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Li Ka-shing said China's property prices are "reasonable," as government stimulus has sent prices soaring in the nation's biggest cities

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WORLD BRIEFS



NORTH KOREA To view the humbling limits of round after round of international sanctions against North Korea, come to Masik Pass. It isn't a secret military facility where Kim Jong Un's best and brightest are hard at work developing nuclear warheads and long-range missiles. It's a ski resort. More on p11



PAKISTAN The army says two members of the security forces and eight militants have been killed in a pair of clashes.

INDIA Security personnel evacuate two aircraft at New Delhi's international airport after receiving an anonymous phone call of explosives being placed on the planes, in the third such scare affecting Indian airlines in less than 24 hours.



NEPAL When Britain's Prince Harry visits Nepal this weekend, ordinary people hope his tour of earthquake-hit areas will draw attention to the country's struggle to recover from last year's disaster. More on p12

JAPAN Scandal-plagued Japanese electronics maker Toshiba Corp. sells its medical unit to Japanese camera maker Canon Inc. for 665.5 billion yen. Separately, Toshiba says it reached an agreement with Chinese home appliance manufacturer Midea Group on selling its refrigerator and other so-called "white goods" business.

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Steve Vickers: Gaming should not grow faster than China's GDP

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Alan Ho walks out of 13-month jail sentence

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weekend Guide

INSIDE

Hotel Lisboa prostitution ring trial closes with lenient sentences

Renato Marques

THE verdict of the Hotel Lisboa prostitution ring was announced yesterday morning at the Court of First Instance (TJB) by the president of the collective of judges, Rui Ribeiro.

After fourteen months behind bars, Alan Ho, the former executive director of the Hotel Lisboa and nephew of Macau gaming tycoon Stanley Ho, will walk out of jail. He has received a sentence of thirteen months of imprisonment (which has already been served) for one crime of prostitution exploitation due to being aware of the activities, and yet allowing them to continue to operate in the hotel he headed.

Kelly Wong, the former assistant deputy manager for the "Special Market" of Hotel Lisboa was the only defendant to be sentenced with a severe penalty. She was condemned to 2 years and 5 months behind bars, for having financially profited from the crime of prostitution.

The other four defendants, Peter Lun, Bruce Mak, Qiao Yan Yan and Pun Cham Un, were considered guilty of com-



Alan Ho at the moment of his arrest on January 2015

plicity in the activities and were handed down sentences ranging from 5 to 7 months of imprisonment, all of which have been considered served. During the reading of the verdict, Ribeiro explained why the defendants were considered not guilty of the accusations of establishing and taking part in a criminal organization. He stated that "there is not one single fact in the reports [of the Judiciary Police] that allows us to relate this activity to a criminal association." He added that a "association is a concept well

established in constitutional rights and criminal association needs strong evidence in order to prove it." In this case, this proof was not evident.

The court also noted that the verdict was based on the "wire-tappings," gathered documents, and witness testimonies. The reports from the Judiciary Police were useful as guides in the analysis and contextualization of the "wiretappings."

The collective of judges decided to convict the defendants of only one crime of prostitution exploitation and not of the 90

counts, as the public prosecution wanted.

Regarding the second defendant Kelly Wong, the court decided that it was sufficiently

The court acknowledged that Alan Ho helped to organize and facilitate prostitution activities

proved that she took advantage of her position to charge fees to prostitutes; money to which she knew she was not entitled. In addition, she took advantage of her position to use the fifth and sixth defendants to help her to cover her activities, showing a direct intent.

Wong who has already served approximately 14 months of jail time, will now spend another 15 months in prison. This will be without the possibility of appealing for a suspension

of her sentence as the legal framework which surrounds the crime doesn't allow that request.

Nevertheless, until the sentence becomes final, she can no longer be held in preventive custody. This led the court to implement the safeguards of a weekly presentation to the Public Security Police Force (PSP) station, and a prohibition on leaving the territory.

As for the first defendant, Alan Ho, although the crimes related to criminal association were unproven, the court acknowledged that he helped to organize and facilitate the prostitution activities in the hotel he headed, which, due to his level of education and studies in law, are inexcusable.

The court also referred to the fact that although the current legal framework surrounding prostitution activities was only established in 1997, the prostitution activities were reported to have been ongoing from a much earlier period. As a result, "the hotel [and its management] should have taken the initiative to address that fact after the law changed" and such conduct became criminalized.

As for the other four defendants, their accountability was deemed to be lesser due to the fact that their guilt resulted mostly from "imposed working duties resulting from their positions and functions."

None of the lawyers of the defendants or the accusation contested the final verdict.

EDUCATION

'UM VIP Day' to be held tomorrow

THE "UM VIP Day," the first major event to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the University of Macau (UM), will be held tomorrow. The program includes an opening ceremony, a carnival-style Open Day, and the inaugural UM Sports Day. Those who are interested are welcome to visit the UM campus tomorrow to participate in the various fun activities being held, including an international food festival, booth games, and performances. The opening ceremony will kick off celebrations of the university's 35th anniversary in the Lotus Square (in front of the Administration Building N6) at 11 a.m., while the first-day events of the UM Sports Day will be held in

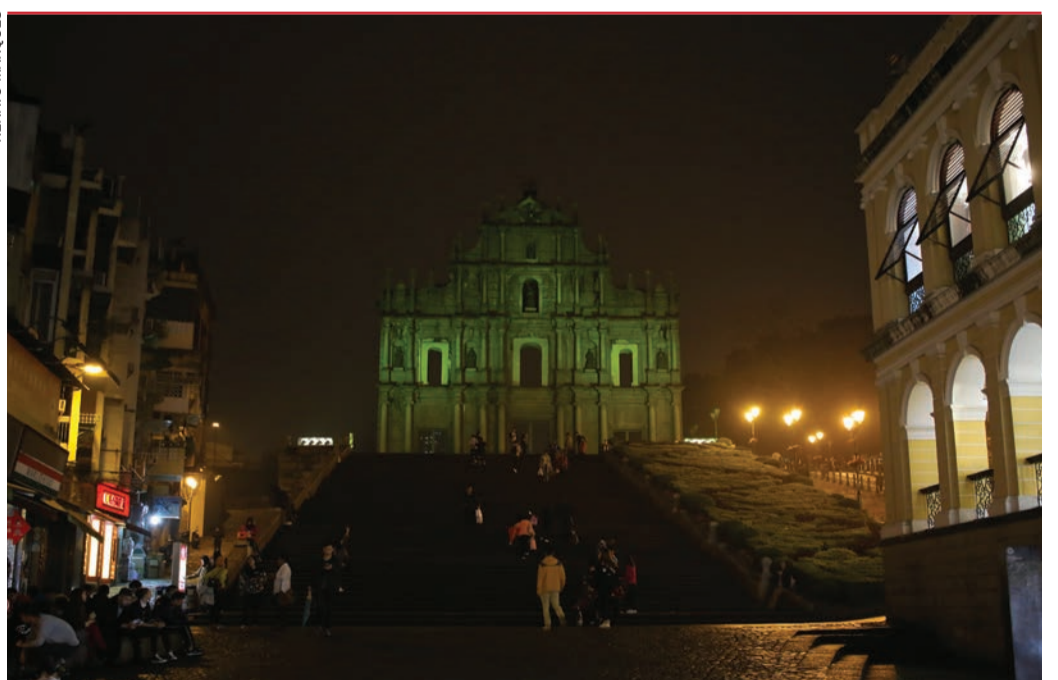
the afternoon.

The various faculties, residential colleges, and laboratories will be open to the public on the Open Day to provide visitors with an opportunity to learn more about the university. Academic lectures and fun workshops will also be held. According to a press release issued by the UM, the lectures will cover a variety of topics such as stem cell transplantation in treating diabetes, the theory, application and science of acupuncture, the basics of robot design, paper planes, and renewable energy.

Other activities include guided campus tours, an English stand-up comedy show, and student performances.

ONE SHOT NEWS

RENATO MARQUES



The façade of the St. Paul's Ruins was cast in green last night in celebration of St. Patrick's Day. It was the first of many events marking the Irish national feast in Macau. The celebrations are being organized by the Irish Chamber of Commerce in Macau (ICCM).

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Taiwanese actress Shu Qi, right, and South Korean actor Lee Byung-hun pose after winning the Best Actress and Actor awards

Asian Film Awards dominated by Chinese

Daniel Beitler

SCORES of celebrities and Asian film stars paraded on the red carpet of the 10th Asian Film Awards (AFA), held last night at The Venetian Macao, with overwhelmingly Chinese filmmakers and actors walking away with prestigious awards in recognition of their contributions to the Asian movie industry.

A host of presenters took to the stage last night, including Hong Kong director Johnnie To, and Chinese celebrities Sean Lau and Gao Yuanyuan, to introduce the nominees and winners of various categories.

Many of them congratulated the award ceremony on reaching its tenth edition, and some added that the AFA had accomplished much to both promote the city of Macau and Asian cinema.

Chinese Director Li Qian

Kuan, who was awarded the AFA Academy Outstanding Contribution Award, told audiences that he personally “looks forward to more films that feature Macau in the future.”

Lifetime Achievement Awards were presented to veteran Hong Kong action choreographer-director, Yuen Wo-ping, and venerable Japanese actress Kirin Kiki, honoring years of distinguished contribution to Asian cinema.

This year “competition was fierce,” organizers said, with 77 nominees of 36 films from nine countries competing for the final Asian Film Awards across a total of 15 categories. There were numerous top contenders in Asian cinema such as “The Assassin”, “Mountains May Depart”, “Mr Six”, “Veteran”, and “Our Little Sister.”

Korean actor Yoo Ah-in, who starred in “Veteran” and “The Throne”, received the Next Ge-

neration Award in recognition of his outstanding and breakthrough acting performances last year.

“The Assassin”, a joint Hong Kong, Taiwan and mainland China martial arts film directed by Hou Hsiao-Hsien, was awarded “Best Film” during the ceremony. Hou, who is Taiwanese, was also presented with the award for Best Director for his work on the same film.

