



GAMING STOCKS RALLY SHORT-LIVED

Deutsche Bank has warned that the rally of Macau's stocks last month will be short-lived

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COURT HEARS ADELSON'S DEFAMATION CASE

Nevada's highest court is being asked if a political group defamed casino mogul Sheldon Adelson

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CONTROVERSY OVER PLANNED MEKONG DAMS IMPACT

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BIGGEST DATA LEAK

The world in papers

The "Panama Papers" are an unprecedented leak of 11.5m files from the database of the world's fourth biggest offshore law firm, Mossack Fonseca, based in Panama City. Fonseca data – exposed by the German newspaper Süddeutsche Zeitung and International Consortium of Investigative Journalists relates to more than 200,000 companies for which the firm acted as registered agent. China and Russia top the list. In Iceland the embattled prime minister has resigned amid the controversy. P3 MACAU, P10-11 CHINA, P12 ASIA PACIFIC, P14-15 WORLD

WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA banned most imports of North Korean coal and iron ore, the country's main exports, in a significant increase in pressure on the North under U.N. sanctions against its nuclear and missile tests. China buys an estimated two-thirds of impoverished North Korea's exports.

NEW ZEALAND Helen Clark, a former New Zealand prime minister who is now a senior U.N. official, announces she is running for the top position at the United Nations, saying she would bring nearly 30 years of leadership skills to the job of secretary-general in a world of increasing challenges. Portuguese former PM António Guterres is seen as the top contender for the position.

AUSTRALIA They gather under the blazing sun and blue skies of an Australian beach, looking out at the water that once symbolized so much misery. For these five asylum-seekers, a novel program introducing them to the iconic Aussie sport of surfing is helping to transform both their feelings toward the ocean and allowing them, at least for a brief time, to forget the pains of the past. More on p13

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Consulate rewards two Filipinas, reveals skills courses



From left: Consul Lilybeth Deapera, Rachalle Magturo and Labor Attache Vivian Tornea

The Philippine Consulate General in Macau has recently recognized two Filipinas for their contributions to the Filipino community in Macau during its 2016 National Women's Month celebration in the city.

"We've always been trying to identify the best of the Philippines in the community because we want them to be an inspiration to the other members of the community," said the Philippine Consul General of Macau, Lilybeth Deapera.

With over 25,000 overseas Filipino workers (OFW) living in the city, the diplomat revealed that the consulate is cooperating with its labor office to provide short courses for the OFWs to learn extra skills. These include skills such as bartending, massage, leadership and social entrepreneurship, money management and others.

"In one of my talks with the government leaders, they recognize that one of the reasons why the country has developed is the contributions of our 'kababayans' [a Tagalog word for fellow Filipino] who have been here," reveals Deapera.

"We have several programs,

and the idea is to recognize positive contributions to the Macau society and Filipino community," said the consul general.

One of those awarded was Remedios Salamanes, a local resident who has been working in the city for over 28 years. She is also a finalist of the "Gawad Geny Lopez Jr. Bayaning Pilipino Awards," an annual search for modern-day heroes that recognizes ordinary people who have performed heroic acts and extraordinary deeds in the Asia-Pacific region.

"It's the first time that the search has included Macau. They only used to include Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan. So we disseminated the information," says Deapera.

"She was shortlisted," the consul general continued, "and we recognize her because [poverty] was not something that stopped her from achieving her goals. She has helped in raising her nieces and nephews [...] she's able to help a lot of our 'kababayans' [in Macau]."

Meanwhile Salamanes, a librarian at a local school, told the Times about a few issues that Filipino migrant workers

face in the city.

"They worry so much about their children [in the Philippines] and also the influence of wrong friends, friends who like to gamble. Some are facing low wages and high rent for boarding houses," explained the awardee, who is also a financial council officer for the Filipino pastoral care program for migrants.

The diplomat also said that the consulate is on its third intake of students for its Leadership and Social Entrepreneurship course.

"The plan is to be able to qualify them for the "Technical Education and Skills Development Authority", commonly known as "TESDA" [an agency of the Philippine government responsible for managing technical education and skills development]; that's our goal. We're trying to work on that," says Deapera.

She explained that there are numerous workers who have come to the territory as tourists. However, she hopes that at some point in time they'll be able to take the exams so as to be "certified by an assessing body in the Philippines," which she believes adds to the chance of a salary increase.

Staff reporter

CRIME

Zealous police officer insulted after fining smoker

Renato Marques

Li, a 53 year-old businessman from Mainland China was the main figure of a somewhat ridiculous situation that occurred on Saturday. Events unfolded in downtown Macau around 9 p.m., when a police officer caught Li throwing a cigarette on the ground.

According to information released by Public Security Police Force (PSP) during a press conference yesterday, when the police officer approached Li to fine him for the illegal act, the man did not respond well to the penalty. In his frustration, Li started to insult the officer.

Although the police officer reportedly asked several times for Li to control his bad language, Li continued his insults, ultimately leading the officer to detain the man. Li was presented to the Public Prosecution Office (MP) where he was charged with aggravated insults to a police officer.

In a separate case, the PJ advised that a local resident was swindled of a total sum of HKD890,000. The resident, a woman aged 52, was introduced to the suspect by a friend. She

initially lent the mainland man a sum of HKD220,000 in October 2015 for the purpose of gambling in local casinos. He allegedly lost this money on the gaming tables.

Not happy with the results, the man again approached the woman to borrow more money, this time asking for a sum of HKD670,000.

In order for her to give him the money, the man with the help of the friend, told the woman that he was a highly ranked mainland public official and provided the woman with a document that he claimed to be a property registration in his name.

The woman believed him and handed over the cash which he rapidly gambled and lost in the casinos once more.

After several unsuccessful tries to recover the money, the woman finally decided to file a complaint at the PJ.

The police investigation revealed that both the claim that the man was a high-ranked official, and the property registration document, were fake.

After a few months of searching, the authorities finally intercepted the man, who was then escorted by the police force to the MP, accused of fraud.

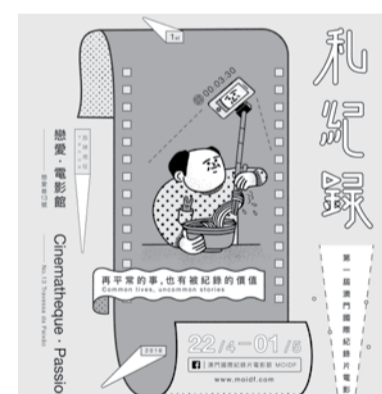
Documentary film festival kicks off on April 22

COMUNA de Han-Ian, a local art and culture association, is set to organize the "1st Macau International Documentary Film Festival," which will kick off on April 22 and run until May 1.

The festival, to be held at the Cinematheque - Passion, will present 18 films from more than 10 countries from Asia, Europe and America, according to a press release.

The opening film of the inaugural festival will be "Taste of Youth," the latest work of director King Wai Cheung, winner of the Golden Horses Awards. The film depicts the life of teenagers in Hong Kong in contemporary society. The film reflects on the present, and divines the future of the city.

Moreover, the festival will also present the Iranian film "Taxi," which won the "Golden Bear"



award at the 65th Berlin Film Festival; the Indonesian film "The Look of Silence," which was nominated at the 88th Oscars for best documentary; and the film "China Heavyweight," which won the "Golden Horse Awards" for best documentary in 2012.

The festival is sponsored by the Cultural Institute and Melco Crown Entertainment.

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Daniel Beittler

MACAU'S Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong, told reporters yesterday that the government needs more time and information before commenting on the so-called "Panama Papers" documents, which are believed to have been leaked from Panama-based law firm, Mossack Fonseca.

Leong added that he has "no knowledge on the involvement of any local companies in this scheme."

Franco Dragone, creator and director of City of Dream's "House of Dancing Water," is allegedly among those implicated in an international media investigation which has exposed hidden offshore financial arrangements in the wake of the information disseminated by German newspaper *Sueddeutsche Zeitung* which has been shared with more than 100 media organizations.

The daily Belgian newspaper *Le Soir* reported that Franco Dragone's name had been found linked to the "Panama Papers."

Le Soir commented: "The talented stage director [...] is equally competent and imaginative when it comes to concealing financial transactions and contracts in exotic paradise."

The Panama-based law firm operates a "regional head office" out of their Mossack Fonseca & Co. (Asia) unit based in Tsim Sha Tsui in Hong Kong. The office

Leong: No comments on 'Panama Papers' leaks



A marquee of the Arango Orillac Building lists the Mossack Fonseca law firm in Panama City

operates as just one of eight China-based units, and is alleged to be connected to individuals mentioned in the documents.

According to information leaked throughout the almost 11.5 million file cache of documents, and published on infographic website, *The Atlas*, Hong Kong has rated as the ninth most popular tax haven, behind British Anguilla and Nevada.

However, sorted by the number of intermediaries operating in such schemes, including banks, law firms and accountants,

Hong Kong outstrips all others with 2,212 mentions in the "Panama Papers," out of the approximately 14,000 clients with which Mossack Fonseca is alleged to have worked. The city also tops the list of countries and territories with the most active intermediaries, with 37,675 offshore companies.

The accusations leveled against individuals incriminated in the leaked files include money laundering, avoiding sanctions and evading taxation.

Among the Hong Kong indi-

Hong Kong outstrips all others with 2,212 mentions in the 'Panama Papers'

viduals implicated in the documents is executive director Thomas Chan of Hong Kong-based Sun Hung Kai Properties, Asia's largest property developer. Chan was arrested in 2012 as part of a corruption probe by HKSAR's Independent Commission Against Corruption.

The leaked papers reveal that the case sparked internal disagreements within Mossack Fonseca over whether to terminate the company's relationship with the senior executive who was found guilty and sentenced in 2014.

Furthermore, in an embarrassing blow against the central government's anti-corruption purge, various leaders within senior ranks of the Communist Party of China have also been identified in the documents. These

range from Xi Jinping's brother-in-law, Deng Jiagui, who owns two offshore companies registered by Hong Kong-based WBC Secretaries Limited, to the family of former Chinese premier Li Peng.

It may also stand in contrast with Beijing's policy to curb outbound investments in order to stymie capital flight and restore a weakening yuan.

China's media coverage of the "Panama Papers" scandal was initially limited to accusations against Russian President Vladimir Putin. More recently however, the media coverage has been further restricted and a number of China-based news reports have been removed altogether.

Current restrictions extend to social media and search engines like Baidu, where the search "Panama Papers" (in simplified characters) retrieves the message: "The search results are not shown as they may not be in accordance with relevant laws, regulations and policies."

On Weibo, searching for the term only retrieves results relating to foreign politicians identified in the leak.

Chinese tabloid *Global Times* accused Western media of scrutinizing only individuals from non-Western countries, adding that the Western media "has taken control of the interpretation each time there has been such a document dump," and that "Washington has demonstrated particular influence [in the past]."

Gaming stocks rally short-lived says Deutsche analyst

DEUTSCHE Bank has warned that the rally of Macau's stocks last month will be short-lived, contrary to the March evaluations of brokerage firms, Macquarie Research and Nomura Securities.

