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The U.S. and its NATO allies asked too few questions about what would follow after dictator Moammar Gadhafi was toppled

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WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA More than 80 percent of China's underground water drawn from relatively shallow wells used by farms, factories and mostly rural households is unsafe for drinking because of pollution, a government report says. More on p10

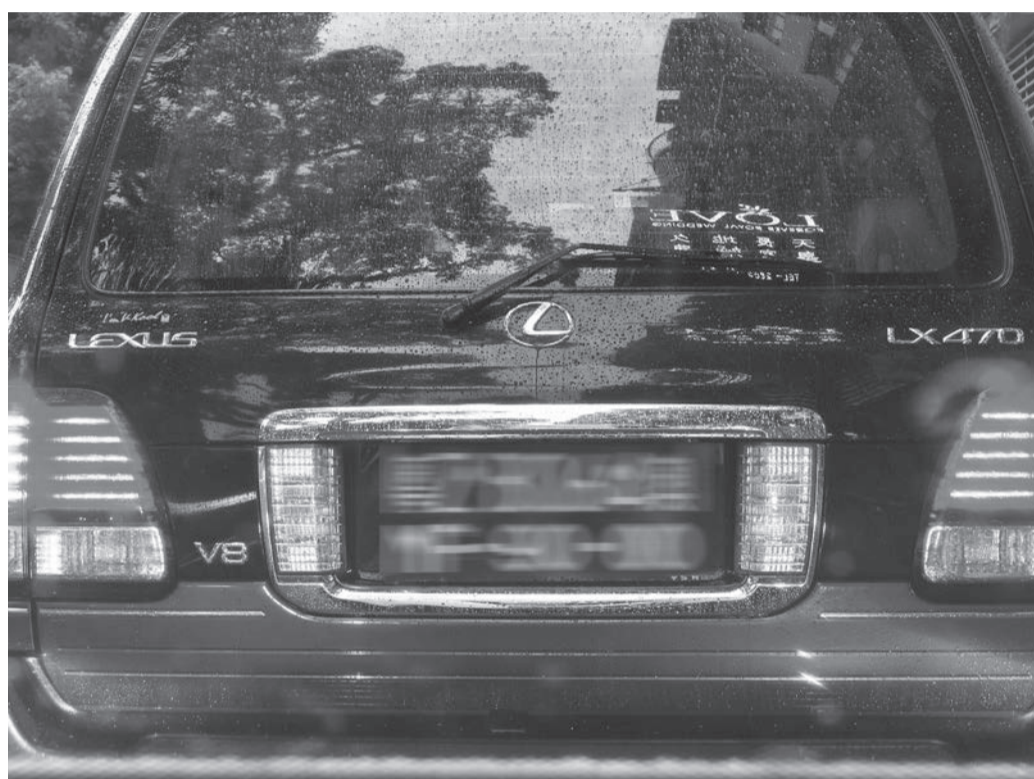
USA-TAIWAN The U.S. military charges a Taiwan-born Navy officer with espionage for allegedly passing military secrets to China or Taiwan. More on p11



NORTH KOREA Four North Koreans who were sent to work abroad confirm many of the brutal conditions rights groups have decried, but also say their lives were better than they had been back home. Their stories add a twist to the plight of tens of thousands of workers North Korea has sent to other countries with a mission to bring in foreign currency. More on p12

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MU88-88 sold for MOP400,000, 60 percent less than MT88-88



AUCTION prices of special car plates, launched by the Transport Bureau (DSAT), saw a sharp decrease compared with last year, Macao Daily News reported.

During an auction that took place on Monday, DSAT released 280 special car plates, separated into four price groups with initial bids of MOP100,000,

MOP80,000, MOP50,000 and MOP20,000.

Plates MU88-88, MU66-66 and MU99-99 were sold for MOP400,100, MOP398,000, and MOP381,000 respectively, marking the three highest bids within this year's auction. In 2015, a buyer paid more than one million patacas to obtain the plate MT88-88.

The second category,

in which plates MU66-88, MU82-28, MU98-89 and MU99-88 were included managed to collect a total MOP413,000. The four plates were sold for MOP101,000, MOP132,000, MOP89,000 and MOP91,000 respectively.

Plates MU77-77, MU68-88 and MU82-82 were the most popular plates

within the third group. Final prices for this trio were set at MOP202,000, MOP181,000, MOP138,000 respectively. The remaining plates in the third category went for prices between MOP51,000 to MOP93,000. Regarding the final group, the items were mostly sold for prices between MOP20,000 to MOP30,000.

