle/moderate rain
Nanjing	1	14	cloudy
Shanghai	2	12	clear
Wuhan	2	16	cloudy
Hangzhou	1	13	cloudy
Taipei	13	22	overcast/drizzle
Guangzhou	10	17	overcast
Hong Kong	12	18	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-7	0	overcast/flurry
Frankfurt	-2	3	flurry/drizzle
Paris	1	6	drizzle
London	0	7	clear/cloudy
New York	-5	13	flurry/clear

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Blink; 5- Long-tailed parrot; 10- Puerto ___; 14- "A Death in the Family" author; 15- Actress Massey; 16- Beige; 17- Tender; 18- Bird homes; 19- Film ___; 20- Way of pronouncing a word; 23- Spicy; 24- Prefix with center; 25- Haunt of Robin Hood; 33- Sycophant; 34- Asset; 35- Santa ___, Calif.; 36- ___ many words; 37- Slow mover; 39- Baby carriage; 40- Cambridge sch.; 41- Travel on water; 42- Aquarium fish; 43- Widespread environmental disaster; 47- ___ Darya (Asian river); 48- Nasser's org.; 49- Style of painting; 56- London art gallery; 58- At ___ for words; 59- Jacob's brother; 60- Dog star; 61- Championship; 62- Blind piece; 63- Ammo; 64- Alleviated; 65- Shrivelled, without moisture;

DOWN: 1- Stinging insect; 2- Aviation pioneer Sikorsky; 3- Emperor of Rome 54-68; 4- Sharp; 5- Small fish; 6- One of the Furies; 7- Mozart's "___ fan tutte"; 8- Architectural pier; 9- Prodigal; 10- Impressionist Pierre; 11- Desktop picture; 12- Dernier ___; 13- ___ Gang; 21- "Driving Miss Daisy" playwright; 22- NASDAQ debuts; 25- ___ boom; 26- Must; 27- Tokyo, once; 28- October birthstones; 29- Half of MCI; 30- 71% is under water; 31- Entrap; 32- Writer Janowitz; 33- Proctor's call; 37- Soak; 38- Actress Vardalos; 39- Energy; 41- Coarsely ground corn; 42- Bull; 44- Attacked; 45- Scuffle; 46- Elevated; 49- Sock ___ mel; 50- "East of Eden" director Kazan; 51- Drunkards; 52- Capone's nemesis; 53- Wight or Man; 54- German river; 55- Silent; 56- Univ. aides; 57- Bat wood;

Yesterday's solution

A	S	A	P		S	W	O	O	N		P	S	S	T
A	C	T	E		C	A	I	R	O		R	O	T	O
R	A	M	P		A	T	L	A	W		E	L	E	A
P	R	E	P	A	R	E		L	A	N	C	E	R	S
F	E	B	E	R	T		D	O	E	S	N	T		
U	T	E	R		H	E	A	R	D					
T	R	E	A	S		L	I	L		S	E	A	N	L
A	I	L		S	E	V	E	R	E	S	T		R	A
H	O	V	A		T	A	S	E		R	A	N	G	E
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A	V	E	R											
S	E	R	A											
S	E	R	A											

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PSP 28 573 333	Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
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England's George Kruis reaches out to score the opening try of the game against Scotland, during the 2016 Six Nations rugby match at Murrayfield Stadium, Edinburgh

RUGBY | SIX NATIONS

More injuries for Italy match against Scotland

ITALY coach Jacques Brunel has again been forced to change his injury-hit side ahead of the visit of Scotland tomorrow, with both teams looking for their first win of the Six Nations.

Lock George Biagi fractured a rib during Italy's 40-9 defeat to England and is sidelined along with fly-half Carlo Canna, who has a muscle injury. Ornel Gega is also out after fracturing a cheekbone.

Biagi will be replaced by Joshua Furno, who missed the first two Six Nations matches with injury, while Kelly Haimona comes in for Canna and will partner Edoardo Gori, who makes his 50th appearance for Italy at the age of 25.

Hooker Leonardo Ghiraldini has also recovered from an injury he sustained during the World Cup and is back for his first appearance since November.

Mogliano back David Odiete, who made his Italy debut in the narrow defeat in France in the tournament opener, returns from an ankle knock.