As cited in *Barron's Asia*,

Deutsche Bank analyst Karen Tang cautioned that the Macau stock rally has already ended and that a hotel price war is in full swing.

"We think that the Street [Wall Street] had misinterpreted the return of

high-end players during [the] Chinese New Year as a permanent trend," Tang wrote, going on to suggest these figures had led to a forecast gross gaming revenue stabilization in the first quarter of 2016, followed by a recovery

during the second quarter.

"We think this is incorrect," she countered. "In fact, since the number of high-end players (both VIPs and premium mass) are now smaller than in previous years, their pent-up demand is now being exhausted very quickly over the holidays."

Tang also wrote in the note that, "since these high-end players now rarely return to Macau over the non-holidays, Macau's low-season is becoming



much weaker than in previous years. This is something which the market has not been able to grasp yet."

Also pointing to weak retail spending despite the slight increase in visitor traffic over the Easter weekend last month, Tang wrote that mainlanders in Macau are spending less, "another sign that Macau's visitor mix is shifting towards more leisure and less spending/gambling."

Furthermore, as casino operators seek to maxi-

mize their share of the market and maintain high occupancy rates, Macau can expect an abundance of sales promotion activities and price slashing.

All of this is trending to a price war that the Deutsche Bank analyst believes is already underway in the MSAR. After checking the operators' websites, the note concluded that Sands, Galaxy and Melco Crown are all offering room discount packages, with some as high as 40 percent for a stay before the end of 2016. **DB**

ONE SHOT NEWS



The new director of the Economic Services (DSE), Tai Kin Ip (second from right), was inaugurated yesterday in a ceremony that was presided over by the Secretary for Economy and Finance, Lionel Leong. The deputy director, Lau Wai Meng (first from right), was also sworn in. This appointment comes following the resignation of the former director of Economic Services (DSE), Sou Tim Peng, who asked for early retirement from the public service.

Macau's low-season is becoming much weaker than in previous years.

KAREN TANG
DEUTSCHE BANK ANALYST

ENVIRONMENT

Missing 'infrastructure' and 'collaboration' to turn green into gold

Renato Marques

THE lack of environmental infrastructure as well as insufficient collaboration between private companies and the government, were two of the main points of a talk held during the Green Business Co-operation Day of Macau International Environmental Co-operation Forum & Exhibition (MIECF), that closed on Saturday.

A panel debated the theme "Turning Green into Gold," looking specifically at how the hospitality sector (one of the fastest growing sectors in many parts of the world) could minimize their currently significant impact on the environment by adopting sustainability practices and striving to reduce waste.

Syed Mubarak, Sands China's director of sustainability commented that "Macau is small but has high visitation and all those people leave a large foot print. There is a long journey ahead." He nominated water management as the most important



point to start with, adding that "water and energy are very close together." Mubarak noted that these sectors were relevant to air conditioning, as large quantities of water are required to cool the system.

Commenting on this issue, Daniel Cheng, managing director of Dunwell Enviro-tech (Holdings) Ltd, took the opportunity to introduce one of the firm's most successful products, the "Biotoilet."

According to Cheng, the system allows savings of about 15 percent every year but, on the down side, "needs to be planned at least 10 years in advance." He stated that "now is really the time to think about what main-

land China is doing through the initiative of president Xi Jinping which ordered that 17,000 self-sustainable toilets should be installed yearly in tourist locations throughout China."

Representing the hospitality industry, Joshua Ho, vice president for Property Services of Melco Crown Entertainment Limited, said, "it is very important that the hospitality industry take responsibility," giving the example of the "City of Dreams" development in which "we did that [take responsibility and action] and installed the dual piping system." He added that what's "more important" than individual actions are "global actions," affirming

that "Macau needs to have local treatment."

Mubarak also pointed to the "lack of collaboration," stating that "one hand doesn't create sound, we need two hands for that."

Another of the hospitality representatives, Rebecca Donnellan, Director of Sustainability of MGM, expressed the same view: "We need collaboration. That's obvious!" She suggested that the solution may come in the form of a taxation of waste. "Maybe we need to get rid of the 'waste' word and put a value on it," she said.

She also agreed with Joshua Ho about the requirement for local infrastructure to handle waste, recalling "in Hong Kong there is an EcoPark where people can do this. In Macau there is no space for recyclers."

Another of the points which saw all members of the panel in agreement was the need to "get rid" of the word "waste" in relation to food, proposing instead the use of the word "excess."

STATISTICS

Money supply retreated in February

ACCORDING to statistics released yesterday by the Monetary Authority of Macau, the money supply in the territory retreated in the month of February. As total deposits increased at a faster pace than total loans, the overall loan-to-deposit ratio of the banking sector dropped in comparison to a month earlier.

Resident deposits dipped 0.9 percent from January to MOP456.6 billion, of which deposits denominated in MOP, HKD and RMB fell by 0.6 percent, 0.6 percent and 9.9 percent, respectively.

Meanwhile domestic loans to the private sector edged up by 0.4 percent to MOP390.8 billion, of which HKD, MOP and RMB accounted for 66.1 percent, 28.1 percent and 0.5 percent, respectively.

At the end of February, the loan-to-deposit ratio for the resident sector remained virtually unchanged at 65.9 percent, while the combined ratio for both the resident and non-resident sectors dropped 0.7 percentage points to 85.3 percent.

The currency in circulation in Macau decreased by 1 percent in February in comparison to the previous month.

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The flags of Hong Kong (left) and China fly in the Wan Chai district of Hong Kong

Hong Kong appoints new immigration director

ERICK Tsang Kwok-wai has been appointed as the new Director of Immigration Department of Hong Kong, to be put into effect immediately. Tsang, 52, joined the Immigration Department as an assistant immigration officer in April 1987. In 2014, he became deputy director of Immigration.

Following the inauguration, the media asked Tsang about the issue surrounding Lee Bo. The newly appointed director said that "the case is still under investigation; the department will inquire with the

Department of Justice based on the situation. There is no firm evidence that Lee Bo committed a crime, therefore no arrest has been made yet."

Regarding detainment policies, he emphasized that the future policy will only target those who violate the refugee regulations, which means that real refugees will not be affected. Chan Kwok-ki, the now former immigration director, had been appointed to the position in March 2011. After 33 years of service, he is now leaving on early-retirement.

TOURISM

Local travel agencies surprised by 'elderly travelers fee'

LOCAL travel agencies have expressed their lack of awareness of an "elderly fee" charged in some situations to aged applicants of package tours, according to interviews conducted yesterday by the Times.

When trying to apply for the package tour at different travel agencies in Chengdu, the capital city of Sichuan province, a Sichuan couple - Mr He, aged 72, and his 68-year-old wife - were required to pay an extra RMB1,200 each due to their age. According to Mr He, the staff told the couple that customers younger than 28 or older than 59 would be charged an additional fee depending on their destination of travel.

Miss Vu, responsible for Gray Line Tours of Macau Ltd, a local travel agency specialized

in inbound services, showed surprise when asked by the MDT about the so-called "elderly travelers' fee." "It is the first time that I have heard about such fee," she admitted, adding that "to charge that is unreasonable." According to Miss Vu, aged travelers normally enjoy special discounts when visiting places that would incur these fees, and that "regardless of the schedule, or the kind of tickets, older customers always get cheaper prices." This information was echoed by another agency contacted by the Times.

The MDT reporter contacted five travel agencies based on Taobao, China's most popular online shopping platform. All five told the Times that no extra fees are charged for "being

old", and that they know of no companies requesting customers to pay extra money for their age.

As to conceivable reasons behind the extra fees, Mr Qiu, from a local travel agency, said that "[pricing policies] treat customers equally. In my opinion, each agent thinks in a different way. Some customers fail to deliver certain evidence required by the agencies, [...] and this forces agencies to take on added risks [which might be the reason why some agencies charge extra]. They might even consider the distance from starting point to destination [when considering extra fees]." According to Qiu, if travelers fail to inform travel agencies of their special conditions, then, in case of an accident, the travel agencies are called upon to

take responsibility. He finished by noting that his oldest customer was over 80 years of age.

In turn, the Taobao based agencies refuse to serve customers older than 65. Particularly, one company first said it simply will not provide services to people over 80, but then refused to accept the requests of a hypothetical 76-year-old customer. "In spite of 80 being the age limit for providing service, we don't accept customers who are over 65," customer service personnel replied with no further explanation as to the criteria. According to mainland media, children and older people are considered low-spending customers, therefore "additional fees" are charged to make up for the losses. **Staff reporter**

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LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMMES

HUMANITIES	Portuguese Language and Culture - Basic I SCHEDULE 09/05/2016-25/07/2016 (144 Hours) LANGUAGE Portuguese (w/ English) CODE 1510130121 TUITION MOP 2,000 MON WED 19:00-21:00	Assessment in Language Teaching SCHEDULE 11/04/2016-21/04/2016 (12 Hours) LANGUAGE English (w/ Portuguese) CODE 1510960486 TUITION MOP 700 APPLICATION FEE MOP 100 MON WED THU 18:30-20:30
HUMANITIES	Portuguese Language and Culture - Basic II SCHEDULE 11/05/2016-27/07/2016 (144 Hours) LANGUAGE Portuguese CODE 1510130122 TUITION MOP 2,000 MON WED 19:00-21:00	Introduction to Environmental Law and Politics SCHEDULE 02/06/2016-30/04/2016 (20 Hours) LANGUAGE English (w/ Portuguese) CODE 1510800795 TUITION MOP 1,200 TUE THU 19:00-21:30
HUMANITIES	Portuguese Language and Culture - Intermediate I SCHEDULE 25/05/2016-13/07/2016 (30 Hours) LANGUAGE Portuguese CODE 1510080682 TUITION MOP 1,800 MON WED 19:00-21:00	Applied Creative Psychology SCHEDULE 18/04/2016-07/04/2016 (30 Hours) LANGUAGE English CODE ECP-1464 TUITION MOP 1,800 TUE FRI 19:00-21:00
HUMANITIES	Portuguese Conversational Club SCHEDULE 09/05/2016-18/07/2016 (20 Hours) LANGUAGE Portuguese CODE 1510120020 TUITION MOP 1,000 MON 19:00-21:00	2016 Religious Teacher Training Programme Unit 2: Man and Himself (2) SCHEDULE 04/05/2016-18/09/2016 (18 Hours) LANGUAGE Cantonese CODE CS-TTP02-1404 TUITION MOP 1,218 18:30-21:30 MON WED FRI
HUMANITIES	Mandarin for Foreigners - Basic I SCHEDULE 25/04/2016-20/06/2016 (30 Hours) LANGUAGE Mandarin (w/ English) CODE 1510130129 TUITION MOP 1,800 MON WED 19:00-21:00	ENGLISH SUMMER CAMP - MACAO AND CANADA MACAO 18/07/2016-29/07/2016 CANADA Option 1: University of Calgary Option 2: University of British Columbia Accommodation: Home Stay Dormitory Date 08/08/2016-19/08/2016 31/07/2016-13/08/2016 Deadline 04/05/2016 25/04/2016
HUMANITIES	Mandarin for Foreigners - Basic II SCHEDULE 26/04/2016-16/06/2016 (30 Hours) LANGUAGE Mandarin (w/ English) CODE 1510130130 TUITION MOP 1,800 TUE THU 19:00-21:00	INTENSIVE PORTUGUESE SUMMER PROGRAMME SCHEDULE University of Saint Joseph 11/07/2016-22/07/2016 Catholic University of Portugal 25/07/2016-05/08/2016 Location: MACAO PORTUGAL 3-week programme: ✓ 4-week programme: ✓ Deadline: 29/04/2016
HUMANITIES	Cantonese for Foreigners - Basic I SCHEDULE 11/04/2016-23/06/2016 (30 Hours) LANGUAGE Cantonese (w/ English) CODE 1510130127 TUITION MOP 1,800 MON THU 19:00-20:30	
HUMANITIES	French - Basic I SCHEDULE 07/04/2016-26/05/2016 (30 Hours) LANGUAGE French (w/ English & Cantonese) CODE 1510130124 TUITION MOP 1,800 TUE THU 19:00-21:00	
HUMANITIES	Workplace English SCHEDULE 19/04/2016-23/06/2016 (30 Hours) LANGUAGE English (w/ Cantonese) CODE 1510140199 TUITION MOP 1,800 TUE THU 20:35-22:05	