Car dealers believe the price is dropping as a consequence of the current economic climate. Some car dealerships admitted to be not as enthusiastic about business potential as before because they still had unsold plates. "The economy is slowing down, therefore investments and returns are disproportionate," an initial report noted.

The manager of a local car dealership, Mr Lam, said that his store's monthly sales of plates in the first quarter was half of that registered last year.

DSAT received a total of 340 bids, around 300 less than last year. The final income of the auction was about MOP6.9 million, down by MOP4.2 million.

Chui discusses trade cooperation with Hainan governor

CHIEF Executive Mr Chui Sai On met with the Governor of Hainan Province, Liu Cigui, this week in hopes of expanding cooperation in fields such as tourism, cultural affairs and services related to trade.

According to an official statement, past cooperation between Hainan and Macau has paved the way for closer ties, in particular the launch of a regular direct air service between the two locations last year. Such initiatives will contribute to furthering tourism development, boosting social exchanges and helping trade.

Liu said the two regions could collaborate to develop a number of two-center holiday tours, with Hainan complementing Macau's status as a "world center of tourism and leisure."

The Hainan Governor briefed Chui on the latest developments in Hainan, revealing that the province's positioning as an "international tourism destination" could be comprised of several components, including the province being a platform for international diplomacy via events such as Boao Forum for Asia, Annual



Liu Cigui (left) and Chui Sai On

Conference.

Moreover, the Chief Executive said Hainan and Macau could serve as a reference point for each other in terms of development, as the two places are both in the process of establishing their respective development goals.

EDUCATION

Parents complain over Chinese character assignment

PARENTS of second grade kindergarten (K2) students complained after their children were taught to write the Chinese character "数" (a difficult Chinese character for "number" or "to count"). The Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) alleges that the teaching outcome received the approval of both parents and the institution, Cheng Pou reported.

Parents had previously expressed their discontent on social media with a picture from an exercise book. The picture displayed the aforementioned character being written out several times by a student, thus illustrating the count or a number as per the meaning. "Isn't this too much? It should be P2 level. Happy childhood," one user commented. Nevertheless, the complaints were followed by comments in support of the poster.

In response, the head of the Department of Research and Educational Resources of DSEJ, Wong Kin Mou, expressed that writing "数" at K2 level prepares the students to move up into K3, where they start to learn to write down the subjects to be studied for homework, thereby learning self-care skills. "This ties with daily life," said Wong.

When asked about whether the bureau felt that teaching complicated characters goes against the government's plan to lighten pupil's studyloads, Wong declined to answer.

Regional team wins WBC Championship

A local youth, together with four teammates, three from Hong Kong and one from Taiwan, won the championship of the World Balloon Convention (WBC) 2016, which took place last week in New Orleans, Apple Daily reported.

The four champions are under 30 years old, and each spent around HKD40,000 in order to enter the competition. They took three months to come up with their masterpiece concept, which they called "Poseidon", a 2.8-meter-tall, 1.83-meter-long, and 1.83-meter-wide balloon art work. This winning piece of art was complemented by special sound effects, background music and lighting, and even produced a loud scream whenever someone approached it. According to Manson Lam, one of the winners from Hong Kong, his team took 12 hours to design and build the balloon, which won against participants from over 60 countries. Another said that "Hong Kong youth not only know how to do school work, but they can also make Hong Kong proud [besides studying]."

The WBC is a world event for the balloon and party industry, and it is held annually. The first edition took place in 2010.

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Renato Marques

AN airplane caused panic yesterday morning in Taipa during a low altitude fly-by, close to the waterfront area surrounding the Amizade Bridge, several witnesses residing in the area claim.

At approximately 11 a.m. yesterday, an airplane with a red painted fuselage caused a scare to the residents of the Taipa waterfront area. In particular, those within the “Pearl on the Lough” residential complex building who saw an “airplane flying fast in front of their windows.”

An airport source that asked to remain anonymous told the Times that the incident is connected to the use of runway 16. The runway is used when aircraft approach from the direction of Zhuhai. Due to noise restrictions in the airspace over Zhuhai, “most of the landings come from the sea” to runway 34.

“In those cases [runway 34] is used with an Advanced Instrument Landing System [ILS] but when the wind is too strong from the South there is the need to use runway 16 that is not on an ILS system.” Such instances require more skill on the part of the pilots, as they need to navigate by eye, as well as employ maneuvers such as the “referred left turn at low level before landing on the runway.” The source noted that, “this time the pilot basically got it wrong.”

According to the source “they might be doing a go-around because they could not see the runway, and got it too late and too low - below 600 feet or the height of Taipa Hill - and that explains why the aircraft pas-

Witnesses report low flying aircraft close to buildings

sed by so close and at the height of the building.”