“Best Actor” went to South Korea’s Lee Byung-hun for his leading role in “Inside Men”, a political thriller film that dissects the corruption within Korean society. Meanwhile the counterpart award, “Best Actress”, went to Shu Qi for her leading part in “The Assassin”, in which she portrays a killer ordered to slay unethical government officials.

Other notable winners last night include, Asano Tadanobu (Best Supporting Actor), Zhou Yun (Best Supporting Actress),

Jessie Li (Best Newcomer), and Jia Zhangke who was awarded Best Screenplay for “Mountains May Depart”.

Additionally, Mark Lee, Lim Giong, and Hwang Wern-ying were all recognized at the AFA for their contributions to “The Assassin”; winning awards for Best Cinematography, Best Original Music, and Best Production Design, respectively. Chu Shih-Yi, Tu Duu-Chih and Wu Shu-Yao were jointly awarded Best Sound for their work on

Visual Effects for the film, “Bajirao Mastani”.

Wilfred Wong, chairman of Sands China, took to the stage at one point last night to explain the origins of the AFA, now in its 10th year. “Ten years ago a group of film enthusiasts got together and decided that with the growth of the Asian film industry, why are there no awards?”

“So we set up the awards,” he continued, “to promote a space for young filmmakers and enthusiasts to share ideas and learn from each other. We are doing our best to ensure that Asian films come to the forefront” in terms of international recognition.

French actress, director and screenwriter, Sophie Marceau, was also invited on stage as a guest of honor.

“In France we are very fond of Asian movies,” said Marceau. “It’s amazing to be part of something like this.”

Members of the Busan International Film Festival, the Hong Kong International Film Festival, and the Japan Film Festival – the three partner organizations behind the Asian Film Awards – were also in attendance, with some of their representatives announcing the winners of various categories.

‘The Assassin,’ a joint Hong Kong, Taiwan and mainland China production, was awarded ‘Best Film’

the same film.

In other areas, South Korea’s Lee Ji-yeon and Shim Hyun-seob won Best Costume Design for “The Throne”, while India’s Prasad Sutar was awarded Best



Chinese actress Zhou Yun poses after winning the Best Supporting Actress



French actress Sophie Marceau



Japanese actor Tadanobu Asano



Japanese actress Kirin Kiki poses after winning the Lifetime Achievement award



Members of South Korean girl group Apink pose on the red carpet



South Korean model-actress Clara Lee Sung-min

20 years of rugby in Macau celebrated tomorrow

AP PHOTO



tches, with the rugby participants ranging in age from 5 to 10 years old. According to organizers, this is more than double the size of the previous local festival.

“We are delighted to be hosting these clubs from Hong Kong,” said Macau Bats President Simon Carrington. “We have even had to turn some clubs away as this is a popular event.”

“Although we are only a fraction of the size of most Hong Kong clubs, rugby continues to grow in Macau as parents discover the benefits for their children. We teach teamwork, sportsmanship, respect, fitness and fun – values that we believe are important for life, as well as in sport,” the president added.

At the conclusion of the kid’s rugby festival, the Macau Rugby Union will welcome a friendly game with Hong Kong’s Valley Rugby Football Club, also at the TIS. Kicking off at 3:30 p.m., the game will be Valley Rugby Football Club’s first 15’s-a-side match in Macau after their strong performance in the Hong Kong season. **DB**

To celebrate 20 years of rugby in Macau, and the return of rugby to the summer Olympics, the Macau Rugby Union and the Macau Bats Rugby are organizing a full day of sporting events tomorrow at The International School of Macau (TIS) sports ground.

The day’s activities will commence at 11:30 a.m. when the Macau Bats children’s rugby group is expecting to host as many as 400 children from Hong Kong and their parents for a “Mini Rugby Festival.”

A total of 31 teams from 8 clubs will compete in 66 ma-

250 new taxi licenses opened to public tender



THE Transport Bureau has invited bids for 250 new licenses, each covering the operation of a single taxi.

The 250 licenses will each be valid for eight years, and cannot be transferred or extended, according to the notice published in the Official Gazette this week. The bidding process, by public tender, is a response to the phased expiration of existing time-limited taxi licenses and increasing public demand for taxi services.

Bidders must be local residents and can submit only one tender for a maximum of one license. Individuals or groups of

individuals are allowed to bid for the licenses.

The minimum bid price for each license is MOP200,000, and there is an additional 10 percent stamp duty. A bid deposit of MOP50,000 is required, payable either in cash or via bank draft.

The public tender documents are now available at the Transport Bureau’s Public Relations Office. According to a statement issued yesterday by the Government Information Bureau, submitted tenders will be opened at the IPM Multisport Pavilion, located at Rua do Instituto Politécnico, at 10 a.m. on April 17.

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW | STEVE VICKERS

Gaming should 'not grow faster than the national growth rate of GDP'

IN an interview with Macau Daily Times, Steve Vickers, the high profile CEO of Steve Vickers and Associates, a political and corporate risk consultancy, addressed the Macau gaming sector's "current market turbulence and strategic issues" in the light of Beijing's policies, and the shortfall in new gaming table allocations. He also noted that Beijing is inclined to "favor local champion(s) over the foreign investors" when concessions are renewed in 2022. Vickers also discussed the "moderate" likelihood of an Islamic terror attack in Macau.

On Macau gaming, Vickers, whose company specializes in risk mitigation, corporate intelligence and risk consulting, said the current "potentially turbulent and uncertain phase" is more "systemic... while the center of focus for most analysts are symptoms of the larger issues at play." He outlined as principal factors "PRC political policies and machinations, PRC economic policies, Macau Government policy issues," as well as gaming table numbers and allocations, and the 2022 reissuing of gaming concessions and subconcessions.

The severe decline in VIP betting, an area which previously provided the overwhelming majority of gaming revenue, has been blamed on the massive ongoing anti-corruption campaign in the mainland, in conjunction with China's moves to stem illegal capital outflows. These two elements have contrived to scare off the vital high stakes players from China. Even so the mainland clampdown on underground banking, he believes, is the main reason revenues of junket operators who bring in VIP room gamblers, have crashed. Junket operators have been facing hard times as their unpaid debts mount, because "as shadow banks have closed their lending windows, many gamblers who used these facilities to service their gambling debts have been left with no viable option... the single biggest reason accounts receivables [unpaid debts] of junket operators have been steadily climbing."

In the past, Beijing's "tacit acquiescence to the violation of its currency regulations, [is] the primary reason Macau has prospered as a gaming hub catering to (mostly PRC) gamblers". Vickers notes that this "had served Beijing's fiscal requirements" providing "a much-needed channel to bleed off excess liquidity from a (then) red hot Chinese economy." Howe-

BLOOMBERG FILE PHOTO



Being prudently prepared for [terrorist risks] is the right approach. However, it is equally important that we go about our business in a normal fashion.

ver, the economic slowdown and reassessment of liquidity movements "will have a severe impact on gaming in Macau," he added.

Vickers said that other Beijing policies affecting gaming growth are the requirements that "Macau gaming not grow faster than the national growth rate of GDP" and that the city diversify its economy.

The government of Macau has been hampered by a need to second guess "signals" from Beijing where major

gaming policy decisions are made, he said. However, he postulated that improved communication lines will see this change. A major issue the city government has to decide on is the number of new gaming tables for new casinos due to come on line by 2017. This decision has the capacity to greatly impact the profitability of new gaming projects, as the current policy will see a massive shortfall. Vickers said that the casinos expect "the government to cave in." However, he cautioned that "our assessment, based on our understanding of how this issue is driven by Beijing, is quite different."

Vickers warns too that Western concessionaires face much stronger local competition in the 2022 granting of gaming licenses. He noted "another economic policy that has gained favor with the current PRC government is one involving elements of economic nationalism, favoring local champion(s) over the foreign investors in the same sector." The original newcomers advantage of "badly needed Western gaming experience and management practices... will not be so true in 2022."

The former head of the Royal Hong Kong Police Force's Criminal Intelligence Bureau downplayed the risk of an Islamic terror attack in Macau and Hong Kong, despite noting that Xinjiang terrorists struck again this month in Guangzhou, and there are significant fears of the impact fighters returning from Syria may have in future terror assaults. "My view is that prudent precautions should be taken but that the overall risk is currently moderate. Hong Kong and Macau are two cities with open transport and communications... no more or less vulnerable than other targets. The truth about ter-



rorism today, is that, if you take the Paris attacks for example, that a group of returned Syrian fighters, and others, took part."

However, he admitted that an attack could not be ruled out. "Xinjiang terror is a real factor in China and most recently we saw an attack on Guangdong Railway Station. So it would be wrong to state that there is no possibility of an attack in Hong Kong and Macau. But the threat is currently assessed to be moderate."

Local casino magnates, Steve Wynn and Sheldon

Another policy that has gained favor with the current PRC gov't [involves] economic nationalism, favoring local champion(s) over the foreign investors [in gaming].

Adelson of Wynn Resorts and Sands respectively, are Jewish, an additional factor that could make them Islamic terrorist targets. In addition, Adelson is a well publicized supporter of Israel's right wing nationalist Likud Party. "The ownership of major Macau casinos by Americans, and the Islamic disapproval of gaming, could be a factor in attracting the attention of Muslim terrorists," Vickers conceded. However, he underlined that the issue is hypothetical in the absence of intelligence indicators pointing to an attack.

"Whilst the Macau casinos might be an appealing target to Islamic terror groups because of gambling activities and American ownership, there is no current intelligence to suggest that this is a likely scenario."

Vickers urged preparedness as well as getting on with life, so as to not send signals of fear to terror groups.

"Being prudently prepared for such [an incident] is the right approach. However equally important is that we go about our business in a normal fashion and that we do not let such threats intimidate us." He added that "the possibility of a terrorism attack on Macau has been overblown by certain media outlets."

Deputy UN ambassador pleads guilty in Macau bribery scheme

Patricia Hurtado

THE deputy ambassador to the United Nations from the Dominican Republic pleaded guilty to engaging in a years-long bribery and money-laundering scheme involving a Macau billionaire and the former president of the UN's General Assembly.

Francis Lorenzo said he served as a middleman funneling bribes to promote the business interests of Macau developer Ng Lap Seng, chairman of the Sun Kian Ip Group, while admitting to charges of conspiracy, money-laundering, bribery and tax fraud. Some of the hundreds of thousands of dollars allegedly paid by Ng were channeled through offshore bank accounts, Lorenzo said.