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Nevada court hears Adelson's defamation case

Ken Ritter

NEVADA'S highest court is being asked if a political group defamed casino mogul Sheldon Adelson in 2012 with an Internet ad alleging that he used prostitution-tainted money from casinos in Macau to fund Republican presidential campaigns in the United States.

A key question during Nevada Supreme Court oral arguments on Monday was whether online point-and-click "hyperlinks" are comparable to footnotes on a printed page — and whether they were enough to inform ad readers that Adelson denied the prostitution claim when it was made in a civil lawsuit.

"This Web page wasn't designed to be fair," Daniel Polsenberg, an attorney for Adelson, told the five justices hearing the case. "It states that Mr. Adelson approved of prostitution. That's not enough."

Lee Levine, attorney for the National Jewish Democratic Council, said hyperlinks are familiar to most Internet users, and as convenient for readers as footnotes and endnotes in books and articles.

The justices also heard related arguments about whether Nevada's anti-SLAPP law



Sheldon Adelson

protected the council when criticizing one of the world's wealthiest men. The statute aims to prevent so-called strategic lawsuits against public participation.

Adelson accuses the Washington-based council and two of its executives of "assassinating" his character by falsely claiming that he personally approved illegal activities in Macau resorts owned by Sands China Limited, a subsidiary of Las Vegas Sands.

Adelson, CEO of Las Vegas Sands, denied

the claims when they were made public as part of a wrongful termination lawsuit filed in Nevada state court by former Sands China executive Steven Jacobs. That case is not yet resolved.

The council followed with an online ad urging readers to sign a petition telling then-presidential candidate Mitt Romney to reject money from Adelson, a prominent donor to GOP causes. The council noted that Adelson also contributed heavily to the failed primary bid of former U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich.

Adelson sued the council in federal court in New York, where the case was dismissed. He then appealed to the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which directed the Nevada Supreme Court to hear the hyperlink and SLAPP issues.

Adelson didn't attend oral arguments Monday in Las Vegas, where the state high court on Tuesday [U.S. time] will take up another appeal stemming from the ongoing Adelson-Jacobs lawsuit.

In that case, Adelson wants the Clark County District Court judge who has heard the case for several years removed from the proceedings as biased.

The administrative judge of the court in Las Vegas rejected that effort. AP

Ching Ming holiday visitors decrease 6.5 percent

During the three-day Ching Ming holiday, a total of 450,958 tourists entered Macau, a 6.5 percent decrease compared to the same period last year.

According to the Public Security Police Force, the border gate recorded the largest influx of persons (including residents and tourists) during the holiday with 513,476 entering the city. A total of 540,048 people exited Macau through the border gate. The Macau Ferry Terminal recorded some 76,755 people arriving and 79,360 people departing the territory. Meanwhile, the local airport received around 25,000 visitors during the holiday. The total number of people entering and leaving Macau during the three-day break totaled 1,429,343.

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Kyunghee Park
and Dave McCombs

CHINESE conglomerate HNA Group Co. agreed to buy a controlling stake in Tysan Holdings Ltd. for about USD340 million to expand in construction and property development, prompting shares of the target company to jump to the highest level in 25 years.

HNA will pay HKD2.62 billion (\$340 million), or HKD4.53 a share, to an arm of Blackstone Group LP for a 66 percent stake in Tysan, the construction company said in a filing to the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. The price is about 11 percent more than Tysan's closing level on March 31. Trading was suspended April 1.

The acquisition would help HNA, the owner of Hainan Airlines Co. as well as hotel, infrastructure, logistics and aviation-maintenance businesses, extend its foothold outside mainland China after agreeing to buy a stake in Brazilian airline Azul Linhas Aereas Brasileiras SA and acquiring airport luggage handler Swissport International Ltd. for about \$2.7 billion. China has urged its companies to expand overseas to improve competitiveness, helping result in \$97 billion in deals in the first quarter.

Tysan gained 5.1 percent to close at HKD4.30 in Hong Kong, the highest since at least April 1991, after trading resumed today. The shares gained 60 percent in the 12 months before trading was suspended April 1, compared with a 17 percent decline for the city's benchmark Hang Seng Index.

"The market may be expecting HNA needs to raise the bid to something more expensive," Mark Jolley, equity strategist at CCB International Securities, said by phone.

Under the terms, Blackstone would receive 58 percent more than the HKD2.86 a share it paid to buy the Tysan stake in a deal completed in 2014, according to

FLIGHTSNATION.COM



HAINAN AIRLINES OWNER WANTS TO FLY HIGHER

HNA to buy Tysan stake from Blackstone for USD340 million

■ The acquisition would help HNA ... extend its foothold outside China after agreeing to buy a stake in Brazilian airline Azul and acquiring airport luggage handler Swissport

data compiled by Bloomberg.

Tides Holdings II, the Blackstone arm, will still own 9 percent of Tysan after the sale of the 577.3 million shares, equivalent to 66 percent of the company. HNA's purchase will trigger a mandatory unconditional offer to buy the remaining shares in Tysan, according to the statement issued yesterday after the market's close.

HNA also signed a letter of intent to buy 40 percent of Tysan Foundation (Hong Kong) Ltd. from Fortunate Pool Ltd., a wholly owned company of Tysan's vice chairman and managing director Victor Fung, for HKD836.6 million. The remaining 60 percent is owned by Tysan Group.

The conglomerate was also said to be one of the bidders for London City Airport this year, before

losing out to a consortium led by Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan Board.

China has undertaken a so-called "One Belt, One Road" initiative, a \$40 billion strategy that aims to strengthen economic and transport ties across Eurasia, while raising the world's second-biggest economy's profile as a global power. The project is part of Chinese President Xi Jinping's efforts to revive the ancient trade route and finance infrastructure construction there.

Tysan Group's main business is in foundation piling, accounting for about three quarters of revenue in the fiscal year ended March last year, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. The company was involved in construction projects such as laboratories at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and Cathay Pacific

Airways Ltd.'s air cargo terminals at the city's airport, according to its website. It also took part in works in the expansion of Sands casino in Macau and a tower development at the Venetian.

Its operations include property development, a business that accounted for about 20 percent of revenue, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. It has completed at least two projects in Shanghai, with two more under construction, its website shows.

The Tysan transaction is subject to a definitive sale and purchase agreement and terms and conditions, and there is no certainty the deal will proceed, Tysan said.

Tides Holdings II had said March 9 that it was in talks with an independent third-party regarding a sale of Tysan shares. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

'SANDS RESORTS BUFFET PASS' LAUNCHED



Sands Resorts Cotai Strip Macao and Sands Macao have launched the "Sands Resorts Buffet Pass" which provides access to four buffet

restaurants at The Venetian Macao, Sands Cotai Central and Sands Macao within a 24-hour period.

With buffets covering every

meal, the offer can save guests up to 40 percent. The promotion gives access to seven different buffet options, namely Bambu and Golden Peacock in Venetian, DreamWorks Shrekfast, Feast, Grand Orbit and Xin at Sands Cotai Central and 888 Buffet at Sands Macao.

According to a statement, by following the official Sands Resorts Macao WeChat account and booking a room via the official websites of any of the four hotels, guests are eligible to purchase the pass.

WeChat followers can download the buffet pass card pack and then activate it using the 12-digit code, to make a direct on-line reservation. The promotion will be valid until December 31, 2016.

MGM DONATES MOP300,000 TO HOLY HOUSE OF MERCY

For the fourth consecutive year, MGM has donated MOP300,000 to Macau Holy House of Mercy to support the operation of its annual Welfare Shop.

According to a statement, Grant Bowie, chief executive officer and executive director of MGM China Holdings Limited, together with other executives, led over 50 volunteer team members on Saturday to visit the Holy House of Mercy's Welfare Shop.

Mr Bowie presented a donation check of MOP300,000 to António José de Freitas, president of board of trustees of Macau Holy House of Mercy, in funding the charity's daily operations and charity projects.



During the distribution of food hampers, the volunteer team members were divided into groups to help pack the daily goods including rice, noodles, and canned food,

into MGM's tailor-made handbags. These hampers are distributed to the 360 low-income households referred by the General Union of Neighborhood Association.

AP PHOTO



Elaine Kurtenbach, Marcy Gordon,
Tokyo

PANAMA PAPERS | FAQ

A look at offshore accounts used to hide wealth and avoid taxes

PRIVACY has a price. For the super-wealthy, it can also have a big payoff.

The use of offshore accounts and favorable laws in certain countries can allow rich individuals and families to keep their money hidden from the eyes of tax authorities, regulators and others in their home country.

Here's a look at how offshore accounts are used, both legally and illegally, in the wake of an investigation by an international coalition of media outlets that shows how the rich and powerful use banks, law firms, trusts and offshore shell companies to hide their assets.

WHAT ARE THESE ACCOUNTS?

They are bank accounts or trusts established in a foreign country that take advantage of local banking and corporate laws to help hide the true identity of the owner of the money or other assets in the accounts.

Often, the person establishes a so-called shell company, which lacks any real operations and exists mainly on paper. In many jurisdictions and some U.S. states, companies can be created without identifying an owner.

The company — with no person linked to it — is listed as the official owner of the trust or account. That allows the wealthy person to control the account

indirectly, through the company, and makes it harder for authorities to link the money to the individual.

While shell companies and offshore accounts aren't illegal by themselves, they can be used to help avoid taxes, facilitate money laundering and conceal corruption.

WHERE ARE OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS HELD?

Those looking to hide assets establish accounts in countries like Panama, the Cayman Islands and Bermuda, where the banking laws are designed to vigorously protect account owners' identities.

In recent years, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Internal Revenue Service have found millions of dollars in taxable income hidden in secret accounts in the Caribbean.