Italy still has a number of other regulars sidelined by in-

juries, including Andrea Masi, Tommaso Allan, Simone Favaro, Quintin Geldenhuys, Michele Rizzo, Luca Morisi, and Andrea Manici.

The match is traditionally seen as the wooden spoon decider.

Tim Visser has been recalled to the Scotland team as it looks to avoid losing 10 straight Six Nations matches when it faces Italy.

Visser has recovered from a hamstring injury and replaces veteran Sean Lamont, who drops to the bench in coach Vern Cotter's only change to the team which lost to Wales two weeks ago.

Uncapped Rory Sutherland also is on the bench with Moray Low, Ryan Wilson and Peter Horne.

Italy won in Scotland last year to avoid the wooden spoon and avenge defeat in the previous tournament. Scotland hasn't won in the Six Nations since beating Italy in Rome in February 2014.

In another Six Nations' match tomorrow, Maro Itoje will make his first start for England side against Ireland as the team looks for a third

straight win under new coach Eddie Jones.

Itoje, a former England under-20 captain and widely regarded as a potential star of the future in English rugby, got his chance after fellow lock Joe Launchbury was ruled out of contention on Wednesday with a hamstring injury.

The only other change from the 40-9 win over Italy in Rome saw Joe Marler return at loosehead prop in place of Mako Vunipola. Elliot Daly could make his England debut off the bench at Twickenham.

The team was announced yesterday.

England started the Six Nations by beating Scotland away, so is still on for the Grand Slam in the first season under Jones.

Ireland won the last two Six Nations tournaments but is without a win heading into Round 3.

"Playing our first game at Twickenham after two away fixtures will be huge for us," Jones said. "We're determined to put in a strong performance against a clever Irish side who are the benchmark of European rugby." **MDT/AP**

CRICKET

South Africa Bowler Tsotsobe investigated in fixing case

SOUTH Africa fast bowler Lonwabo Tsotsobe is reportedly under investigation in a match-fixing case that has already seen one of the country's former international players banned for 20 years.

Tsotsobe told the Wisden India website yesterday that he had handed over his bank account and cellphone records after being asked for them by national federation Cricket South Africa.

Former South Africa limited-overs batsman Gulam Bodi was banned last month after admitting he conspired to recruit players to fix matches, or parts of matches, in South Africa's domestic Twenty20 league last year.

Documents leaked to the South African media show eight players were approached by Bodi. Media reports have named former South Africa wicketkeeper Thami Tsolekile and now Tsotsobe, who are both former teammates of Bodi in domestic cricket, as two of those players.

"I've given them [Cricket South Africa] everything they want. My phone bills, my messages, my bank accounts, everything," Tsotsobe was quoted as saying by Wisden India. "They said they would get back to me."

Tsotsobe denied taking money from Bodi to fix. Tsolekile has previously denied being under investigation. **AP**

GOLF

American Peter Uihlein takes first-round lead in Perth

AMERICAN Peter Uihlein shot a 7-under 65 to take a one-stroke lead after the first round of the Perth International.

India's Shiv Kapur, recovering from a shoulder injury, and Romain Wattel of France shot 66s, both in morning groups when the conditions were more conducive to low scoring.

Australian Rhein Gibson was in fourth place after a 67, while Australian Brett Rumford and Northern Ireland's Cormac Sharvin were among those three strokes behind after 68s on the Lake Karrinyup Country Club course.

Uihlein was among the few afternoon starters to move up the leaderboard in tough, blustery conditions. He bogeyed his first hole, the par-4 first.

"When the wind is blowing the way it was, you've got to expect to hit a few bad shots," Uihlein said. "Just accept it and move on."

Louis Oosthuizen, the 2010 British Open champion playing for the first time in Australia, shot 70. Defending champion Thorbjorn Olesen of Denmark had a 71.

Oosthuizen started strongly with three birdies in his first six holes, but bogeyed his 11th hole to fade from the leading groups in the European and Australasian PGA tour event.

"I hit it really well all day, but just found myself on the front nine in awkward spots on the greens," Oosthuizen said. "I just need to think a bit better around it. I left myself with a few shockers to try and make birdies. I found the places on the green you're not supposed to be."