The payments to John Ashe when he was serving as the UN General Assembly president were made to influence the agency's official business, Assistant U.S. Attorney Janis Echenberg told a Manhattan federal judge. Ng sought Ashe's support to win the UN's endorsement for the construction of a conference center in Macau, according to the prosecutor. Lorenzo also arranged for payments to be made to "other foreign officials" to take unidentified actions that would



Francis Lorenzo (second from left), a suspended ambassador from the Dominican Republic and former U.N. diplomat, leaves court after pleading guilty to bribery charges

benefit Ng, she said.

Lorenzo told U.S. District Judge Vernon Broderick at a hearing Wednesday that in June 2014, he helped get a USD200,000 bribe paid into a foreign bank account belonging to Ashe, saying "the purpose was to influence John Ashe to the benefit of Ng Lap Seng and others."

As part of his plea agreement, Lorenzo will provide evidence to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Internal Revenue Service and is prepared to be a government witness in the case, Broderick said in court.

"Mr Lorenzo has chosen to plead guilty and accept responsi-

bility for his conduct," his lawyer Brian Beiber said after court. "He's looking forward to resolving all issues and closing this chapter of his life sooner rather than later."

Ashe, Ng Lap Seng and Jeff Yin, an aide to Ng, have pleaded not guilty to the charges. Ashe's lawyer, Joseph Sumofsky, and Sabrina Shroff, a lawyer for Yin, declined to comment on the plea.

Ng's lawyers, Benjamin Brafman and Hugh Mo, were in court for Lorenzo's guilty plea and said their client will continue fighting the charges.

"Today's plea by Mr Lorenzo does not in any way affect Mr

Ng," Brafman said after court. "He's determined to proceed to trial. Mr Ng strongly maintains that he is personally innocent of the crimes he's been accused of."

Ashe, who was also the ambassador to the UN for Antigua and Barbuda, is accused of omitting more than \$1.2 million, including the proceeds of the alleged bribery scheme, from his tax returns.

The U.S. says he received money for a family vacation and the construction of a basketball court at his house in Dobbs Ferry, New York. Some funds went to pay his mortgage and other items such as a \$40,000 lease on a new

BMW, \$54,000 for a pair of Rolex watches and \$59,000 for a single order of custom-tailored suits, Manhattan U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara said.

Ashe is also accused of steering a Chinese technology executive to a Kenyan UN official in order to facilitate meetings between the Chinese and government officials in Nairobi.

Ng sought Ashe's support to win the UN's endorsement for the construction of a conference center in Macau, according to the prosecutor

Two others charged in the case have pleaded guilty. Shiwei Yan, who headed a New York foundation, admitted she paid bribes to Ashe to win his influence both at the UN and in Antigua. Heidi Hong Piao, a businesswoman, pleaded guilty to helping pay almost \$1 million in bribes from sources in China to Ashe.

The case is U.S. v. Ashe, 15-cr-00706, U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York (Manhattan). **Bloomberg**

MSC to hold award ceremonies for 'dino' contests

THE Macau Science Center (MSC) will hold an award presentation ceremony on Sunday for the "Dino Coloring Contest" and "Multimedia Design Contest". Both initiatives were launched in a bid to raise public interest in dinosaurs.

The two contests were instigated ahead of the "Living Dinosaurs" exhibi-

tion that will open on March 23.

The "Dino Coloring Contest" award ceremony will be held between 2:45 p.m. and 3 p.m. on Sunday in the Lobby Exhibition Gallery at the Macao Science Center. It will be immediately followed by the "Multimedia Design Contest" ceremony, which will be hosted in Meeting Rooms

3-4 in the Convention Center at the MSC.

Winners of the "Dino Coloring Contest" will be awarded prizes that include a certificate of merit and a bookstore cash coupon.

In a statement, the center said that both of the contests had exceeded their "most positive expectations."



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LI Ka-shing said China's property prices are "reasonable," as government stimulus has sent prices soaring in the nation's biggest cities.

"As a developer, I don't think housing prices are surging too much in mainland China," said Li, who spoke yesterday at a press briefing accompanying earnings for CK Hutchison Holdings Ltd. and Cheung Kong Property Holdings Ltd. "People might have seen prices jump in one or two projects in Shenzhen, but in other Chinese cities, it probably only rose by less than 10 percent."

CK Property reported its first full-year earnings after Li spun off real estate assets from his conglomerate in June. The company, which announced an underlying profit of HKD15.6 billion (USD2 billion), said the real estate market in Hong Kong and China remained challenging. In Hong Kong, home sales plunged to the lowest in 25 years last month. On the mainland, where the developer is also active, prices fell for most of last year amid uncertainty over the economy and a glut of homes before rebounding sharply in the latter part because of government stimulus.

"Don't speculate in the property market," Li said at the briefing.

Li Ka-shing says China property prices 'reasonable'



CK Property said property prices in Hong Kong and China will continue to be affected by increases in construction costs as

well as development and marketing expenses. The market, especially in Hong Kong, is also seeing increasing competition in

land auctions from new entrants, the company said.

"It is therefore not an easy task to acquire land at reasonable costs," CK Property said.

CK Property reported profit attributable to shareholders of HKD17.1 billion on revenue of HKD58.8 billion. The firm derived 60 percent of its full-year sales from China, recording sales of HKD29.4 billion. Sales reached HKD15.9 billion in Hong Kong, about 32 percent of the total, according to the earnings statement.

"The property market condi-

tions remained challenging in Hong Kong and on the mainland during last year," according to the statement. "All development and marketing plans have proceeded cautiously according to their scheduled timetable."

CK Property indicated that it may seek to expand beyond the real estate business, without giving details.

The company is "is open to considering various opportunities to generate revenue from other different sources," it said. The firm didn't provide any other details on its plans. **Bloomberg**

'Brexit' would prompt UK retrenchment

BILLIONAIRE Li Ka-shing, one of the biggest foreign investors in the U.K., said he'd scale back investments from the country in the unlikely event that Britain exits from the European Union.

"If 'Brexit' really happens, we will surely decrease our investments," CK Hutchison Holdings Ltd.'s chairman,

who's also Hong Kong's richest man, said during an annual press briefing after earnings. "The possibility of Brexit is small if British people care about their own interests."

Li, who has businesses ranging from infrastructure to telecommunications in the U.K., is among the most prominent

global businessmen to voice concerns over a potential Brexit. Voters will decide on the U.K.'s future in the EU at a June 23 referendum.

Li spoke after his flagship company, CK Hutchison, yesterday delivered annual profits that edged above analysts' estimates.

AD

Macau Rugby Day

Game Day
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REAL ESTATE MATTERS
The Challenges Facing Macau
 (final part in this 4 part series)

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



JULIET RISDON

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Macau is facing some serious challenges, and these challenges will almost certainly affect property prices either directly or indirectly. If Macau is going to prosper in the long term and would like a healthy property market, hard questions have to be asked and hopefully answered. It's easy to criticize, so there are also suggestions for potential solutions. Whether they are liked or not will be largely a matter of opinion. Last week we examined education, and in this final article we look at the other challenges Macau must address.

HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL CARE

Receiving health care in Macau is perfectly aligned with its reputation. It's a gamble. Speaking from experience, a person can receive excellent medical care at a subsidized cost that would be difficult to beat in any general hospital worldwide. However, they could also receive treatment that is downright negligent, potentially leading to permanent injury or worse. The problem is the inconsistency, and the care and attention received will depend largely on the attending nurses, doctor or surgeon. Talking with people living in Ma-

cau, some who grew up here and some who did not, the majority state that they would prefer to receive medical attention in Hong Kong where the diagnosis is trusted and there is faith in the system as well as the individuals. Is there any reason that Macau is not actively seeking the world's leading medical facilities? Some say it's a case of protectionism again, whilst another popular opinion is to do with the way the medical profession is administered and the lack of openness that the system promulgates. Again, there is no silver bullet. As we are aware, medical care is a difficult issue in almost every country both rich and poor. But perhaps its time to look at successful practices and administration systems elsewhere that create a higher degree of consistency, especially if at least one hospital staffed and operated to international standards is established in Macau against which the others can be measured.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The size and wealth of Macau make it almost a perfect place to practice 'green' initiatives. From the generation of power to the fuelling of cars, from the recycling of waste to the awareness of littering, it does not appear to

be anywhere near the top of the governmental agenda. In one small but illustrative example, the trails in Coloane are slowly being widened and resurfaced... with concrete. The last remaining chance that Macau people have of connecting with nature is being taken away. Once the 'lungs' of Macau, Coloane has been targeted for development. The damage being done is growing every day, and will not be reversed. Can anything be done? Possibly, but it's unlikely. Perhaps swapping development land on Coloane for something of similar value on Hengqin. Giving a clear directive to IACM that trails are to be maintained, not developed. On a wider scale, even setting some goals for electric powered vehicles?

All of these elements affect the quality of life, and ultimately whether Macau is an attractive place to live or not. If it isn't attractive, the only thing that will bring people to Macau is money, and that's simply not sustainable in the long term. We often hear the phrase 'Macau for Macau people'. Whether we like it or not, Macau relies heavily on money from outside Macau, a fact that has not gone unnoticed for the past two years especially.

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**SANDS ANNOUNCES
PARISIAN'S
RECRUITMENT FAIR**



Sands China Ltd is set to hold its first large-scale recruitment fair for The Parisian Macao at the Duhnang Ballroom at Sands Cotai Central on March 21 and 22, open to Macau residents aged 21 and above.

According to a press release, vacancies are available for over 150 positions, ranging from rank and file, to manager level. Approximately 40 departments will be represented – from finance to front office, to housekeeping, and food and beverage – spanning both gaming and non-gaming areas of operations.

In addition to offering standard work transfers for permanent placement at The Parisian Macao, Sands China has launched "My Way," a program that allows current gaming team members to work in non-gaming departments and positions at The Parisian Macao for a set period of time. "My Way" offers team members opportunities to discover new areas of professional interest – and the option to engineer diverse career paths at the new property.