There also are havens like the Isle of Man off Britain, Macau off China and the Cook Islands in the South Pacific. Some European countries like Switzerland, Luxembourg and Monaco have also served as havens

for those trying to avoid taxes, though many nations have tightened banking laws to combat tax cheating.

ARE THERE LEGITIMATE REASONS FOR THESE ARRANGEMENTS?

It's possible, but don't bank on it, says Jimmy Gurule, a former assistant U.S. attorney general and undersecretary for enforcement at the Treasury Department. The likelihood is strong that the entity has "no commercial or legitimate purpose," said Gurule, who teaches law at Notre Dame. The Caymans, for example, "has a well-deserved reputation for being a money-laundering and tax-evasion haven."

The country's banking laws made it more difficult for him and his colleagues in U.S. law enforcement to investigate and prosecute cases, Gurule said.

Still, wealthy people who live in countries with unstable political situations, high levels of corruption, or high levels of criminal activity such as kidnapping or extortion could use offshore accounts and the

secrecy they provide for protection, and not necessarily to avoid taxes.

ILLICIT USES OF OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS

The anonymity afforded by shell companies and offshore accounts allows them to be used by terrorists and other international criminals to hide and move money.

They're an ideal vehicle for people "who want to keep their transactions secret to escape law enforcement or civil liability," said Jack Blum, a Washington attorney who's an expert on financial crime and international tax evasion.

Terrorist groups' use of shadowy financial networks has been scrutinized by law enforcement agencies, and the U.S. government has applied sanctions to a number of groups hoping to cut off their access to the U.S. financial system. Lawmakers say they've been hindered, though, by a lack of consistency in policies among the various national and international agencies involved in fighting terrorist financing.

EFFORTS TO CRACK DOWN

Congress passed a law in 2010 called the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act to target U.S. taxpayers who may be hiding money in foreign accounts. The leaders of the Group of 20 — representing 80 percent of the global economy — have recently worked to get its members to adopt stricter reporting requirements to prevent secret dealings. Anti-corruption advocates say legal standards have improved, but are not tough enough.

On Monday Angel Gurría, the secretary general of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which is working with the G-20 to restrict the use of shell companies, called on Panama to "put its house in order" and implement transparency standards. It was a leak of 11.5 million documents from a Panamanian law firm that specializes in creating shell companies that led to revelations of widespread use of these companies and accounts to avoid taxes. **AP**

Didi Tang, Beijing

PANAMA PAPERS

Reports on leaders' finances a bugbear for Beijing

REPORTS based on millions of leaked documents say relatives of past and present Chinese officials, including the brother-in-law of current President Xi Jinping, opened overseas shell companies of the type that have sometimes drawn criticism. Previous reports by international media on the personal finances of Chinese leaders have drawn retaliation from Beijing, frequently through the blocking of media websites and a refusal to issue visas to their journalists.

Here's a look at two of the best-known investigations and their outcomes.

SENSITIVE TIMING — In the months before a 2012 once-in-decade power transfer in Beijing, both The New York Times and the Bloomberg News service published articles detailing the family wealth of incoming and outgoing Chinese leaders.

Bloomberg said then-Vice President Xi's extended family, mainly his older sister Qi Qiaoqiao, her husband, Deng Jiagui, and Qi's daughter, Zhang Yannan, had investments in various companies, an 18 percent stake in a rare earths firm with USD1.73 billion in assets, and a \$20.2 million holding in a technology company. The report said none of the wealth could be traced directly to Xi, his entertainer wife Peng Liyuan or their daughter, but it is widely believed that political influence and insider

AP PHOTO



The setting sun lights up the Panama City skyline

knowledge are factors in the building of such fortunes.

The New York Times said a review of corporate and regulatory records showed that relatives of then-Premier Wen Jiabao controlled assets worth at least \$2.7 billion and hid that wealth through

layers of partnerships and investment vehicles.

ANGRY RESPONSE — Xi did not respond publicly, but Wen reportedly issued a statement through a law firm denying the Times report. Chinese spokesmen issued furious

denunciations, a reflection of the extreme sensitivity surrounding the private lives and personal finances of the Chinese leadership. The New York Times was threatened with a lawsuit, although no action appeared to be taken. Xi's brother-in-law, Deng Jiagui, told

Bloomberg he was retired and that it was "not convenient" to discuss the family's investments.

Beijing blocked access to Bloomberg's website in China. The New York Times, which won a Pulitzer Prize for its coverage, also had its Chinese-language service blocked, alongside its English-language website, which had long been inaccessible inside China.

China often refuses to grant or renew visas to reporters whose work has angered the leadership. The New York Times suffered especially in the wake of its Wen report, with reporters denied permission to live in the country or enter for short-term assignments.

Xi later said foreign journalists must comply with Chinese laws while working in China and should examine themselves for why they had trouble obtaining visas.

"It's like a car that broke down halfway," Xi said at a news conference with visiting U.S. President Barack Obama in November 2014. "Maybe you should get off the car and see where it went wrong." **AP**

China, Pakistan push back on offshore revelations as Syria named

Gregory Viscusi and
Amber Chen Choudhury

China denounced the so-called Panama Papers exposing shell companies as part of a conspiracy and Pakistan's prime minister denied his family did anything wrong as the revelations spurred calls by European political leaders to clamp down on tax evasion.

As media outlets expanded reporting based on 11.5 million leaked documents that point to some of the world's wealthiest people, the Panamanian law firm at the center of the leak, Mossack Fonseca, said prosecutions will fail because its clients haven't broken any laws.

The reports released by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists since Sunday implicate figures from Iceland's prime minister to Indian movie stars for using overseas bank accounts. While such accounts in low-tax centers may be legal, they often raise suspicions of avoiding taxes or hiding

AP PHOTO



A man looks at a newsstand with a copy of the day's Global Times displayed on a basket in Beijing, China

ownership.

"We've got revelations of tax avoidance on an industrial scale, of companies being set up in the British Virgin Islands and then moving themselves across to Panama, not paying any tax anywhere," U.K. opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn told BBC Television yesterday. "The more the revelations come out, the more murky the whole thing becomes."

In China's first official reaction to the investigations, the state-run Global Times newspaper said a "powerful force is behind

the leaks and the U.S. government stands to gain the most from the revelations, which identify President Xi Jinping's brother-in-law. The editorial, which focused on Russian President Vladimir Putin and didn't mention any of the Chinese examples, assessed the revelations as a salvo in an East-West ideological struggle, echoing the Kremlin's response.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's government used Mossack Fonseca to create shell companies in the Seychelles to buy aviation fuel and avoid

international sanctions, the French newspaper Le Monde reported, citing the ICIJ data. Documents also showed that Rami Makhoul, a cousin of the Syrian president and a top financier in Assad's government, had used the law firm's services until June 2011, a few months after the start of the Syrian civil war. Mossack Fonseca cut ties to the Makhoul family after being contacted by authorities in the Virgin Islands who were investigating the family, Le Monde reported.

France's National Front party said it isn't implicated in any revelations from the Panama release after Le Monde said two people who have had business dealings with the anti-European Union party had used shell companies to move money from their activities in France to accounts in Hong Kong, Singapore and the Virgin Islands.

Mossack Fonseca said in a statement to the ICIJ that it has "always complied with international

protocols ... to assure as is reasonably possible, that the companies we incorporate are not being used for tax evasion, money laundering, terrorist finance or other illicit purposes."

"No new information has been disclosed by the Panama leaks and ICIJ which was not already in public domain," said a statement from a spokesman for the family of Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. Three of Sharif's children are either owners or have signing rights to authorize transactions in four offshore companies in the British Virgin Islands, according to the ICIJ's report.

Ramon Fonseca, one of the firm's founders, told the Financial Times in an interview that he doesn't expect "one single legal case" out of the revelations. In a Bloomberg interview, the founders of the law firm said their computer systems had been hacked.

Any German banks found to have been involved in tax evasion and terror financing "will have to face the courts," German Jus-

tice Minister Heiko Maas said in a statement. Maas, whose Social Democratic Party is German Chancellor Angela Merkel's junior coalition ally, said he'll seek expanded laws against money laundering.

Policy makers including German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble and European Commission Vice President Jyrki Katainen said the leak will strengthen the resolve of governments to combat tax avoidance and evasion, something that's been on the agenda of international forums such as the Group of 20 for years.

"Even though it's not surprising, it helps us," Schäuble said in Berlin. "It increases the pressure to halt abuse."

"I'm furious," Katainen said yesterday in Brussels at a breakfast sponsored by Politico. "The best thing in this issue is the leak. So it's not necessarily illegal to have a bank account in a tax haven, but if you are avoiding taxes, then it's totally unacceptable. **Bloomberg**

PANAMA PAPERS

Rajan cautious on leaks as Modi seeks hidden India cash

Vrishti Beniwal and
Siddharth Philip

INDIA'S central bank Governor Raghuram Rajan urged caution on drawing premature conclusions a day after the government announced an investigation into the reported offshore accounts of hundreds of citizens, from Bollywood stars to business tycoons.

The Reserve Bank of India will participate in a multi-agency probe ordered by Prime Minister Narendra Modi after news reports this week cited leaked files from Panama law firm Mossack Fonseca to shed light on offshore holdings around the globe. The report by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, known as ICIJ, says that there's no implication that anyone has broken the law or acted improperly.

"It is important to note that there are legitimate reasons also to have accounts outside," Rajan told reporters in Mumbai on yesterday when asked about the probe. "We have to see what is legitimate and what is not legitimate."

Undisclosed assets - referred to locally as "black money" - have long been a hot political topic in India. Prior to his landslide election win in 2014, Modi promised to bring back enough illicit funds stashed abroad to give each of India's 1.3 billion people as much as 2 million rupees (USD30,000) - almost 25 times the average national income.

In announcing the investigation, India's Finance Ministry noted that previous leaks had led to more than 200 complaints for prosecution and brought

AP PHOTO



Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Raghuram Rajan

about 58 billion rupees into government coffers. Those cases were based on a 2013 report by ICIJ and information received from the government of France in 2011 on the Swiss bank accounts of more than 600 Indians. More than 500 Indians are linked to the documents known as the Panama Papers, according to the Indian Express, a local newspaper.

"The government is committed to detecting and preventing generation of black money," the Finance Ministry said in a statement on Monday. "In this context, the expose of Panama Papers will further help the government in meeting this objective."

India has long struggled to bring in enough revenue, lea-

ving it with one of the widest budget deficits among the largest emerging markets. Modi has sought to lure funds from the shadows with windows for individuals to declare income without facing prosecution in cases where wrongdoing is uncovered.

India brought in about 25 billion rupees (USD385 million) from a three-month window that ended last year before fines increase on funds stashed abroad. A similar measure has been proposed for local cash.

In 2004, India's central bank allowed companies to invest up to 100 percent of their net worth in certain companies overseas by scrapping a cap of \$100

million. It also introduced the liberalized remittance scheme that permitted resident individuals to remit up to \$25,000 annually. The limit was raised subsequently in phases.