Our source added that the fact that the aircraft passed over the bridge is something that “normally never happens.” A strong crosswind at that exact moment might have also contributed to the incident. “Over the last few years there have been a number of incidents where airplanes have not turned left on time and not climbed, presenting a significant safety threat.” Insofar as

It was obviously off-route and on a collision course.

MS THURID
WITNESS

the source is aware, “the airport is working on a new approach system.”

Ms Thurid, a resident who has lived in “Pearl on the Lough”’s second tower for approximately four and half years, said that she had never seen something like this. “It was obviously off-route and on a collision course,” she told the Times.

“I was in my living room looking straight out my window towards Hong Kong when I saw a big airplane (I’m pretty

sure it was a 737) coming past the window full power and over the exiting circle from the [Amizade] bridge and went straight over the [Taipa] ferry terminal, heading to Hong Kong. The trajectory of the flight was right on top of the exiting circle of the bridge so it was that close to our building,” she told the Times.

The witness said it was difficult to see the airliner’s information because her view was primarily the “undercarriage of the plane” as it headed in the direction of Hong Kong but Ms Thurid recalls that “the landing gear was not down”. This led her to conclude that the aircraft was not preparing to land.

“It was definitely in the wrong place,” she said, adding that, “we are used to seeing the planes taking off and landing every day from our windows and that was definitely not in the right place nor position for landing. [If it was to land in Macau, the aircraft] was totally perpendicular to where it should be going.”

“The flight originated from the North and as soon as it came out of a cloud it banked and turned over towards Hong Kong,” she concluded.

Another resident of the same residential complex, Kiki, told the Times that she also witnessed the odd maneuver. “I was in the house and was initially

taken by surprise by the noise. It was the first time that I saw an airplane flying just outside our apartment. It was actually really close,” she mentioned.

In this case there is a need to go around and make a big turn on the side of runway 16 and the aircraft might get a little nearer to the residential area.

EUPHEMIA LAM
CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

“It was really my first time experiencing this although I’ve heard from other people that it has happened before,” she added, concluding that “I saw most of the belly of aircraft as it was tilted at about 45 degrees. A really unusual position for an airplane.”

Other people living in the same area and contacted by the Times said that although they did not witness the incident “it

is not unusual to see airplanes coming in the direction of the building, but they usually turn much earlier.”

Contacted by the Times, the Civil Aviation Authority of Macau (AACM) confirmed that the incident was due to the fact that runway 16 was being used yesterday “due to weather conditions that didn’t allow [for] landings to be done at runway 34,” in the words of Euphemia Lam, Senior Officer of Public Relations of AACM. She added that “in this case there is a need to go around and make a big turn on the side of runway 16 and the aircraft might get a little nearer to the residential area.” Lam reassured the Times that, “visually it might seem that is very close but the operation was always within the protection area.”

Lam also recalled “within a year of operations of the airport, only 15 percent of the operations are [handled] using runway 16, mostly due to weather conditions.” Although the AACM spokesperson initially responded, “all was according to normality” she confirmed that the controversial maneuver involved a Siam Air aircraft.

About 11 months ago the Times reported a similar incident where an Air Macau flight encountered trouble landing and flew close to a hill while circling overhead before attempting to land again.

Sports Bureau issues no comment on banned marathon winner

THE Macau Sports Bureau (ID) has remained silent on the case of Flomena Chepchirchir, the Kenyan athlete that won the 2014 Macau International Marathon while under a ban issued by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF).

The Times questioned the ID last week about the occurrence, reported on Friday. Among other questions, we inquired if the bureau was planning to take any action to prevent banned athletes from running again in Macau.

The Associated Press has been investigating multiple cases of so called "second tier" Kenyan athletes - some of them banned by the IAAF - that are being enrolled in small races in the United States, where they compete for modest prizes that can financially support their families back home.

One of those Kenyan runners is Lilian Mariita, who in the past was caught by lab technicians on steroids. On that occasion she was banned for eight years effectively putting her career to an end and returning her to the muddy tea-plantation village in western Kenya of her origins.

Mariita competed in the US with the help of her agent and for-



mer elite Russian athlete Larisa Mikhaylova.

Mikhaylova's business model is simple. In exchange for a cut of their prizes, she enters runners into far-flung road races across the US, which are often so modest and amateurish that they do not have sufficient funding for extensive drug-testing.

Three Kenyans who worked with Mikhaylova have been caught doping since 2012, Jynocel Basweti, the father of Mariita's daughter, is one of them, who tested positive at a Mexican marathon for a steroid used in veterinary medicine. Nixon Kiplagat Cherutich was also busted for a byproduct of the steroid nan-

drolone, while Mariita failed two doping tests in eight months.