DOLLAR DOWN

Eurozone core inflation revised up, helping euro to climb

Pan Pylas, London

UNDERLYING inflation pressures in the 19-country eurozone were not as subdued in February as initially thought, official figures showed yesterday, in a development that's helped the euro climb to five-month highs against the dollar.

The European Union's statistical agency said that the core rate, which strips out energy, food, alcohol and tobacco, was 0.8 percent in the year to February, up from the initial estimate of 0.7 percent.

The headline number, which includes those typically more volatile items, was left unchanged at minus 0.2 percent. The negative rate was the main reason behind the European Central Bank's decision last week to expand its stimulus measures for the eurozone economy.

The ECB is worried that low or negative inflation will become embedded into expect-



tations to the detriment of the wider economy. For example, if consumers expect a sustained period of falling prices, or so-called deflation, they may delay spending. And businesses may opt against investing.

The figures showed 11 countries that use the euro have inflation rates below zero. Cyprus and Spain have remarkably weak inflation rates of minus 2.2 percent and minus 1 percent. Others like Austria and Belgium aren't suffering the same phenomenon, with posi-

tive inflation rates of 1 percent and 1.1 percent respectively.

Given the backdrop across most of the eurozone, the ECB backed another big package of stimulus measures last week. As well as expanding its monthly government bond purchases, it cut all its main interest rates, including a surprise reduction in the rate banks pay to borrow from the ECB to zero. It hopes the package will shore up economic activity, boosting inflation.

The ECB will be hoping that with oil prices having recently recovered from multi-year lows inflation will start pushing higher in the coming months. The ECB aims to have the inflation rate just below 2 percent.

Few economists think the headline rate is heading back toward that target anytime soon given tepid economic growth in the eurozone, a slowing Chinese economy and low inflation expectations.

Danae Kyriakopoulou, senior economist at the Centre for Economics and Business Research,

expects the headline rate across the eurozone to at least start rising soon largely because of a pickup in oil prices. However, she thinks the core rate could actually start to slide back as the increase in oil prices dents demand for other goods.

"The rises in oil prices act to reverse the boost that consumers have enjoyed given the eurozone's status of a net oil-importing region," she said.

ECB President Mario Draghi indicated that further cuts in the rate the central bank charges commercial banks on their deposits were unlikely and that has helped the euro push higher – lower rates can weigh on a currency as the returns available to investors are reduced. Wednesday's decision by the U.S. Federal Reserve to keep its own interest rates unchanged and its suggestion that increases this year will be limited have also pushed the euro higher.

Following the figures, the euro was up 1 percent at USD1.1328, its highest level since Oct. 20. **AP**

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CHINA-AUSTRALIA

German submarine builder warns Canberra of Japanese risk

Rod McGuirk, Canberra

A German executive vying for a lucrative Australian submarine contract yesterday said that awarding the contract to Japan could damage Australia's relationship with China.

German's ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems, Japan's Mitsubishi and French company DCNS are in the running to build 12 conventional submarines that the Australian navy expects will cost at least 56 billion Australian dollars (USD43 billion). The government expects to award the contract this year, with Japan regarded as a favorite early in the bidding process due to its close military relationship with Australia and the United States.

Hans Atzpodien, the German company's chairman, described the Japanese bid as a choice for Australia between its relationship with China, its biggest trading partner, and Japan, its second biggest partner.

"Maybe it is an advantage dealing with us not to be in a position where you have to — let's say — decide between certain heavyweights of the Pacific area," Atzpodien told Australia's National Press Club.

Japanese defense officials argue that the military partnership between Japan and Aus-



Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop (left), and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (right)

tralia will enhance peace and stability, especially maritime security, in the Asia-Pacific region amid China's military buildup in the East and South China seas.

Despite strong economic ties, Tokyo's relations with Beijing are strained, divided by antagonisms dating back to before World War II. The points of

friction are numerous, ranging from what China says is a lack of a proper apology from Japan for its invasion and wartime acts, while Tokyo sees Beijing's growing power as a security threat and competition for influence in Asia.

Relations have been generally calm since violent anti-Japanese riots broke out in sev-

eral Chinese cities in 2012 after Japan nationalized a chain of uninhabited islands claimed by China.

The submarine deal would be Japan's first fully fledged military technology transfer since World War II.

Australian government ministers have expressed no preference for any bid.

Former Prime Minister Tony Abbott said during a speech in Tokyo last month that for Japan, the deal was strategic while for the others, it was of commercial value.

None of the contenders have ever built a conventional submarine large enough to meet Australia's long-distance requirements.

Germany is proposing a variation of its Type 214 submarine made for Australian specifications called a Type 216. France is offering a diesel-electric version of the Barracuda-class nuclear submarine under construction for the French navy. Japan proposes a longer version of its Soryu-class diesel-powered propulsion system with advanced stealth capabilities.

Atspodien said that the Germans could build all 12 subs in Australia for AUD20 billion — less than half the cost that Australia is budgeting for.

Hugh White, Australian National University professor of strategic studies, warned that Japan's long-term cooperation in the submarine contract might hinge on Australia forming an alliance that could bring Australia into conflict with China.

"Tokyo expects that in return for its help to build our submarines, it would receive not just many billions of dollars, but clear understandings that Australia will support Japan politically, strategically and even militarily against China," White wrote in a Fairfax Media column this week.

The Chinese Embassy in Canberra did not immediately respond to a request for comment. **AP**

BUSINESS

Sausage maker defaults after dodging nonpayment in October

THIS time, the Chinese sausage maker that dodged default last year has run out of luck.

Nanjing Yurun Foods Co. said it failed to make full payment for 500 million yuan (USD77.1 million) bonds due yesterday, according to a statement on the Chinamoney website. The company, based in the eastern province of Jiangsu, avoided nonpayment in a turnaround in October.

Chinese companies are struggling with debt repayment as Premier Li Keqiang aims to weed out zombie companies amid the worst economic slowdown in a quarter century. Zibo Hongda Mining Co., an iron ore miner based in the eastern province of Shandong, said this month it didn't raise enough

funds to make its full debt payment due March 8. At least 11 companies have now reneged on bond obligations in the past two years even as the government loosened monetary policy.

Nanjing Yurun, a unit of Hong Kong-listed China Yurun Food Group Ltd., sold the 500 million yuan of bonds in 2015 with a coupon rate of 6.45 percent. It must repay 532.25 million yuan in principal and interest, according to a statement on March 9 posted on the Chinamoney website.

Nanjing Yurun is suffering from a cash shortage and sluggish demand for meat products, the company said in the statement yesterday. The company had a loss of 524 million yuan in the first nine months of last year, according to the sta-

tement. A call to the firm went unanswered. A call to Han Wei, the contact person listed on the company's March 9 statement, went unanswered. There was no immediate reply from China Yurun after an operator took questions by phone and said someone may reply.

Nanjing Yurun said March 9 it wasn't sure it could repay the notes because its director Zhu Yicai was placed under house arrest, which indirectly has had an impact on its operations.

Shanghai Brilliance Credit Rating & Investors Service Co. on March 15 cut the rating for Nanjing Yurun to CCC from BB and placed it on negative watch list, citing liquidity risks and debt repayment pressure, according to a statement on Chinamoney. **Bloomberg**

E-COMMERCE

Alibaba taps virtual reality for 3D online shopping experience

ALIBABA Group Holding Ltd. wants to use virtual reality to enhance the shopping experience for its 400 million users and has set up a lab to research a technology it expects to become as common as television.

The Chinese e-commerce emporium is exploring how virtual reality technology can be applied to its other services, including online games and video streaming, according to an e-mailed statement from the company yesterday.

Alibaba is revealing for the first time its foray into the emerging market, which included leading a round of fundraising for U.S.-based Magic Leap Inc. The virtual reality and augmented reality hardware industry is expected to reach USD110 billion by 2025, Alibaba cited Goldman Sachs Group Inc. research as saying.

The e-commerce company's GnomeMagic Lab will work closely with its other units and affiliates, including video streaming site Youku Tudou Inc. and Alibaba Pictures Group, the company said.

Alibaba will work on creating music and video and help promote VR-hardware manufacturers on its e-commerce platforms, it said. The company has already created three-dimensional visuals for hundreds of products and will issue standards for merchants to create VR-enabled shopping options. **Bloomberg**

Eric Talmadge, Masik Pass

TO view the humbling limits of round after round of international sanctions against North Korea, come to Masik Pass. It isn't a secret military facility where Kim Jong Un's best and brightest are hard at work developing nuclear warheads and long-range missiles.

It's a ski resort.

The U.N. has been trying for years to punish North Korea for its nuclear program by barring trade not only in weapons but in luxury items, in hopes of making Pyongyang's elite feel some pain. If they feel pain at Masik Pass, it's more likely because they've had a tumble on their French Rossignol skis.

The resort boasts the amenities of a first-world ski destination — a luxury hotel, a half-dozen upscale restaurants and a well-equipped, professionally staffed ski rental shop. Visitors can stock up on European chocolates, drink their fill of Heineken beer, even buy T-shirts with themselves and the slopes Photoshopped and emblazoned across the back.

Imported snowmobiles from China were buzzing up and down its slopes even as the U.N. Security Council was discussing how to crack down after the North's latest nuclear test in January and subsequent rocket launch. Despite an occasional power outage, its Doppelmayr chairlifts from Austria were working just fine.

To its critics, Masik Pass is a shining example of how Kim's regime has been able to pour resources into prestige projects and flaunt restrictions designed to block its access to imported luxury items, set through four prior rounds of U.N. sanctions. Part of the problem is that countries disagree over what items are banned.

Masik is also important because it is a signature project of Kim Jong Un himself. It opened in 2013, just two years after Kim, who lived in Switzerland when he was a teenager, assumed power.

Adding salt to the wounds of ardent sanctions supporters, the resort has become a big hit with Western tourists.

Though exact figures on how many have gone and how much they have spent are not available, Masik Pass is part of package tours offered by the main tourism agencies that specialize in North Korea, which has for several years been trying hard to build its still-nascent tourism sector.