Indian citizens who were named in reports by ICIJ and the Indian Express include Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan and his daughter-in-law, actress Aishwarya Rai Bachchan; DLF Ltd. Chairman Kushal Pal Singh; and Sameer Gehlaut, co-founder of Indiabulls Financial Services Ltd., which owns India's third-most valuable real estate company.

Bachchan and Rai didn't immediately respond to e-mails sent to the address provided by Bachchan's office. The In-

dian Express reported that Bachchan and his family didn't respond to repeated emails, as well as calls made to their mobile phones, homes and offices. In a statement, DLF said all remittances were reported to authorities, complied with all applicable laws and were in line with opportunities "available to every Indian."

■ The Indian Finance Ministry noted that previous leaks had led to more than 200 complaints for prosecution and brought about 58 billion rupees into government coffers

Gehlaut said he made overseas investments after paying full taxes in India, every remittance was recorded with the central bank and all disclosures related to the investments are made in annual reports to the Reserve Bank of India and income tax authorities. Authorities have scrutinized the returns, and they received a clean order with no tax demands, Gehlaut said in an e-mailed statement.

The ICIJ report says that shell companies can be and are used for legal purposes. Mossack Fonseca said it "does not foster or promote illegal acts" and allegations that it helps hide the identities of real owners are "completely unsupported and false." Panama's government said it will cooperate with any legal probe resulting from the data leak, Agence France-Presse reported. **Bloomberg**

Vietnam warns of dire impact from planned Mekong dams

RESEARCH commissioned by Vietnam has warned of devastating environmental and economic effects for millions of people living along the Mekong River if 11 proposed dams are built on its mainstream.

The 2 1/2-year study by Danish water expert DHI was submitted recently by Vietnam to the Mekong River Commission, a body comprising Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos that was set up to mediate the conflicting water priorities of Mekong countries. The commission released



A farmer carries pots loaded with water from a pond for watering her vegetable crops at Chamkar Mean village outside Phnom Penh

a five-page summary of the study to The Associated Press yesterday.

It predicts "high to very high adverse effects" on

fisheries and agriculture in Cambodia and Vietnam if all 11 dams are built, and even greater damage if the Mekong's tributaries also

are dammed. The famed Irrawaddy dolphin would likely disappear from the Mekong, it says.

Unmitigated hydropower development will cause "long-lasting damage to the floodplains and aquatic environment, resulting in significant reduction in the socio-economic status of millions of residents," according to the study.

Much of Southeast Asia is suffering a record drought due to El Nino, and officials in Vietnam have said the effects are exacerbated by existing Chinese dams on the upper Mekong.

The rice-bowl-sustaining river system flows into Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam.

The Mekong is also one of the world's largest inland fisheries, providing a livelihood to millions of people. Dams diminish fishing grounds by creating barriers to breeding-cycle migrations and creating river conditions that destroy habitat and food sources.

The study said agricultural production in the lower reaches of the Mekong Delta would drop steeply because the dams would

trap river sediments, resulting in large reductions in the volume of nutrients flowing downstream. Less sediment downstream would also make the delta more at risk of saltwater incursion that can render land infertile.

It predicts annual fishery and farming losses of more than USD760 million in Vietnam and \$450 million in Cambodia. Fish catches would drop by 50 percent for Vietnam and Cambodia, and 10 percent of the delta's fish species would either disappear from the region or become extinct. The incomes of fishing and farming villages would likely fall by half. **AP**



Asylum seeker Amin (center) and fellow class mate Kumar catch a wave during a surfing class on Bondi Beach in Sydney

Kristen Gelineau, Sydney

AUSTRALIA

Surfing soothes asylum-seekers' fears of sea

THEY gather under the blazing sun and blue skies of an Australian beach, looking out at the water that once symbolized so much misery: Terrifying boat trips marked by sickness and death and the constant dread that their own lives might be nearing the end. But today, the sea will become their unlikely savior.

For these five asylum-seekers, a novel program introducing them to the iconic Aussie sport of surfing is helping to transform both their feelings toward the ocean and their lives and allowing them, at least for a brief time, to forget the pains of the past.

"We know that getting into the ocean and surfing makes everybody feel good," says Brenda Miley, surf school director at Let's Go Surfing, which is providing the lessons. "[...] I just think it's a win-win because it helps build confidence, they learn some skills, they learn about being a local Aussie."

There is a rush of nervous laughter and chitchat as the men file into the Let's Go shop at Sydney's famed surf haven, Bondi Beach. Inside, instructors Conrad Pattinson and Will Bigelow demonstrate how to put on wetsuits.

Amin, an asylum-seeker from Iran, flexes his muscles under the neoprene and chuckles. He has been urging his fellow Surfing Without Borders buddies along all morning, eager to get on a surfboard for the first time. But he admits his excitement is tinged with anxiety.

Like the tens of thousands of asylum-seekers who have fled to Australia in recent years, Amin's trip involved a harrowing ocean crossing that began in Indonesia, where smugglers pack migrants into rickety boats that frequently break down or capsize. Those who survive the journey are often scarred by it.

Amin's memories of that trip and the relentless seasickness that came with it are dark. Today, though, he hopes to forget all that.

Down on the beach, Pattinson and Bigelow give the men a pep talk. They explain how the current works and the different parts of the surfboard.

"We're going to make a plan to keep it safe and get heaps and heaps of waves," Bigelow says.

Amin eyes the turquoise water, where the swells are gaining strength. He asks how far out they will go. "Not deep," Bigelow assures him.

The students practice standing on the boards from the safety of the sand. Pattinson warns them that if they don't use proper form, they'll lose their balance and "do a helicopter." At this, he circles his arms wildly. The men crack up.

Finally, it is time to hit the water. The men slide onto their boards and paddle toward a sandbar where the waves are breaking. There, the instructors help maneuver the students' boards into the proper position. And when Amin is ready, Pattinson pushes him forward onto his first wave.

Amin presses himself up with his hands, pops into a brief, unsteady crouch and...

Splash!

"Fell down, no good!" he says. Undeterred, he wipes his face, grabs his board and paddles back out.

One by one, the men make their first shaky attempts as Pattinson and Bigelow whistle and cheer. Flanked by other student surfers, they are largely indistinguishable from the rest of the

rookies: Their hips wobble, their arms "do the helicopter," they occasionally collide, and they belly flop more than they stand. But more than anyone else in the water, they laugh.

This kind of joy is exactly what the staff at Settlement Services International hoped to achieve when they launched the surf program last year. They knew their clients were grappling not only with the trauma associated with their boat journeys and the wars and persecution they had fled, but also with the anxiety of settling into a new country.

Flanked by other student surfers, they are largely indistinguishable from the rest of the rookies

Sandra Oehman, a case manager at the not-for-profit organization and a surfer herself, researched the concept of ocean therapy, which has been used to help everyone from sexual assault survivors to war veterans. Many find that being in the water and focusing their energy on riding the waves produces a calming sensation that helps clear the mind. Maybe, Oehman thought, it

could do the same for her clients.

Her manager, Robert Shipton, thought it was a brilliant idea. After all, their organization's goal is to help asylum-seekers adapt to their new culture — and what could be more Australian than surfing?

Conscious that students might harbor fears of the ocean, instructors took a gradual approach, says Miley, the surf school director. First, they encouraged the men to go in the water just up to their hips, then helped push their boards onto the waves, and calmed any jitters along the way.

The technique worked wonders for the dozen or so participants, who quickly gained confidence and became so enamored with the sport that many of them now surf on their own, using boards donated by locals and the surf school.

"We just found that once we just encouraged people and got them in and gave them that safe space to be in the water, that very quickly those worries about anything that had to do with the water — that just disappeared," Shipton says. "And it's now to the stage where they're like, 'Let's go to the beach, we want to go surfing, let's do it more!'"

Danny, an asylum seeker from Iran who was part of the pilot group, says surfing helped clear his head of the horrors he left behind.

"It was very different from my [boat] journey," says Danny, who like the other students spoke on condition that their last names be withheld to protect themselves and loved ones in their home countries. "My worries when I was in the ocean were gone and I had the feeling of freedom. And I was happy."

Back at the beach, Kumar, an asylum-seeker from Sri Lanka, hops off his board after riding a wave into shore. He can't stop grinning. In his former life as a fisherman, he spent a lot of time on the water. But it was nothing like Bondi.

"I will never forget this," he says. "Ever." **AP**

PANAMA PAPERS: THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

The Latest on the publication by a coalition of media outlets of an investigation into offshore financial dealings by the rich and famous:

SLOVENIA: BOXER DEJAN ZAVEC NAMED

Slovenia's finance ministry has called for greater international sharing of data to tackle the kind of tax fraud allegedly revealed by the data leaked by a Panama-based law firm.

The ministry said Slovenia was active in tackling tax havens by investigating hundreds of suspected cases of tax evasion. It says an additional 24 million of euros was collected between 2011 and 2015 as a result of probes into suspected transactions. Slovenia's Delo newspaper says that according to leaked documents it analyzed, at least 78 Slovenian companies and 74 Slovenian individuals are reportedly associated with offshore companies set up through the Panama-based Mossack Fonseca law firm.

The newspaper says that Slovenia's most prominent boxer Dejan Zavec is among those named in the leaked documents. He has said he has done nothing wrong.

PUTIN: SPOKESMAN SAYS 'RUSSIAN LEADER HAS NO CONNECTION WHATSOEVER'

President Vladimir Putin's spokesman says the Russian leader has no connection whatsoever to offshore accounts allegedly owned by his close friend, a Russian musician.

Dmitry Peskov says the leaked documents from a Panama-based firm have been wilfully interpreted by an international consortium of investigative journalists to make what he called an unfounded claim that cellist Sergei Roldugin's offshore assets were linked to the Russian president.

Peskov, speaking to The Associated Press yesterday, emphasized that "there is not a word about President Putin in those papers," and dismissed the alleged link between Russian owners of offshore assets and Putin as a "product of imagination."

He said the scandal around the so-called Panama Papers has proven that Putin was right when he urged Russian businesses to pull out their assets from offshore.

UK: CORBYN CALLS FOR INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION

British opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn has called for an independent investigation into the tax affairs of people and companies accused of wrongdoing in the leak of the Panama Papers. Labour leader Corbyn said yesterday the investigation should include a look at the finances of Prime Minister David Cameron and his family. Corbyn spoke after the British press published extensive stories about Cameron's late father setting up an offshore account at a tax haven. He told reporters: "I think the prime minister, in his own interest, should tell us exactly what's been going on."

The information about Cameron's father was first published several years ago.

Corbyn said the government should stop "pussy-footing" around and deal aggressively with tax havens.

REAL SOCIEDAD: KOVACEVIC AMASSED USD1.4 MILLION ON A USD2,000 SALARY

The Belgrade-based KRIK network investigating crime and corruption, which issued the list yesterday after going through documents leaked from the Panama-based law firm, says Darko Kovacevic had officially earned about \$2,000 a month while playing for Spanish club Real Sociedad during the 2006-2007 season.