Kapur almost didn't play yesterday because of his lingering shoulder injury. He injured his right shoulder while lifting his golf bag at Singapore airport two weeks ago, but some treatment just before his opening round eased the pain enough for him to play.

"I was really struggling on the driving range this morning with my shoulder," Kapur said. "The first few shots that I hit I couldn't really hold the club at the top of my backswing. The chiropractor here did a great job to get me fit to play, and I popped a couple of pills. Sometimes when you drop expectations and you don't think about your golf swing, it seems to work pretty well."

Australian Marcus Fraser, who won last week's European Tour event in Malaysia, shot 69. European Ryder Cup player Victor Dubuisson of France birdied his final hole on an otherwise forgettable day in which he shot 77. **AP**

Australia's prime minister says his country will bolster its naval strength with more submarines and warships as part of a long-term military buildup needed to maintain peace in the Asia-Pacific region.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said yesterday that Australia plans to double the size of its submarine fleet to 12 as well as commissioning

three additional air warfare destroyers, nine anti-submarine frigates and 12 patrol boats.

The naval increase is at the center of a planned 20-year military buildup to deal with future threats, including tensions in the South China Sea where China, Australia's most important trade partner, is aggressively staking territorial claims. (See p10)

Station	Air quality
Roadside	45-65 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	45-65 Moderate
Ambient	50-70 Moderate

SOURCE: DSMG

opinion

Kapok
 Eric Sautédé



BOTTOMING AT LAST?

"Bottoming" is the new buzzword that has been on everyone's lips for a few months now. It intends to convey the positive outlook that our whole economy could soon be recovering after 20 straight months of dwindling gaming revenues. Although it is a very large step away from the more robust "upturn" or "recovery", one gets the feeling that there is finally some light at the end of the tunnel—even if the light is still distant and the "bottoming" stage surely prolonged.

Beyond the necessary confidence bolstered by casino operators to reassure investors, the "bottoming" credo rests on two main arguments. First, that the shift towards the mass market is finally happening, and that revenues from what constitutes now half of the pie is slowly but surely making gains—only VIP rooms are still steeply declining; and second that the downward trend is decelerating—gaming revenues shrank by 21.4 percent in January 2016 whereas they plummeted by a record 48.6 percent in February 2015. With that perspective in mind, and despite an overall staggering contraction in gaming revenues of 34.3 percent for 2015, one could say that we are now falling at half the pace of a year ago.

All this is very well: casino operators are still turning hefty profits and with an estimated MOP350 billion in GDP for 2015, Macao should still be No. 2 on the world listing of GDP per capita—don't ask me about distribution though as the last time we "extrapolated" a Gini Index in the SAR was in 2011.

Yet, the "bottoming out", the real change on the road to recovery, is heavily dependent on the success of the oft-repeated "diversification" and transformation of Macao into "a world centre of tourism and leisure". The diversification here can be either "path dependent" and/or resolutely novel. The first direction considers the development of tourism as the extension and necessary complement of the gambling industry. Huge properties have already been built, more are scheduled to open (with further delays) in 2016/2017 in Cotai, and then many more will mushroom in Hengqin—Maldives- or Bhutan-like, but all mega in size. Upper mass market is the target, and more in line with the VIP heritage that is presently restructuring. And then there is the entirely new route: think Marina ripping the benefit of an extension of our maritime borders; think business and finance in Shizimen; think creative industries in Xiangzhou Culture Street; think medical tourism investments from well-established local companies; think industrial park; think transportation hub connected with China's fastest network; etc. In the meantime, local SMEs are being pampered. Energetic young people are opening cafés all around town with generous government funding, and creative industries of all guises are being given the nod.

Indeed, how can one doubt that the next stage of development for Macao has to be found in the periphery if we want to spare the suffocation of Macao's heart and soul while making the whole 'MSAR experience' something that visitors remember and possibly come back to? But the question of the short- and medium-term remains. When will this periphery be up and running? What about the sustainability of all these small service outlets enriching our neighborhoods? Who will actually benefit in the end? Unimaginative and greedy vested interests are also a Macao specialty.