Andreas Hofer, a well-traveled skier and lawyer from Austria who recently visited the resort, described it as "surprising, and full of unexpected luxury." He rated its slopes as somewhat less than stellar for the true ski enthusiast, but gave it bonus points for being among

AP PHOTO



The hotel at the Masik Pass Ski Resort is perched against the hills in Wonsan

NORTH KOREA

Ski resort's amenities defy UN luxury-imports ban

the most exotic ski locations on the planet.

"Nobody from abroad will come for the skiing only," he said in an interview by email. "They want to have an idea about new ways and developments in North Korea. And the hospitality and friendliness and welcoming are ample compensation for the more limited skiing."

North Korea, which obviously opposes the sanctions, argues that skiing isn't a luxury anyway, but a sport for the masses.

Masik, it claims, has opened up the door for the country to provide large numbers of common people with recreation enjoyed by millions all over the world. It's a facility where the North can train serious skiers who may one day compete internationally, maybe even in the upcoming Winter Games — which, it's worth noting, will be held in Pyeongchang, South Korea, in 2018.

Indeed, most skiers on Masik are North Korean. Many come in groups organized by their work units, trade or community associations or schools. The prices for North Koreans are far lower than for foreigners and the lodgings are much more

modest.

But Washington, the strongest advocate of sanctions, sees Masik within the larger context of cracking down on any income streams Pyongyang can use to fund its nuclear program, or reward the North Korean elite for their loyalty to the regime.

"We have eyes on how they spend their money, what they look at, what merchandise, what goods that they purchase

■ Masik is [also] important because it is a signature project of Kim Jong Un himself

from abroad. We try to target those to limit, frankly, their ability to enjoy themselves," State Department spokesman Mark Toner said at a recent news conference.

Actually cracking down, however, has been a challenge.

According to the latest U.N. Security Council report exami-

ning enforcement of sanctions, efforts have been severely undermined by the North's ability to use its diplomatic missions abroad to get the goods it wants. It also has acquired goods in roundabout ways that involve passage through multiple countries. Manufacturers, it said, often have "no idea about their final destination."

The report also noted that not all countries agree on what they are supposed to be banning to begin with.

Sanctioned luxury items range from caviar and gems to yachts and limousines. But each country is essentially allowed to choose what it does or does not ban. That gives the North a lot of wiggle room.

In a section devoted to Masik Pass, the report said Beijing acknowledges Chinese companies provided ski lifts and other equipment but said it was "of the view that skiing is a popular sport for people, and ski equipment or relative services are not included in the list of prohibited luxury goods."

Other countries interpreted the same luxury goods category to include such things as snowmobiles and certain makes of snow groomers.

"This creates a situation of

uneven practice by member states," the report concluded.

Masik's success and past failures to enforce sanctions have exasperated Washington.

"China does not enforce the mandated ban on luxury goods," Bonnie Glaser, of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said in testimony before the U.S. Congress in January. "Chinese customs data shows that North Korea imported USD2.09 billion worth of luxury goods between 2012 and 2014."

Her conclusion? Washington should consider sanctioning Beijing, too.

The latest sanctions on North Korea, announced by the Security Council earlier this month, try to close some of those loopholes.

Explicitly banned are "luxury watches: wrist, pocket, and other with a case of precious metal or of metal clad with precious metal;" "aquatic recreational vehicles (such as personal watercraft);" "items of lead crystal;" and "recreational sports equipment."

And just to make sure everyone is on the same page, the Security Council added: "snowmobiles (valued greater than \$2,000)." AP

AP PHOTO



Britain's Prince Harry

NEPAL

Prince Harry to tour quake-hit areas

Binaj Gurubacharya, Kathmandu

WHEN Britain's Prince Harry visits Nepal this weekend, ordinary people hope his tour of earthquake-hit areas will draw attention to the country's struggle to recover from last year's disaster. Rebuilding is slow, and tens of thousands remain homeless.

"Hopefully when a big prince comes to these alleys and the world's media will see how miserable our lives are, we will get some help," said Ram Kaji, who was selling potatoes on the street near his damaged home in Patan, a historic district near the capital of Kathmandu.

The April 25, 2015, quake killed nearly 9,000 people, destroyed about 1 million homes and damaged many old temples, palaces and other old structures in Patan and the capital.

During his five-day trip, the 31-year-old prince will also visit a camp for displaced survivors and stay with a family whose men served in the famed Gurkha regiments in the British army — units that Harry served with in Afghanistan.

"He has a huge amount of ad-

miration for the resilience of the people of the country, particularly in response to the earthquakes last year," Kensington Palace said in a statement.

Harry is the first British royal to visit the Himalayan country since the monarchy was abolished in 2008 following street protests. Since then, Nepal has turned into a republic, with a president chosen by a parliament. The prince will meet with President Bidhya Devi Bhandari.

Authorities, however, have been slow to push ahead with rebuilding efforts. A government reconstruction agency was finally appointed in December but has yet to provide promised aid money to displaced families and guidelines to build new houses and structures.

People who live around the shiny Golden Temple in Patan — which Queen Elizabeth visited about 30 years ago — hope Harry's visit will generate greater awareness about rebuilding needs and bring in funds to repair damages to the many of historic structures.

The Buddhist shrine that dates back 1,400 years was mostly spared by the earthquake but the adjoining monastery,

prayer house and assembly halls have been damaged. Only plastic sheets are keeping the rain off and the damaged areas are closed to the public due to danger of collapse. Harry will also negotiate a narrow alley alongside brick and mud houses that are supported by wooden beams.

Puspa Raj Bajracharya, who is on the committee that takes care of the Golden Temple, said they have sent requests and proposals to the government, saying it was getting dangerous for the devotees who come to the temple, but have not received any response. Repairs are estimated to cost about 25 million rupees (USD227,000), but so far only a fraction of that has been collected from private donors.

"His grandmother had visited the temple in the 1980s when she came to Nepal with her husband and now the young prince is coming," Bajracharya said. "We hope when the prince comes to our temple we will get the attention of the world to come help us."

Prince Harry will also travel to Bhaktapur, a historic town east of Kathmandu that suffered even more damage, and visit a nearby temporary camp for

about 250 people made homeless by the disaster, a quarter of whom are children.

In Pokhara, a lakeside town that is a base for trekkers in central Nepal, Harry will meet several retired Gurkha soldiers and their families. The prince served with a Gurkha battalion during a tour of duty in Afghanistan.

The Gurkhas have served in the British army for 200 years and have a reputation for being brave, tenacious fighters. Thousands of young Nepali men attempt to pass the grueling test to become a Gurkha, but only a few get through.

Harry will honor those killed in battle and spend a night with a local family.

For years, the Gurkhas fought for equal pay and pension to their British counterparts until a landmark 2008 court ruling that ended most discriminatory practices. Gurkha soldiers now receive equal salary and pension, and their families are allowed to settle in Britain. However, those who retired before 2008 still get roughly one-third of the pension.

The Gurkhas are proud of their heritage and identity, and Harry's visit is a "big event for us Gurkhas," said Krishna Kumar Ale, who served in the British army between 1969 and 1998 when he retired as a major. He recalled seeing the young Harry during a visit to a military exercise in Britain, and said Harry once had a Gurkha orderly.

"He is a good friend of the Gurkhas," he said, "and has always been close with the Gurkhas." AP

VIETNAM

Southern Mekong delta faces worst drought in history

VIETNAM'S southern Mekong Delta, the country's main rice growing region, is experiencing the worst drought and saline intrusion in recent history that has affected more than half a million people, officials said yesterday.

The drought could result in the loss of up to 1 million tons of rice, but is not expected to affect Vietnam's status as the world's third largest exporter of grain, said Ma Quang Trung, a department director at the Agriculture Ministry.

Vietnam exports an average 7 million tons a year, behind Thailand and India. Thailand too has been hit hard by the drought.

The water shortage could drive many farmers into poverty, especially if there are no rains between now and the peak of the dry season in late April, Trung said.

He blamed the drought on the El Nino weather phenomenon and excessive construction of more than 10 hydropower dams on the upper stream of the river.

Vietnamese Foreign Ministry spokesman Le Hai Binh told reporters that neighboring China has doubled the amount of water discharged from a dam to help alleviate the crisis.

Binh also said the ministry was working with China and other Mekong River countries toward sustainable use of the river's resources.

The level of inland saline intrusion was unprecedented, resulting in damage to some 180,000 hectares (444,780 acres) of paddy fields, Trung said.

The government has provided some USD1.5 million in aid to farmers in three most affected provinces in the delta, according to state media. AP



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Anna Edgerton, Arnaldo Galvao and Raymond Colitt

BRAZIL | CORRUPTION

Judge suspends Lula's appointment to Rousseff cabinet

A federal judge in Brazil issued an injunction to suspend the appointment of Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva as President Dilma Rousseff's chief of staff, further deepening a political crisis that has paralyzed Latin America's largest nation.

Judge Itagiba Catta Preta Neto from Brasilia argued that Lula's appointment could lead to his interference in police and judicial activities, according to a copy of the decision.

He also said that Rousseff may have broken administrative laws. The attorney general's office said in a statement it will appeal the injunction. The presidential press office declined to comment on the suspension of the cabinet appointment.

The injunction underscores the volatile political situation in Brazil, where Rousseff is struggling to remain in power amid rising clamor for her ouster. Lawmakers are planning to form a multi-party committee that will recommend whether to impeach her, as thousands of protesters in major cities rallied asking for her removal.

"The political crisis spilled from the presidential palace to Congress, to the streets and now to the courts," said Gabriel Petrus, a political analyst at business consulting firm Barral M Jorge. "She made a risky bet by tapping Lula. It doesn't look like it's paying off."

Earlier yesterday, Lula joined the cabinet in a ce-



Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff and former Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, attend a Workers Party's campaign rally in Sao Paulo

remony at the presidential palace, where government supporters chanted "There will be no coup." Outside the

palace in Brasilia, as well as cities including Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, protesters demanded Lula's arrest and

Rousseff's ouster.

"Coup supporters won't bring me to my knees," Rousseff said at the ceremony.

Vice President Michel Temer skipped the event, increasing speculation that his PMDB party, the largest in Congress, would depart from the ruling coalition.