The leaked documents, however, show the club had paid Kovacevic \$1.4 million that season to his offshore account. That means that both the club and Kovacevic had avoided paying full taxes in Spain, KRIK says.

Fashion designer Roksanda Ilincic had a firm in British Virgin Islands, KRIK says, adding that the ownership of a shell company is not a crime, but that it can be used for money laundering or evading taxes.

ICELANDIC PM RESIGNS

Iceland's embattled prime minister has resigned amid a controversy over his offshore holdings, a Cabinet minister said yesterday as outrage over the accounts roiled the North Atlantic island nation. Prime Minister Sigmundur David Gunnlaugsson is stepping down as leader of the country's coalition government, Agriculture Minister Sigurdur Ingi Johannsson told Icelandic broadcaster RUV. No replacement has yet been named, and Iceland's president has not yet confirmed that he has accepted the resignation.

Thousands of Icelanders protested outside the parliament building in Reykjavik on Monday, demanding that Gunnlaugsson resign over reported offshore financial dealings by him and his wife that opposition lawmakers say amount to a major conflict of interest with his job.

GERMANY MINISTERS PROPOSES A NATIONAL 'TRANSPARENCY REGISTER'

Germany's justice minister is proposing setting up a national "transparency register" that would list the real beneficiaries of letter-box companies — but only those set up in the country itself.

Heiko Maas' proposal to expand national money-laundering legislation followed a massive leak of documents from a Panama-based law firm. German daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung reported Tuesday that 28 German banks used the company's services to set up or administer over 1,200 shell companies. Maas conceded that German legislation could only apply to companies set up in Germany, which has pushed for tax havens to open up. He said: "Those who are pushing for this at the international level have to have corresponding national rules themselves."

Maas added: "I can imagine many countries considering this." AP

PANAMA PAPERS

Panama rejects mon

Juan Zamorano,
Joshua Goodman, Panama City

PANAMANIANs have long shrugged off their country's checkered reputation as a financial haven for drug lords, tax dodgers and corrupt oligarchs. If they're crooks, they've learned from the world's wealthy nations, they like to joke.

That same defensiveness has re-emerged amid the fallout from the leak of 11.5 million confidential documents from the Panama-based law firm Mossack Fonseca revealing details of how some of the globe's richest people funnel their assets into secretive shell companies set up here and in other lightly regulated jurisdictions.

Ramon Fonseca, a co-founder of the firm, said yesterday [Macau time] that his country's success in establishing itself as an offshore banking giant has bred jealousy from first-world rivals at a time of increasing competition and scrutiny of the industry in the aftermath of the global financial crisis.

"It's very unfair what's happening because there's not a level playing field," Fonseca told The Associated Press in an interview. "Without a doubt if this happened to a company in Delaware nothing would happen, but because it's Panama it's the front page of the world's newspapers."

Panama cemented its status as a money laundering center in the 1980s, when dictator Gen. Manuel Noriega rolled out the red carpet to Colombian drug cartels. It has remained a magnet for illicit money, as well as for legitimate funds, because its dollarized economy sits at the crossroad of the Americas. Breakneck economic growth averaging 8.5 percent a year for a decade has been fed by the flood of cash, transforming the capital's skyline into Latin America's Dubai.

But Panama isn't alone in its permissive attitude toward shell companies, which the British-based Tax Justice Network estimates hide USD21 trillion to \$32 trillion in untaxed or lightly taxed financial wealth around the globe. Panama ranks 13th on the watchdog group's financial secrecy index — better than the U.S., which is at No. 3.

In 2014, a group of academics wrote a book, "Global Shell Games," that looks at tax havens. They used emails to set up shell companies with 3,700 corporate service providers in 182 jurisdictions, posing as a range of low- to high-risk customers, including drug traffickers and terrorist groups. The findings were startling: All countries scored poorly. Service firms in Panama complied 29 percent of the time with minimum standards like requesting photo IDs and other do-

cuments establishing the identity of the company owners. U.S. firms complied on average 25 percent of the time, while Delaware, at 6 percent, was even more lax.

"Most of the money from these shady dealings is held in other countries, not Panama, so there is plenty of blame to share around," said Jason Sharman, one of the book's authors and a political scientist at Australia's Griffith University.

Panamanian President Juan Carlos Varela has promised to cooperate with any judicial investigations stemming from the leaked data, and the country's chief prosecutor's office said that it will look into the documents to see if they reveal any wrongdoing.

■ Panama ranks 13th on the watchdog group's financial secrecy index — better than the US, which is at No. 3.

Varela says he has "zero tolerance" for financial crimes and likes to cite the ramming through congress last year of legislation expanding supervision over more than 12 non-financial industries, from real estate to casinos. The legislation paved the way for Panama's removal in February from a black list of high-risk jurisdictions kept by the Financial Action Task Force, an inter-government agency that sets standards for controlling money laundering and terror financing.

In a statement issued yesterday, Mossack Fonseca said: "Our industry is not particularly well understood by the public, and unfortunately this series of articles will only serve to deepen that confusion. The facts are these: while we may have been the victim of a data breach, nothing in this illegally obtained cache of documents suggests we've done anything wrong or illegal, and that's very much in keeping with the global reputation we've worked hard to build over the past 40 years of doing business the right way."

Until recently, Panama was one of the few jurisdictions allowing companies to issue "bearer shares," which obscure any record of ownership by giving whoever is in possession of a stock certificate ownership rights. Legislation last year banned the practice although outstanding bearer shares still circulate while the legislation is being implemented.

Still, Varela's close relationship

ey-launder label following documents leak



with Ramon Fonseca is likely to bring questions about his commitment to transparency.

Until recently, Fonseca was president of the governing Panamenista party and ser-

ved in Varela's Cabinet as a special adviser. He resigned in February after authorities

in Brazil raided the offices of a Mossack Fonseca affiliate as part of the investigation

into bribes paid to politicians by companies doing business with the state-run oil giant Petrobras.

Varela himself was hit with unproven allegations during the 2014 presidential campaign that he evaded taxes and took money from an illegal gambling ring in the U.S.

Some say Panama's stigma as a haven for illicit cash is well deserved and cleaning up will be hard. While the regulatory framework has greatly improved, old habits are ingrained and many of Panama's bankers and lawyers have little to fear from the country's corrupt prosecutors and judges.

"This scandal is truly an indication of the schizophrenia of Panama's ruling class," said RM Koster, an American-born novelist who has made his home in Panama City for decades. "They want to pretend to live in a first world country run by serious people but at the same time won't give up the culture of graft, bribes, etcetera." AP

AD

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SATURDAY JUST GOT EPIC

SATURDAY SUPER STACK

Every Saturday, until April 19, PokerStars LIVE Macau will be hosting the HK\$1,000 Saturday Warm-up (20k GTD) at 2pm and the HK\$3,000 Saturday Superstack (100k GTD) at 6pm

It's part of the exciting new schedule of poker tournaments we're running Wednesdays to Sundays

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All tournaments are subject to regulatory approval.

PokerStars LIVE Macau

what's ON

MACAU ARTS WINDOW – RESTRAINED HUGS
– INSTALLATION BY ELLA LEI
TIME: 10am-7pm
(no admittance after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: April 10, 2016
VENUE: Macau Museum of Art,
Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
ADMISSION: MOP5
(Free on Sundays and public holidays)
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

“GETTING INTO SALON”
– EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKS BY
KONG IU LAM AND HIS STUDENTS
TIME: 9am-10pm (Institute for Tourism Studies,
Colina de Mong-Ha); 12pm-10pm (Educational
restaurant, Institute for Tourism Studies, Colina de
Mong-Ha)
UNTIL: April 30, 2016
ADMISSION: free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2856 1252

‘WONDERFUL TIME’
– CHEONG SOU MAN ART EXHIBITION
TIME: 10:30am-6:30pm
(Closed on Mondays and public holidays)
UNTIL: May 29, 2015
ADMISSION: Free
VENUE: 10, Calçada da Igreja de S.Lázaro, Macao
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 4582

**“HEART CARVING – XUE YIHAN’S SCENES OF
MACAU PRINTMAKING EXHIBITION”**
TIME: 12pm-8pm (Tuesdays to Sundays); 3pm-8pm
(Mondays, open on public holidays)
UNTIL: April 22, 2016
VENUE: Albergue SCM – A2 Gallery, Calçada da
Igreja de São Lázaro No.8, Macau Gallery A2
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2852 2550 / 2852 3205

10TH MACAU DESIGN BIENNIAL
TIME: 10am to 7pm
(Closed on Monday, no admission after 6:30 pm)
UNTIL: June 26, 2016
VENUE: Macau Museum of Art
ADMISSION: Adult MOP5, free for Children under 12
years old, elderly over 65 years old
(Admission is free on Sundays and public holidays)
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 7588

**ABSTRACT PAINTINGS
FROM THE MAM COLLECTION**
TIME: 10am-7pm
(no admittance after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: December 31, 2016
VENUE: Macau Museum of Art,
Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
ADMISSION: MOP5
(Free on Sundays and public holidays)
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

Offbeat

**CROATIAN POLICE PROBE MASSIVE
THEFT FROM ITS HEADQUARTERS**

Croatian police are investigating the reported theft of 280,000 euros (USD320,000) and two kilograms of gold – all snatched from the force’s headquarters.

Helena Biocic of the police media office confirmed Monday that the theft had taken place, but refused to reveal any details.

The Jutarnji List newspaper, which reported what was taken, says the heist occurred late Sunday. The report says the thieves got in by the fire stairs and broke into the office of the organized crime department chief, Zeljko Dolacki.

The daily says police found an overturned, empty safe in the morning.

TV canal macau

13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
15:00	RTPi Live
17:45	Fillers
17:50	Trail of Lies (Repeated)
18:35	Non-Daily Portuguese News (Repeated)
18:45	TDM Entrevista (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Montra do Lilau
21:30	Criminal Minds Sr.9
22:10	Trail of Lies
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Champions League Highlights
23:45	Champions League: Bayern Munchen - Benfica (Repeated)
01:25	Fillers
01:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

cinema

CINETEATRO

01 APR - 06 APR

BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE_
ROOM 1
2.30, 6.30, 9.15 pm
Director: Zack Snyder
Starring: Amy Adams, Jesse Eisenberg, Diane Lane
Language: English (Cantonese)
Duration: 153min



ZOOTOPIA_
ROOM 2
2.15, 4.05, 9.45 pm
Director: Byron Howard, Rich Moore
Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)
Duration: 108min



EDDIE THE EAGLE_
ROOM 3
2.15, 4.05, 5.55, 9.30 pm
Director: Dexter Fletcher
Starring: Taron Egerton, Hugh Jackman, Tom Costello
Language: English (Cantonese)
Duration: 106min

KUNG FU PANDA 3_
ROOM 3
7.45 pm
Director: Alessandro Carloni, Jennifer Yuh
Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)
Duration: 95min

MACAU TOWER

24 MAR - 27 APR

BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE_
1.15, 4.00, 6.45, 9.30 pm
Director: Zack Snyder
Starring: Amy Adams, Jesse Eisenberg, Diane Lane
Language: English (Cantonese)
Duration: 153min

this day in history

**1989 Dockers’ ‘JOBS FOR LIFE’
SCRAPPED**

Chaos in Britain’s ports is looming after the government announced it is to abolish legislation which, in effect, guarantees work for more than 9,000 dockers. Employment Secretary Norman Fowler told MPs the National Dock Labour Scheme (NDLS) had become “a total anachronism” which stood in the way of a modern and efficient ports’ industry.