As of now, we had only marginally fewer tourists in 2015 (30.7 million) than in 2014, but tourists still stay on average 1.1 nights per visit (against 3.3 in Hong Kong) and visitor expenditures have gone drastically down with the per capita average registering a staggering 15 percent contraction—so much for the "upper mass market" drive! And then general retail is down too, by 10.4 percent year-on-year—the first yearly decline since 1999! Providing Macao citizens with incentives to consume cannot hurt—"Macao loves locals"—but long-term recovery goals will require bigger sweeteners and a thorough upgrade of the operating system if innovation and talent are to prevail.

Chart-topping Adele gets emotional with big Brit Awards win



Singer Adele cries as she accepts the award for Global Success onstage at the Brit Awards 2016 at the O2 Arena in London

A tearful Adele was crowned queen of the British music scene — and banished memories of Grammy Awards sound glitches — with four prizes and a soulful performance at the Brit Awards yesterday [Macao time].

"Not bad for a girl from Tottenham that don't like flying," said the North London-born singer as she accepted the Global Success Award.

The world-conquering diva also took trophies for British female solo artist of the year; British single of the year, for lovelorn ballad "Hello"; and album of the year for 15 million copy-selling "25."

Adele has seen "25" — her first album in almost five years — top charts around the world, though her performance at last week's

Grammy Awards was unsettled when a microphone fell into a piano during the tender song "All I Ask."

There were no such glitches during her performance of "When We Were Young," though the singer choked up as she accepted the Global Success award — presented by astronaut Tim Peake from the International Space Station.

"You're getting... bored of me," she quipped, accidentally slipping an expletive into the live telecast.

"I got really lost for a while — I didn't know if I'd ever come back," she added. "And for you all to be so kind to me..."

Later she apologized for losing her composure.

Adele also sent a message of public support to "Tik Tok" singer Kesha, who is

fighting to get out of a contract with record producer Dr. Luke, who she says sexually assaulted her.

The Brits ceremony, performed to music-industry figures and thousands of fans at London's O2 Arena, also featured performances from Coldplay, Justin Bieber and Rihanna — joined onstage by Drake for a sultry "Work."

Singer-songwriter James Bay was named best British male solo artist, while Bieber was named best international male artist. The 21-year-old Canadian star, who has endured some wayward behavior and scrapes with the law, thanked his fans, saying "everybody has their own journey. Everybody has their ups and downs."

The prize for best British group went to dependable crowd-pleasers Coldplay. Singer Chris Martin dedicated the award "to all the young men and women musicians in refugee camps around the world. We could be them and they could be us."

The awards — which celebrate international as well as British acts — have been accused of failing to represent the industry's ethnic diversity, in an echo of the debate raging around the Academy Awards. All the British nominees this year were white. AP

WORLD BRIEFS

MALAYSIA A woman sues Malaysia Airlines and the government for USD7.6 million in damages over the loss of her husband on Flight 370, which disappeared mysteriously in 2014. Lawyers said more lawsuits are expected over the next few days ahead of a two-year filing deadline over air accidents set by a global aviation agreement.



MYANMAR A grassroots anti-drug organization whose members are marching through northern Myanmar to destroy opium poppies in farmers' fields say 14 of their members were wounded when they were attacked by unknown men with automatic weapons and hand grenades.

CAMBODIA Tough-talking prime minister Hun Sen says he has authorized helicopters to fire rockets at smugglers of illegally cut timber. He announced the policy at the inauguration yesterday of a new Environment Ministry building in the capital, Phnom Penh.

FIJIANS in remote places are urged to immediately bury loved ones who died in a powerful cyclone rather than waiting for autopsies.

INDONESIA The Australian government warned yesterday that terrorists may be in the advanced stages of preparing attacks in Indonesia, and urged travelers to exercise a high level of caution when visiting the Southeast Asian nation, including the popular tourist island of Bali.

USA Harvard University in the US is going to remove the word "master" from academic titles, after protests from students who claimed the title had echoes of slavery, BBC reported. House masters, in charge of residential halls at the university, will become known as "faculty deans". Harvard Law School is also deciding whether to change its official seal, because of links to slavery.

times square by rodrigo