Tension escalated on Wed-

Rousseff is struggling to remain in power amid rising clamor for her ouster

nesday after Federal Judge Sergio Moro released phone recordings that, according to critics, suggest Rousseff appointed Lula as minister to shield him from a criminal probe. The conversation between Rousseff and Lula, obtained through a police wire tap, aired on television and sparked demonstrations around Brazil, with rallies carrying on into the night.

Financial markets rallied yesterday on bets that impeachment could pave the way for a new government with a stronger mandate to revive economic growth. The real appreciated 3.5 percent to 3.61 per U.S. dollar in early-afternoon trading. **Bloomberg**

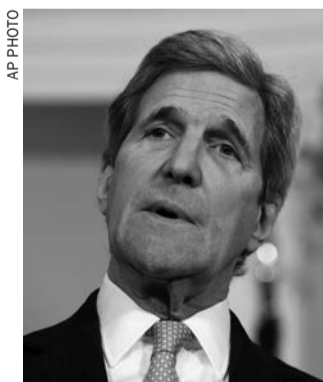
MIDDLE EAST

Kerry determines IS group committing genocide in Iraq, Syria

SECRETARY of State John Kerry has determined that the Islamic State group is committing genocide against Christians and other minorities in Iraq and Syria, according to U.S. officials, as he acted to meet a congressional deadline.

But Kerry's finding, set to be announced today, will not obligate the United States to take additional action against IS militants and does not prejudice any prosecution against its members, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly preview Kerry's decision.

A day after the State Department said Kerry would miss the March 17 deadline, the officials said



Secretary of State John Kerry speaks to reporters at the State Department in Washington

Kerry had completed his review and determined that Christians, Yazidis and Shiite groups are victims of genocide. The House this week passed a nonbinding resolution by a 393-0 vote condemning IS atrocities as genocide.

Lawmakers and others who have advocated for

the finding had sharply criticized the department's disclosure Wednesday that deadline would be missed. The officials said Kerry concluded his review just hours after that announcement and that the criticism had not affected his decision.

The determination marks only the second time a U.S. administration has declared that a genocide was being committed during an ongoing conflict.

The first was in 2004, when then-Secretary of State Colin Powell determined that atrocities in Sudan's Darfur region constituted genocide. Powell reached that determination amid much lobbying from human rights groups, but only

after State Department lawyers advised him that it would not — contrary to legal advice offered to previous administrations — obligate the United States to act to stop it.

In that case, the lawyers decided that the 1948 U.N. Convention against genocide did not require countries to prevent genocide from taking place outside their territory. Powell instead called for the U.N. Security Council to appoint a commission to investigate and take appropriate legal action if it agreed with the genocide determination.

The officials said Kerry's determination followed a similar finding by department lawyers.

Although the United States is involved in mili-

tary strikes against IS and has helped prevent some incidents of ethnic cleansing, notably of Yazidis, some advocates argue that a genocide determination would require additional U.S. action.

In making his decision, Kerry weighed whether the militants' targeting of Christians and other minorities meets the definition of genocide, according to the U.N. Convention: "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group."

His determination, however, does not carry the legal implication of a verdict of guilt or conviction on genocide charges, the officials said. Such decisions will be left to

international or other tribunals.

In a bid to push the review process, several groups released reports last week documenting what they said is clear evidence that the legal standard has been met.

The Knights of Columbus and In Defense of Christians, which had applauded Monday's House resolution, said they hoped the delay would ensure that Kerry makes the determination.

"There is only one legal term for this, and that is genocide," said Knights of Columbus chief Carl Anderson.

The groups' 280-page report identified by name more than 1,100 Christians who they said had been killed by IS. **AP**

TV canal macau



FRIDAY

- 13:30 News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
- 14:30 RTPi Live
- 18:20 Trail of Lies (Repeated)
- 19:10 TDM Talk Show (Repeated)
- 19:40 Soap Opera
- 20:30 Main News, Financial & Weather Report
- 21:15 Documentary Serie
- 22:10 Trail of Lies
- 23:00 TDM News
- 23:30 Europa League Highlights
- 23:45 Portuguese Movie

SATURDAY

- 10:30 Boonie Bears - Sr.2
- 11:30 Young Adult
- 13:00 TDM News (Repeat)
- 13:30 News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
- 14:30 Soap Opera
- 16:30 Portuguese Movie (Repeated)
- 18:00 Classic Music
- 18:30 Contest
- 20:00 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
- 13:00 TDM News (Repeat)
- 13:30 News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
- 14:30 Zig Zag
- 17:25 Comedy
- 18:20 Non-Daily Portuguese News
- 18:45 Documentary Serie
- 19:40 Comedy
- 20:30 Main News, Financial & Weather Report
- 21:00 Contraponto
- 22:00 Caribbean with Simon Reeve
- 23:00 TDM News
- 23:30 Non-Daily Portuguese News

offbeat

SPANISH TOWN LOOKS TO REVIVE BOTCHED RESTORED FRESCO SUCCESS

AP PHOTO



More than three years after a botched fresco restoration by an octogenarian painter became a major tourist attraction for a northern Spanish town, local officials looking to inject new life into the phenomenon opened a center this week that celebrates the fresco.

Borja Mayor Eduardo Arilla said 160,000 people had come to see the fresco since the story of Cecilia Gimenez's restoration of a Christ fresco in a town sanctuary went viral in 2012. He said with the new center, the town hopes to keep attracting up to 30,000 visitors annually.

Gimenez, 85, smiled as she entered the new center in a wheelchair for the inauguration ceremony. She became a sensation when pictures spread on the Internet of an "Ecce Homo" ("Behold the Man") mural she disfigured while trying to restore it. Twitter users redubbed it "Ecce Mono" ("Behold the Monkey").

The decision to open the center was aimed at giving "the painting a new impetus," Arilla said. Also attending the ceremony was the granddaughter of the little-known Spanish painter of the near 100-year-old original, Elias Garcia Martinez.

The new center brings together stories, photographs and videos documenting the impact of the restoration. Visitors can see the fresco in the adjoining chapel — and for those feeling inspired, there are canvases to try to paint your own version.

It also displays the fresco's new official merchandise — ranging from T-shirts to teacups — which also will be available on Amazon. Proceeds are to be split between Gimenez and the sanctuary's home for retirees. **AP**

cinema



CINETEATRO

17 MAR - 23 MAR



KUNG FU PANDA 3_

ROOM 1
(2D) 2.15, 4.00, 7.30 pm
(3D) 5.45 pmDirector: Alessandro Carloni, Jennifer Yuh
Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)
Duration: 95min

GODS OF EGYPT_

ROOM 1
9.30 pmDirector: Alex Proyas
Starring: Brenton Thwaites, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau,
Gerard Butler
Language: English (Cantonese)
Duration: 127min

THE DIVERGENT SERIES: ALLEGIANT_

ROOM 2
2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pmDirector: Robert Schwentke
Starring: Shailene Woodley, Theo James,
Jeff Daniels, Naomi Watts
Language: English (Cantonese)
Duration: 120min

THE TAG ALONG_

ROOM 3
2.15, 5.45, 9.30 pmDirector: Wei-hao Cheng
Starring: Wei Ning Hsu, River Huang, Yin-Shang Liu
Language: Mandarin (Cantonese/English)
Duration: 93min

ZOOTOPIA_

(19 MAR - 20 MAR) ROOM 3

4.00 pm
Director: Byron Howard, Rich Moore
Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)
Duration: 108min

LONDON HAS FALLING_

ROOM 3
4.00, 7.30 pmDirector: Babak Najafi
Starring: Gerard Butler, Aaron Eckhart,
Morgan Freeman
Language: English (Cantonese)
Duration: 99min

MACAU TOWER

03 MAR - 23 MAR

GODS OF EGYPT_

2.30, 4.45, 7.15, 9.30 pm

Director: Alex Proyas
Starring: Brenton Thwaites, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau,
Gerard Butler
Language: English (Cantonese)
Duration: 127min

this day in history



King Leopold III

1950 GOVERNMENT FALLS AS BELGIANS VOTE FOR KING

The Belgian government has collapsed over a referendum on the return from exile of King Leopold III.

Sunday's vote showed a narrow majority of 57.7% of votes in favour of the king being allowed back from Switzerland. But the result highlighted sharp divisions within the country and cabinet.

There was no majority for the king in the Walloon region or in the Brussels district - but in areas like Flanders, there was a 72% majority for the king's return.

In cabinet, the Liberals argued the king could return to the throne only if a majority in all areas had voted for him.

They refused to recall a joint session of both houses of parliament to rescind the regency law and then pulled out of the Catholic-Liberal coalition, prompting the government's collapse.

The Catholic Prime Minister Gaston Eyskens took the government's resignation to the regent, Prince Charles.

King Leopold has been in exile in Switzerland since the end of the war.

He had been accused of co-operating with the Nazis and displaying fascist tendencies. He surrendered Belgium unconditionally to the Germans in 1940 - despite the opposition of his cabinet.

He spent the rest of the war as a prisoner in his castle at Laken until he was freed by the Allies in 1945.

Parliament barred him from returning to Belgium without its permission.

Voting in the referendum was compulsory. The king's daughter, Princess Josephine Charlotte, 22, flew in from Switzerland to vote.

Former Prime Minister Paul Henri Spaak, who is currently President of the Assembly of the Council of Europe, voted against the king's return. He claimed it would damage the country's social and political stability.

According to some newspaper reports, the King had been hoping for a majority of 60-62%. He had been warned his return to Belgium would trigger a cabinet crisis unless he decided to abdicate.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Two days after the government's collapse, parliament authorised the king's return.

Efforts continued to form a new coalition government - but protests grew. In Antwerp, 15,000 dockworkers walked out on strike in protest. Other 24 hour strikes were called at factories on the outskirts of Brussels and in the town of Huy.

King Leopold III did eventually return to Belgium in July. More rioting greeted his return and he announced his son, Baudouin, would rule temporarily in his place.

He abdicated the following year and Baudouin officially became king in July 1951. He ruled until his death in 1993 when he was succeeded by his brother Albert II who reigned until his abdication in 2013.

Philippe is the reigning King of the Belgians, having ascended the throne on 21 July 2013.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
It may feel like your world is crashing down around you, but all you've really lost so far is a bit of your swagger. And although that isn't permanent, once you get your confidence back, you'll probably rethink the attitude.