Mr Fowler said an abolition bill would be presented before the House of Commons tomorrow.

Employers at the 60 British ports covered by the NDLS have long complained they are losing business to other ports in the UK and Europe because of the restrictions it imposes.

Introduced by a Labour government in 1947, the scheme was intended to end the scourge of casual labour by giving dockers the legal right to minimum work, holidays, sick pay and pensions.

A National Dock Labour Board was set up consisting of 50% union and 50% employer representatives.

It gives the unions an absolute veto over dismissal and total control over recruitment.

Registered dockers laid off by any of the 150 firms bound by the scheme have to be taken on by another or be paid £25,000, meaning they virtually have a “job for life”.

In the wake of Mr Fowler’s announcement a ballot of the 9,400 registered dockers for industrial action is expected to be held soon but early reaction does not bode well.

Dock workers at the Port of London staged an unofficial half-day strike on Thursday and there was also unofficial action at ports in Bristol and Glasgow.

Labour has accused the government of “wilful sabotage” which will plunge the docks into strikes.

But Mr Fowler said there would be generous compensation of up to £35,000 for men laid off as a result of the scrapping of the scheme.

He had also received assurances from the port employers that there would be no return to using mass casual labour, Mr Fowler said.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

By the time Mrs Thatcher’s government squared up to the dockers’ unions, it had already broken the miners’ and printers’ unions after they took strike action.

However, many later argued that if the main dockers’ union, the TGWU, had balloted for strike action sooner they may have been more successful.

By the time the dockers came out on strike in July the NDLS had already been abolished.

It meant port employers could once again use casual labour, lessening the impact of the dockers’ action.

In August most dockers voted to return to work.

However, port workers in Liverpool remained on strike culminating in 500 of them being sacked.

YOUR STARS

Aries

Mar. 21-Apr. 19

You are facing a big impasse today - but you can deal with it! Your energy may feel all blocked up, but that just means you need to rely on other people or resources in order to keep moving.

Taurus

April 20-May 20

Don't worry about the details - things are getting a little weird, but that just means that you're on the right track. Your practical nature can make a success out of almost anything that comes your way today.

Gemini

May 21-Jun. 21

You are drawing on hidden resources today - strength you didn't even know you had! You can't count on it to last forever, but it should help you long enough to get past this rough patch.

Cancer

Jun. 22-Jul. 22

Get started on a little project today - and then watch as it snowballs into something bigger and crazier than you could have anticipated! It's a good time to make a move in a new direction.

Leo

Jul. 23-Aug. 22

Be wary of overindulgence today - things look better for you than they really are. Your energy is a little scattered, so it's all too easy for you to take on too much without thinking.

Virgo

Aug. 23-Sept. 22

Express yourself! Your innermost thoughts and feelings need an outlet, and that could mean that you've got to post an overshare on Facebook or just sit down with an old friend and spill your guts.

Libra

Sep.23-Oct. 22

You are feeling somewhat more intense right now, so see if you can get some alone time to figure out what's really going on. You may be surprised by how simple it all is at its root.

Scorpio

Oct. 23 - Nov. 21

You can tell that things are hung in the middle, so it's up to you to push them one way or the other. It's a good time for you to rely on your instincts and accept that control doesn't always work out.

Sagittarius

Nov. 22-Dec. 21

You need to deal with quiet, mundane issues or tasks today. Don't let yourself get too bored, as you may find that your life spirals out of control if you get too distracted or stop paying attention.

Capricorn

Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Don't worry about spoiling friends or family - go ahead and indulge them! On a day like today, people remember the little things you do for them long afterward, and you can use those warm fuzzies!

Aquarius

Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Dig deeply into your past and see if you can figure out anything that may be relevant to today's big problem. You are sure to be surprised when you drift back and hit on a nearly exact parallel!

Pisces

Feb.19-Mar. 20

Someone says the sweetest thing to you at some point in the day - and you may feel nearly panicking from joy! It could be romantic, professional or almost anything else, so embrace it!

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle.

Easy+

9x9 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle.

Medium

9x9 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle.

Hard

9x9 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle.

WEATHER

CHINA

Table of weather conditions for various Chinese cities including Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, etc.

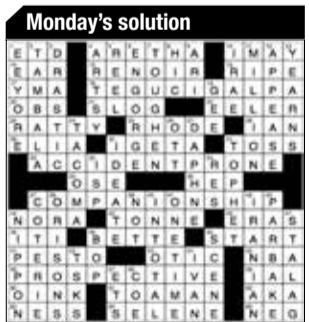
WORLD

Table of weather conditions for world cities including Moscow, Frankfurt, Paris, London, New York.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Safecrackers; 6- Biblical birthright seller; 10- Diner orders; 14- Red as ...; 15- Whirl; 16- In ... of (replacing); 17- Street show; 18- Cumberbund; 19- Predictive sign; 20- Main dish; 22- Boards that support a mattress; 24- Major-leaguer; 26- Puts up; 27- Having a resemblance; 31- ...-jogg; 32- Rock; 33- Sniggler; 36- JFK watchdog; 39- Not barefoot; 40- Fiddled; 41- Actor Rob; 42- Wimbledon unit; 43- We're Off ... the Wizard; 44- Spanish Mister; 45- Floor covering where the cat sat; 46- Quickly; 48- 33rd president of the U.S.; 51- Mineo of "Exodus"; 52- Violent mischief; 54- Disco ballroom dance; 59- Romeo's last words; 60- Bad time for Caesar; 62- Showed again; 63- "... you dare!"; 64- Scrabble piece; 65- Something for the mill; 66- Greek peak; 67- Ivy League school; 68- Curved letters;

DOWN: 1- Easy to steer; 2- Israel's Abba; 3- Goldfinger portrayer Frobe; 4- Will of "The Waltons"; 5- Spire; 6- Curvy letter; 7- Health resorts; 8- Brides walk down it; 9- Unscathed; 10- Blemish; 11- Boundary; 12- Mall frequenter; 13- Had the mic, say; 21- Notable period; 23- Salty drop; 25- Cream-filled cookies; 27- Flat sound; 28- Spillane's "... Jury"; 29- Debatable; 30- Not Rep. or Dem.; 34- Spud bud; 35- Sly looks; 36- Adoring; 37- Mil. truant; 38- Ethereal; 40- Entirety; 41- Wreath of flowers; 43- Pack down; 44- Spend lavishly; 45- Mator's red cloth; 47- Sigh of satisfaction; 48- Flaps; 49- Debris; 50- Gymnast Comaneci; 52- Rover's pal; 53- Scream; 55- Sun. speeches; 56- Speaker of note; 57- Erit coherent light; 58- Tolkien tree creatures; 61- This is what eyes do;



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222
Water Supply - Report 1990 992
PJ (Open line) 993
Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333
Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944
S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
IACM 28 387 333
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A FIFA judge who helped ban Sepp Blatter for financial misconduct is now under investigation by his ethics committee colleagues after being named in an international probe of offshore accounts.

The FIFA ethics prosecution chamber said that it "opened a preliminary investigation to review the allegations" linked to lawyer Juan Pedro Damiani of Uruguay.

Damiani was identified in reports Sunday by international media who received a vast trove of data and documents leaked from a law firm based in Panama. The firm, Mossack Fonseca, specializes in creating offshore accounts which can be used to avoid tax.

He heads his family's legal and accountancy practice in Montevideo founded by his late father, Jose Pedro Damiani.

The FIFA case against Damiani was opened in March after ethics judges learned of his "business relationship" with former FIFA vice president Eugenio Figueredo, a fellow Uruguayan who was arrested in Zurich almost 10 months earlier.

Figueredo was indicted by American federal prosecutors last May, and later extradited to Uruguay. In December, Figueredo pleaded guilty to fraud and money laundering charges

PANAMA PAPERS

FIFA judge faces ethics investigation over offshore accounts



Juan Pedro Damiani, president of Uruguay's Penarol soccer club (right) shakes hands with Brazilian soccer legend Pele

and acknowledged taking bribes.

Damiani was a founding member of the FIFA ethics committee in 2006. He was proposed by the South American soccer body, CONMEBOL, and approved by the FIFA executive committee chaired by then-president Blatter.

Damiani retained his place when the FIFA ethics court was restructured in 2012 under the leadership of chief judge Joachim Eckert and former U.S. fe-

deral prosecutor Michael Garcia, then the lead investigator.

In December, Blatter identified Damiani as one of four ethics judges who passed an eight-year ban on him for several violations of the FIFA ethics code, including a financial conflict of interest. Blatter's ban was reduced to six years on appeal, and he has filed a further challenge at the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

The FIFA judging panel in Blatter's case was chaired by

Eckert, who referred claims linked with Damiani to the current FIFA chief prosecutor Cornel Borbely.

"Dr. Borbely is currently looking into said allegations in order to determine if there is a breach against the FIFA Code of Ethics and decide any further measures," the ethics committee statement said.

Damiani is "currently not involved in any ongoing cases of the adjudicatory chamber," according to a statement from Eckert's FIFA office.

Damiani also followed his father into football, succeeding him as president of Uruguay's 49-time champion Penarol.

Last week, Damiani hosted Blatter's successor as elected FIFA president, Gianni Infantino, at the club and presented him with a personalized yellow and black-striped team shirt.

Separately, suspended UEFA president Michel Platini said after he was named in the leaked documents that all his accounts

and assets are known to Swiss tax authorities

According to Le Monde newspaper, which has access to the leaked documents, Platini has an offshore company founded in Panama in 2007 and named Balney Enterprises Corp.

Platini's advisers said in a statement that the former France international "wants to inform that, as he stated it many times to the journalists in charge of the investigation, all of his accounts and assets are known to the tax authorities in Switzerland, where he has been a fiscal resident since 2007."

Platini's communication team declined to confirm whether the Frenchman actually ran the company.

Platini was suspended from office in October by FIFA's ethics committee and is now serving a six-year ban over a USD2 million payment former FIFA president Sepp Blatter approved from FIFA funds in 2011. AP

AD

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FOOTBALL

Loss to Urawa has Guangzhou on brink of ACL exit



Luiz Felipe Scolari

DEFENDING champion Guangzhou Evergrande is on the brink of a group-stage exit in the Asian Champions League after a 1-0 loss to Urawa Reds yesterday left the big-spending Chinese club winless in four games.

Yuki Muto's header in the 52nd-minute secured Urawa's victory at home and moved the 2007 champions into second place in Group H with seven points, two behind Sydney FC.

Evergrande, coached by Luiz Felipe Scolari, has two points and needs wins in its last two games to have any chance of progressing in its bid for its third Asian Champions League title in four seasons.

Brazilian midfielder Paulinho hit the post from eight yards, missing a chance to put Guangzhou in front early in the second half, minutes before Muto's close-range header gave Urawa the lead.

Paulinho shot over the crossbar from Jackson Martinez's cross in the 56th, failing to equalize in a contest Guangzhou needed to win.

Evergrande, coached by Luiz Felipe Scolari, has two points and needs wins in its last two games to have any chance of progressing in its bid for its third Asian Champions League title in four seasons

In Sydney, forward Milos Ninkovic scored with his second touch from close range in 51st minute to give the hosts a 1-0 home win over the three-time champion Pohang Steelers, maintaining first place and needing only one point to ensu-

re a spot in the knockout stage for the first time in three attempts.

"Good discipline, good effort and they played to the game plan," Sydney FC coach Graham Arnold said of his team, which is languishing in seventh place in the Australian A-League. "I'm very happy for once in 10 weeks.

"We're not there yet, I want us to finish on top of the group."

In Group F, 2013 finalist FC Seoul was held to a 0-0 draw at home by Shandong Luneng, moving to 10 points and remaining three clear of the Chinese club.

Seoul defender Osmar Barba hit the post with a volley after 16 minutes and Shandong missed a chance when Gil headed pasted the post.

Seoul squandered late chances when Ju Se-jong's shot from the edge of the area flew over the Shandong crossbar and Yun Ju-tae's shot was deflected just wide.

Sanfrece Hiroshima remained in contention with a 2-0 win at Buriram United, moving to six points as it extended the Thai club's run to four straight losses. **AP**



Fittipaldi driving the Lotus 72 at the Nürburgring in 1971

FORMULA ONE

Emerson Fittipaldi facing financial difficulties in Brazil

TWO-TIME Indy 500 winner Emerson Fittipaldi is facing serious financial difficulties in Brazil, with authorities seizing trophies and racing cars from his personal museum.

Among the cars seized was the one he used to win the 1993 Indy 500, as well as one driven by the Brazilian in Formula One.

Fittipaldi's press office released a statement saying that the difficulties are "the result of an unstable financial and political scenario" in Brazil, which is in political turmoil and facing its worst recession in decades.

Fittipaldi's struggles surfaced after a report aired by Brazil's Record TV over the weekend. The revelations came as a surprise to most Brazilians, as Fittipaldi was largely seen as a very successful businessman following his racing days.

Yesterday's statement sent to The Associated Press said the two-time F1 champion was optimistic about overcoming this situation.

"Emerson Fittipaldi believes that he will solve this issue with more work. He has confidence in the future economic outlook and financial health of his companies," the statement said, adding that the driver never hid his financial struggles or denied interviews on the subject. "He is seeking

partnerships and solutions for this situation."

In addition to the seized cars and memorabilia, authorities also took computers and furniture from the Sao Paulo mansion where his personal museum is located. Record TV showed images of the cars being towed into trucks and the trophies being carried by officials. Other properties and assets by the former driver have also been blocked, Record TV said.

"The racing cars and the trophies earned by the two-time F1 and Indy 500 champion belong to a museum dedicated to all racing fans in Brazil," the statement said. "As soon as this issue is solved, they will return to their place. Emerson laments what has happened, but is not discouraged by these difficulties and is confident that these problems will be solved."

Fittipaldi is reportedly facing more than 60 lawsuits from banks and other businesses seeking payments. Record TV said Fittipaldi's debts reach nearly 27 million reais (USD8 million).

Fittipaldi raced 11 seasons in F1 from 1970-80, winning the world title with Lotus in 1972 and with McLaren in 1974. He started racing in the United States in 1983, winning his first Indy 500 in 1989, when he also clinched the CART Series title. **AP**

FOOTBALL

Greece under renewed threat of soccer 'Grexit'

FIFA says Greece is facing expulsion from international soccer over a government decision to suspend the country's cup competition because of fan violence.

Sports Minister Stavros Kontonis called off the Greek Cup last month following violence at a semifinal match between PAOK and league champion

Olympiakos. PAOK fans threw flares and clashed with riot police on the field.

In a letter to Kontonis yesterday, FIFA described the action as "disproportionate and as interference in the internal affairs" of the Greek soccer association, and issued a 10-day deadline to reverse the decision. **AP**

opinion

Macau Matters

Richard Whitfield



DRUGS - WAR OR STORE?

Some Hong Kong fortunes were founded on the opium trade in China. More recently, in the 1930's there were businesses happily operating in Macau to make and sell opium to the public. At that time many now prohibited drugs were readily available in many places around the world.

However, since 1961 when the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs was signed in the United Nations, there has been a relentlessly growing criminal drug trade and the war on drugs has become ever more costly from human and financial perspectives. In 1971 two American congressmen released a report stating that more than 10-15% of US servicemen in Vietnam were addicted to heroin. More recently there has been an escalating arms race of chemists developing more and more new psychotropic drugs and increasing efforts to stem their distribution and jail drug traffickers. Around the world, and especially in South America, more and more crime, and especially murders, can be traced to the illegal drug trade.

I have long felt that this war is unwinnable and new approaches to dealing with drugs need to be tried. Through discussions with friends and colleagues I know that many others feel the same way, and this seems to be an increasingly common view. On this topic I recently found a new short documentary and a series of related print articles on this topic put online by The Economist to kick off its "Global Compass" series - see economist.com/films for details.

This resource takes the view that the war on drugs is failing miserably and that the best way to improve the situation is to legalize (and tax) drug production, sale and use, treat addiction and other problems related to drug use as health (and not criminal) issues, and use taxation and other revenues from the drug industry to pay for their treatment. Interestingly, the resource cites the decriminalization of all drug use in Portugal in 2001 and how this change has actually significantly reduced many drug related problems there. It strongly argues that decriminalization is not enough as this approach still leaves drug production and sale (and the profits) in the hands of criminals. I fully agree with The Economist's view.

I very much like this resource and believe it can be an excellent educational tool. About the only change I would make is to add materials to explain the high cost of the war on drugs - the murders and other crimes committed by drug criminals, the large and costly police forces deployed to combat them; the drug users turning to crime to support their addictions and the destruction of their families, and the high costs of jailing them after prosecution.

Here in Macau drugs have always been a problem, and it seems to be increasing. Guangdong Province is a well-known source for many different drugs to which Macau people have easy access. In recent years, the authorities in Hong Kong have been conducting an ever expanding advertising campaign to advise young people against drug use. Perhaps the time has come for a public debate on drugs in Macau and action to adopt new approaches to dealing with the issue here. And perhaps, we can take a lead from what is happening in Portugal and some other places.

THE BUZZ THAILAND SEIZES 87 AFRICAN IVORY TUSKS WORTH USD800,000

Officials in Thailand say they seized 315 kilograms of African elephant tusks worth an estimated USD800,000 at Bangkok's international airport. Thai Customs said that the haul of 87 ivory tusks was found March 27 in a dozen barrels sent from Mozambique on a Kenya Airways flight. A routine X-ray at Suvarnabhumi International

Airport detected the contraband. A Kenyan man was due to pick up the parcels, but is believed to have fled the country after learning they were seized.

Thai authorities alerted Kenyan officials, who discovered 561 kilograms of ivory tusks waiting to be shipped to the same man.

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

SOURCE: DSI/MG

China military to prosecute former top general over bribery



China's People's Liberation Army Gen. Guo Boxiong

A former top Chinese general will be tried in a military court on charges he took bribes, the county's military said yesterday, in what is believed to be the highest-level prosecution of a military figure in decades.

Military prosecutors have proof that Guo Boxiong and his family took advantage of his position and accepted bribes to arrange promotions and assignments for others, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

Citing prosecutors, it said Guo, 74, confessed to the bribery charges.

The announcement ensures a swift trial, conviction and what is likely to be a heavy penalty against the former vice chairman of the Central Military Commission led by president and ruling Communist Party leader Xi Jinping.

Formerly one of 25 members of the party's Politbu-

ro, Guo is among the most powerful figures to fall in Xi's sweeping anti-corruption drive. Guo's former immediate subordinate on the commission, Gen. Xu Caihou, was also facing prosecution when he died of cancer in March last year.

Hong Kong's South China Morning Post newspaper quoted an unidentified military source as saying Guo had accepted a total of 80 million yuan (USD12.3 million) in bribes.

Under the founder of the Communist state, Mao Zedong, military leaders were often shifted into civilian roles, where many fell victim to Mao's political campaigns. Mao's successor, Deng Xiaoping, sought to professionalize the military and such efforts have gained pace in recent years.

Though officially retired, Guo continued to enjoy many of the rights and pri-

viliges of his exalted status.

As the commission's first-ranking vice chairman, Guo was responsible over a decade for the daily operations of the 2.3 million-member People's Liberation Army, the world's largest standing military. During that time, the military enjoyed large annual budget increases, fueling competition for potentially lucrative control over funds, units and support functions such as construction.

Guo's prosecution had been expected since March 2015, when his son, Maj. Gen. Guo Zhenggang, was placed under formal investigation for corruption and unspecified criminal activity. The senior Guo was expelled from the party last July.

Some top generals are reported to have accumulated stunning fortunes through corruption in both cash and gifts, including golden statues of Mao Zedong and cases of expensive liquor stacked to the ceiling in secret underground caches.

Such practices are believed by some to have sapped morale and battle worthiness in the People's Liberation Army, and Xi has relentlessly driven home the need for officers to keep their hands clean during recent visits to military units. AP

WORLD BRIEFS



MYANMAR Former Myanmar President Thein Sein sheds his formal attire and his hair to join the Buddhist monkhood, days after relinquishing power to a party led by Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi.

INDONESIA Authorities blow up 23 foreign vessels that were captured for fishing illegally in the country's waters. The boats, 13 from Vietnam and 10 from Malaysia, were blown up simultaneously in seven ports from Tarakan in northern Kalimantan to Ranai on the Natuna Islands in the South China Sea.

CAMBODIA A leading international environmental group has called on the Cambodian government to investigate an attack on a young forest activist who was slashed with a machete while she slept in a hammock after patrolling for illegal loggers.

MARKETS Global shares fall as oil prices drop further and the head of the International Monetary Fund sounds downbeat on the outlook for the world economy.

VATICAN Discussions are underway about a possible trip by Pope Francis to Greece as early as next week as the country begins deporting migrants back to Turkey. Vatican spokesman the Rev. Federico Lombardi said that no decision had been made but in an email to The Associated Press he said "I don't deny that there are contacts about a possible trip."

USA Tennessee lawmakers voted yesterday to make the Bible the state's official book. They've already made a .50-caliber sniper gun the official state rifle. The state Senate gave final approval on a 19-8 vote despite arguments the measure conflicts with a provision in the state Constitution that "no preference shall ever be given, by law, to any religious establishment or mode of worship."

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

AP Photo/Jens Meyer



Blossom. A bumblebee arrives at a cherry tree blossom in Erfurt, central Germany, yesterday. Weather forecasts predict changeable weather for Germany in the next few days.