Taurus
April 20-May 20
You were racing ahead full speed, but you won't be doing that again any time soon. You're nothing if not cautious these days. If that gets in the way of long-term plans, so be it.

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21
Things haven't come to a complete standstill. There are still lots of things going on in the financial arena, but getting them into your life requires a lot more finesse. Don't sit back and wait. Start flirting.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
You can't afford to chuck a project because it irritates you, or seems dull or beneath you. Don't miss the point of it all. You need money to survive, not excitement. Try to put things in the proper perspective.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Teamwork is more than a good way to get things done. You're missing the chance to discuss goals and hopes and hear those of others. The right group can make all the difference in your bottom line.

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22
Your quick reasoning has saved you, and it could help others, too. You don't have to be a super hero to have a profound effect on the world. All it takes in your case is more cold logic.

Libra
Sep. 23-Oct. 22
If you're aware at all, you can feel that there's not much good energy out there. But there is some, if only a drop. There might not be enough to share, so be careful who you communicate with.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
To say you need to be careful is an understatement. It's time to start walking on eggshells. Anything related to making money grow is worth treating like a hothouse flower.

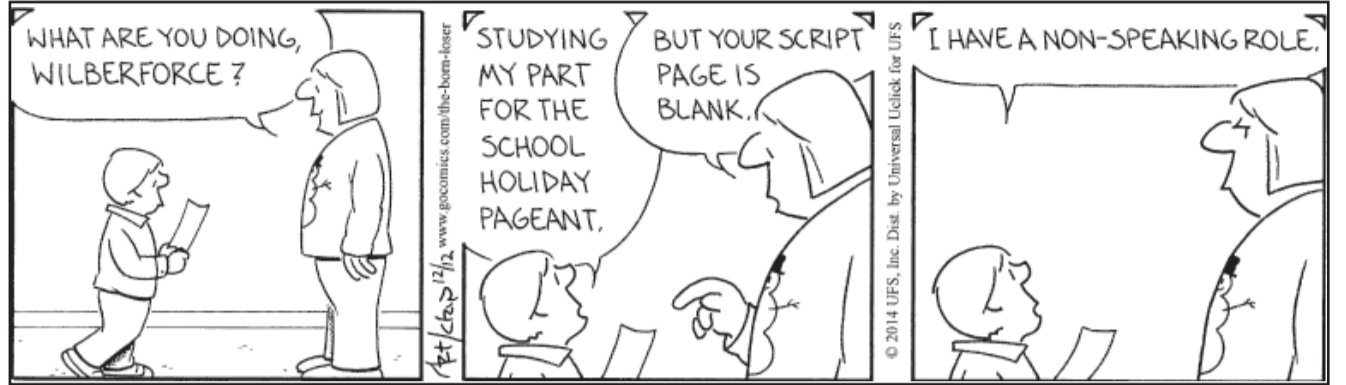
Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Time's a-wastin'. You can sit around philosophizing, but it will only get you deeper into trouble. Try not to think about it. With finances like yours, you're better off working.

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You're too nervous for chit chat. You don't have to listen to someone else's blather just for the sake of being polite, but don't be rude, either. It can't be too hard to come up with a compelling reason to let yourself off the hook.

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
You can imagine a sizzling affair. So far the image is only in your head, but every business plan has to start somewhere. Ignore the dire times around you and know you've just seen the first spark of life.

Pisces
Feb. 19-Mar. 20
Someone needs specifics, but you just can't think clearly. You're melting inside and not in a good way. It's from the same heat that is making you mop your brow. Cool down long enough to supply the numbers.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	6	18	smoggy
Harbin	-1	14	clear/cloudy
Tianjin	8	20	smoggy
Urumqi	-2	7	clear
Xi'an	7	14	overcast
Lhasa	-2	12	snow shower/cloudy
Chengdu	11	18	drizzle/overcast
Chongqing	14	19	shower/overcast
Kunming	13	23	cloudy
Nanjing	10	18	overcast/drizzle
Shanghai	11	18	cloudy/drizzle
Wuhan	10	14	drizzle
Hangzhou	11	21	cloudy/drizzle
Taipei	17	25	drizzle/cloudy
Guangzhou	13	17	drizzle
Hong Kong	17	20	cloudy
WORLD			
Moscow	-4	4	flurry/drizzle
Frankfurt	-1	4	sleet/clear
Paris	1	9	drizzle/clear
London	2	10	cloudy/clear
New York	8	18	overcast/cloudy

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- It's blown among the reeds; 5- Take ___ at (try); 10- Slather plaster on the upper surface of a room; 14- Untidy condition; 15- Indira Gandhi's father; 16- Prefix with present; 17- Self-centered; 19- Swallow eagerly; 20- Guy's partner; 21- Hawaiian outdoor feast; 22- Topeka's state; 24- Hemoglobin deficiency; 26- Aztec ___ ustad?; 27- Capital of Utah; 33- Forceps; 36- Comic O'Donnell; 37- Sign of summer; 38- At the drop of ___; 39- Sausalito's county; 40- Do a number; 41- ___ Angeles; 42- Paris divider; 43- Prince Valiant's wife; 44- Distinguish; 47- Sounds of disgust; 48- Abrupt; 52- Sickness at the stomach; 55- Designer Christian; 57- "Hold On Tight" group; 58- Belinda Carlisle's "Should ___ You In?"; 59- Pipefish; 62- Anklebones; 63- Ran in neutral; 64- Currency exchange fee; 65- Wait ___; 66- Pursue; 67- Once again;

DOWN: 1- Last Greek letter; 2- Started; 3- ___ Mio; 4- Corner key; 5- Yearly; 6- ___ precedent; 7- Drive ___ window; 8- Greek nickname; 9- Skin of a deer; 10- Good brandy; 11- Flightless flock; 12- To Live and Die ___; 13- Kissers; 18- Inventor Howe; 23- Suit to ___; 25- High-ranking NCO; 26- Simpler; 28- Characteristics; 29- TV producer Michaels; 30- Would ___ to you?; 31- Camp sight; 32- Hindu discipline; 33- Bath powder; 34- Yikes!; 35- Cape Canaveral org.; 39- Person who repairs machinery; 40- Hill toy; 42- Stuffing herb; 43- Sky blue; 45- Rural; 46- Tristan's love; 49- Condescend; 50- Noted spook; 51- Not in any way; 52- Actress Talbot; 53- Word of woe; 54- River to the Ubangi; 55- Boxer Oscar ___ Hoya; 56- Bad time for Caesar; 60- Old English letter; 61- JFK watchdog



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



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THOMAS Mueller equalized in the first minute of injury time and Bayern Munich scored two more goals in extra time to complete a thrilling 4-2 victory over Juventus yesterday that sent the German powerhouse into the Champions League quarterfinals.

Thiago Alcantara scored in the 108th minute to put Bayern ahead for good in the second leg match of the last 16 and Kingsley Coman, on loan from Juventus, added the hosts' fourth goal just two minutes later to seal a 6-4 victory on aggregate.

Bayern trailed 2-0 at halftime after goals from Paul Pogba and Juan Cuadrado put Juventus firmly in charge. The home side looked to be on the way out until Robert Lewandowski scored in the 73rd and Mueller's late header changed everything.

"To score four goals against an Italian side, wow, compliments to my team," Bayern coach Pep Guardiola said.

The match, at least in regulation time, was nearly a replica of the first leg in Turin, where Bayern dominated and led 2-0 before Juventus struck back with two late goals to salvage a draw.

Juventus, last season's runner-up, produced a clever tactical display, defending smartly and relying on dangerous counterattacks. And it was seconds away from success.

"It's disappointing, because we were so close," Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri said.

Guardiola's team, a five-time winner, is in its fifth straight quarterfinal.

"After our first goal, we saw that Juventus was not counterattacking any more. It's that German mentality to try until the end," Guardiola said.

In the other match, Barcelona's big three of Lionel Messi, Luis

FOOTBALL

Bayern comes from behind to advance in Champions League



Bayern's Thomas Mueller (center), celebrates after scoring the opening goal during the Champions League, round of 16, first-leg soccer match

Suarez and Neymar all scored to beat Arsenal 3-1, sending the defending champions into the Champions League quarterfinals for a ninth consecutive season with a 5-1 victory on aggregate.

With Bayern besieging the Italians' goal, Douglas Costa sent a cross from the right corner and Lewandowski headed home at the far post from close range to put Bayern back into the match.

Bayern's perseverance paid off in the first minute of added time. Patrice Evra lost the ball near the penalty area and Coman crossed to the far post for Mueller to head home and send the 71,000 at the Allianz arena into frenzied celebrations.

Alcantara, a substitute in extra time for Franck Ribery, swapped passes and beat Neuer, before Coman, also a substitute, made sure of victory by curling a shot past Gianluigi Buffon.

Juventus may have taken Bayern by surprise with its pressing deep inside Bayern's half from the opening whistle and the Italian side got its dividend early when Pogba scored his first Champions League goal since November 2014.

Sami Khedira sent a long ball down the right and David Alaba missed his clearance attempt. With Manuel Neuer also mistiming his exit from the goal, Stephan Liekekeister was able

to square the ball to Pogba, who slotted home from the edge of the penalty area into the empty net.

Juventus pulled back a little after the goal, but always looked dangerous and doubled the lead in the 28th after a great run by Morata.

The forward picked up the ball in his half and slalomed past four defenders before passing to Cuadrado, who fired inside the near post over Neuer.

Buffon parried an effort from Mueller in the 42nd and the attempted clearance by the Juventus defense bounced off Lewandowski and flew just wide.

Immediately after, Neuer did well to save a close-range shot by

Cuadrado.

Juventus had former Bayern forward Mario Mandzukic on the bench, while Bayern was without winger Arjen Robben because of a groin problem.

■ Last eight: today's draw will feature Atletico Mad, Bayern M, Barcelona, Benfica, Manchester C, PSG, Real Mad and Wolfsburg

The Italians were already without midfielder Claudio Marchisio, defender Giorgio Chiellini and striker Paulo Dybala, all injured.

Morata had two chances early in the second half after counterattacks but finished poorly. Mandzukic came in for Morata in the 71st but Juventus missed Morata's speed.

Today's draw will feature Atletico Madrid, Bayern Munich, Barcelona, Benfica, Manchester City, Paris Saint-Germain, Real Madrid and Wolfsburg. Teams from the same country can be drawn together. AP

GOLF

Adam Scott looking to carry on his winning form at Bay Hill

ADAM Scott went nearly two years without winning and now looks like he can't lose.

Over three straight weeks, he was runner-up at Riviera, won the Honda Classic and then rallied to beat Rory McIlroy in the Cadillac Championship at Doral. It brought the Australian back into the conversation of golf's elite, and it raised a pair of questions going into the Arnold Palmer Invitational.

How long can he sustain this great run?

With the Masters less than a month away, is it possible that Scott has peaked too early?

"I don't really know how long I can keep it up," Scott said yesterday at Bay Hill, where players are raving about the condition of the course. "You've got to take advantage of it while it's there. That's the big thing and obviously, I feel confident I can play well this week. Nothing feels any different than when I left Doral, and I'd like to get myself in that position to win again this week and keep it running."

No one had ever won the opening two legs of the Florida swing since Doral began in 1962. Scott went home to the Bahamas last

week, where he didn't touch a club for four days because he needed rest more than practice. Now he goes for a third straight victory.

He couldn't help but laugh when he mentioned how Tiger Woods kept a hot streak going "for about 10 years."

Whether he is using up all his great chances before going for another green jacket at Augusta National is impossible to predict. Fifteen years ago, when there were rumblings that Woods was going through a slump, Woods won Bay Hill and The Players Championship

in successive weeks, and then won the Masters.

"I think guys like Tiger and some of the best players of history have shown that they can sustain a high level of golf for fairly long periods of time," Scott said.

Scott said the Arnold Palmer Invitational is a tournament he would love to win for no other reason than the host.

The 86-year-old Palmer is not as visible this week as in years past, though he has been seen driving a cart and watching his grandson, Sam Saunders, on the practice range. He is slowing down, his spee-



Adam Scott, of Australia

ch isn't as sharp and his hearing not as clear, so he is taping interviews for the telecast this week.

It only deepens the appreciation of all that Palmer has meant for the game.

"The most dynamic, impactful player in the history of the game," PGA Tour Commissioner Tim Finchem said.

In some respects, Scott has a score to settle. He tied records for 18 holes (62) and 36 holes (130) two years ago when he had a seven-shot lead going into the weekend. He closed with a 76 and finished two shots behind.

The field features five of the top 10 in the world, including McIlroy and Jason Day. AP

Donald Trump's presidential campaign is far from ordinary, and late-night television humorists are pushing boundaries in order to keep up.

The most memorable Trump-inspired comedy of the past few months has been more intricate than monologue jokes, reflecting a tough competition for laughs and knowledge that the best

material can have a long life online.

John Oliver's epic, 20-minute Trump take-down, with research that revealed the family's name was once "Drumpf," has logged more than 2 million YouTube views.

"There's a part of me that even likes this guy," the HBO host said. "It's a part of me I hate, but it's a part of me."

Station	Air quality
Roadside	35-55 Moderate
High Density Residential Area	40-60 Moderate
Ambient	30-50 Good

SOURCE: DSMG

opinion

Bizcuits

Leanda Lee



LOCALISATION

Coming at different angles on the term localisation, there appear two conflicting meanings. The expatriate package for high-flying executives with full relocation and repatriation costs, accommodation and hardship allowances, club memberships, and school fees at elite schools has made way for localised packages which have brought expatriate workers on par with local employees. Transferring foreign managers to local packages has clear cost benefits. It also sends messages of value to local employees, and it provides expatriates with a way to stay in the country if they wish to remain. Becoming localised, or 'local', can even accord a special feel-good status to the expatriate who wants to be accepted as an insider, a full card-carrying member of their new community. One day, hopefully it will become politically acceptable for initiatives such as 'Macau Loves Locals' to also embrace these people.

Such programmes, however, are underpinned by Macau's pursuit towards the other form of localisation: replacement of expatriate managers by competent local staff.

Macau's peculiar context has its own set of drivers, barriers and facilitators of localisation. Businesses are driven to localise for a discernible set of internal as well as external reasons. Cutting costs in a competitive environment encourages the development of a strong local management team, but when knowledge transfer is the priority, and there's lots of cash around as there has been in Macau, that pressure is not as great. Over the years we've seen the ebbs and flows of foreign managers but since the opening of the gaming industry, the economic pressure to localise has not been a major force. That may be changing, or be made to change, as profit margins are squeezed by the increasingly controlled flow of customers and capital.

Foreign companies are also known to move towards local management teams if an understanding of the local culture and environment is crucial to business performance; often to ply influence with external stakeholders. As a case in point, Sands China's appointment of Wilfred Wong – although not strictly a local, but close enough – as the company's president and COO is commonly believed to be for his lobbying capacity with Beijing and key government influencers. Macau's colonial legacy means that overall, however, the local community and key government personnel are used to interaction with foreigners and have rather remarkable socio-linguistic skills, so the social and cultural motivation for companies to localise is yet another driver that is not particularly strong here.

The willingness of expatriate managers to come to Macau does not create a natural incentive for businesses to support localisation. It's not a hardship posting, and although there are aspects of this lifestyle that take some getting used – the traffic, the narrow spaces, the pollution, different values, some nonsensical bureaucratic processes – with good social support, it can be a friendly place to be and a meaningful place to work and contribute to.

A big barrier towards localisation and which the Macau government recognised very early is the trust by the corporations in local staff to manage the businesses competently. This is the major reason behind the requirement for in-house training of local talent and the SAR's development of education infrastructure. As there aren't many internal operational issues that naturally propel companies towards localisation (especially as local labour costs increase), external pressures on companies to 'do the right thing' have been applied: foreign labour quotas, more stringent criteria on the importation of labour [MDT Mar 16: "Local association says non-Chinese media face hiring challenges"], requirements for HR policies of local resident promotion, and - the doozy of them all for those in the gaming industry – the unspoken threat of concessions not being renewed. We have also seen, and continue to see, subtler forms of pressure being applied through community dialogue, complaints by legitimate community groups [see MDT Mar 14 "Gaming association pledges to protect local workers"], and overt signals of compliance with the government line [Air Macau's Local Cadet Pilot Program, and in a similar vein the Macau Loves Locals campaign (MDT February 24)]. In the absence of the business case to localise, we can expect external pressures to continue.

QUEEN OF LATE

Madonna angers Australian fans with two-hour concert delay

MADONNA has angered fans by starting a concert in the Australian city of Brisbane more than two hours late and finishing the show early yesterday morning after the last train had left the venue.

The pop star had been due to start at 9 p.m. local time on Wednesday but did not take the stage at the Brisbane Entertainment Center until 11.22 p.m.

Hundreds of angry fans had left the venue by then and demanded refunds at the ticket office after a public announcement that the "Rebel Heart" show would not start before 10:30 p.m.

During the concert, she thanked the crowd that was near the venue's 13,500 ca-



capacity for their patience, but joked they had arrived too early.

"We started late – that hardly ever happens," she said. "You were here too early. You should have taken your time doing your hair and makeup. Then I wouldn't have been late."

The last train left the entertainment center in the outer suburb of Boondall at 12.15

a.m. – around an hour before the concert eventually ended. Long lines of concertgoers waited for taxis.

The venue and Madonna's publicist did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Madonna played a second Brisbane concert yesterday night before ending the tour in Sydney.

A similar delay happened in Macau where her first concert at Studio City on Feb 20 started at 10.35 p.m. - 2 hours and 35 minutes later than schedule. But there's no information of anybody leaving the concert hall.

Despite the late starts and other occurrences, the Queen of Pop's "Rebel Heart" tour stands number one on the Top 20 Global Concert Tours list which ranks artists by average box office gross per city and includes the average ticket price for shows worldwide. Madonna racked so far USD2.7 million on an average price ticket of \$117.85. Second in the list published this week is Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band (\$2.2m; \$77.08) while The Weeknd (\$1.4m; \$57.42) ranks third.

The list is based on data provided to the trade publication Pollstar by concert promoters and venue managers. MDT/AP

SINGER PLAYS OFF DRUNK RUMORS IN INSTAGRAM POST

MADONNA SAYS she would never perform at a concert "high or drunk" in an Instagram post this week. The pop star played off the reported rumors that she appeared drunk onstage during her current world tour. She wrote "too bad people don't know the art of acting and playing a character." During Madonna's live set,

she plays a character who drinks a shot onstage. She wrote the post in response to a fan who was defending her on Instagram. She told the fan "thanks for supporting me." Madonna called the claims she was drunk sexist. She wrote: "Sexism is alive and kicking but i am #livingforlove."

times square by rodrigo



WORLD BRIEFS

JAPAN posted its biggest trade surplus in over four years in February, thanks to a strengthening in the yen and weak oil prices, though both imports and exports fell, suggesting persisting slack demand both in Japan and overseas.

INDONESIA's central bank has cut its benchmark interest rate by a quarter point to 6.75 percent to help enhance domestic demand to bolster economic growth momentum.

PHILIPPINES A Senate committee investigates how USD81 million stolen by hackers from the U.S. Federal Reserve Bank account of Bangladesh's central bank was transmitted to four private Philippine bank accounts and then to three casino companies.



TURKEY The Kurdish militant group TAK says it carried out Sunday's deadly attack in Ankara. In an online statement it said the attack, which killed 37 people, was in revenge for military operations in the mainly Kurdish south-east. The TAK, an offshoot of the banned Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), had already said it was behind another bombing in Ankara last month.

CYPRUS President Nicos Anastasiades says Turkey must open its airports and ports to Cypriot ships and planes if it wants to join the European Union – a standoff that is hampering efforts to seal an EU-Turkey migrant agreement. Anastasiades said yesterday that "every candidate country should fulfill its obligations and it's obvious that unfortunately, until now, Turkey hasn't."



USA Frank Sinatra Jr., who carried on his famous father's legacy with his own music career and whose kidnapping as a young man added a bizarre chapter to his father's legendary life, died yesterday [Macau time]. He was 72.