Their stories represent the underbelly of a top-to-bottom doping crisis in Kenya's thriving but ill-regulated running industry.

Her athletes take on aggressive schedules to maximize prizes. As in the case of Mariita who ran 24 races across 13 states in 2014, according to the Association of Road Racing Statisticians, including over three weekends when she raced on consecutive days.

The outcome of these efforts was earnings of about USD24,000 that year, more than what 99 percent of Kenyans earn back home. **RM**

Manetic promoting innovation competition for university students

THE "InnoICT Business Plan Competition" will reach its seventh edition this year. The competition aims to encourage and inspire innovation among tertiary students, facilitating their "start-up" and supporting them in realizing their "business dream".



Manetic director Chan Tong Seng speaks

Chan Tong Seng, director of the Macau New Technologies Incubator Centre (Manetic) said during a press conference last week that all students in tertiary education institutes in or outside Macau can enter the competition, which is now open for registration. Each first team can have up to five members. Foreign students studying in Macau institutions are also eligible to participate provided at least half of the team members are local residents.

After submission and evaluation, the three

best business plan proposals will be given the opportunity to be converted into real businesses with the support of Manetic's Business Incubator Centre.

The winners will be also awarded cash prizes that range between MOP12,000 and MOP30,000. The first place winner will also be granted a business start-up fund of MOP50,000.

Manetic will be accepting registrations until June 20.

A workshop to help participants prepare business proposals is scheduled for June 30. **RM**

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' "

CHIEF Executive (CE) Chui Sai On has denied allegations that the lack of a public tender for the production of primary education general studies school materials represents a conflict of interest, public broadcaster TDM reported yesterday.

The contract, reportedly worth MOP5.9 million was agreed with the Association for Promotion of Science and Technology of Macau, a local association headed by the CE's cousin, lawmaker Chui Sai Peng, and published in Monday's Official Gazette.

The controversy arises from the fact that the decision to award the contract was not preceded by a public tender; a contentious issue in Macau that, according to Commission

CE insists contract awarded to cousin is aboveboard



Chui Sai Peng

Against Corruption (CCAC) Commissioner Andre Cheong, contributed to the arrest of former Prosecutor-General Ho Chio Meng in February. "Macau is a small city, where

many of the people I know are the children of the seniors I know," Chui Sai On told TDM. "Please do not worry; I follow my promise [... that] we would follow the law strictly and try to avoid any conflict of interest. I think this is what we do and what we are supposed to do."

The CE also stressed that the Education Bureau has followed all relevant regulations and laws in the case and that he, personally, always follows procedures to avoid such conflicts

of interest.

Lawmaker Chui Sai Peng said that in his capacity as president of the Association for Promotion of Science and Technology, it is normal to participate in such projects, however his contribution is entirely voluntary.

In a separate case, Chui Sai On's older brother Chui Sai Cheong has now been appointed as a member of the Public Prosecutions Magistrates Commission, upon recommendation of the Judges Appointments Independent Commission. **DB**

IAS announces new facilities for mentally handicapped

THE Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) announced that new facilities for people with severe mental disabilities will be available by the end of this year, TDM reported.

According to IAS, the new facilities will provide 96 vacancies, a lower figure than the 118 which commenced operation in

the beginning of this year at Seac Pai Van. These services exist to release pressure from aging parents who have children in need of special care.

However, local charity workers hold contrary opinions on these help programs. Lio Sao Wa who is in charge of the Association of Families and Care-

takers of the Mentally Disabled told the Times that this new building is "not suitable, and not humanitarian." She explained: "100 vacancies is just a number to meet demand."

In her words, the facilities should only accept 50 people at most. The larger the facility community is, the more difficult it

becomes to provide good assistance. "The management becomes rigid, people have limited [access to] activities, [...] it is difficult to handle emergencies," Lio told the Times.

According to Miss Lio, the program was announced five years ago when demand for such institutions was higher, adding that in

the 70s and 80s, local facilities for mentally disabled people only had around 30 places each. "Taiwan and Japan both limit their number of places to around 50, therefore these new facilities are against socialization and are not humanitarian," Lio repeated. Small communities allow for better communication

between patients and doctors, she noted.

However, director-general of the Macau Association for the Mentality Handicapped, Gloria Ma agreed with the program. "It unloads the endless worries off the parents," she said. Miss Ma added that "more attention should be paid to both the facilities and environment, in order to ensure the disabled people are respected and fully protected." **Staff reporter**

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Logistics costs stand in way of local MICE industry

THE China Import and Export Fair (Canton Fair) announced the reduction of participation fees for exhibitors. However, according to representatives of the local MICE industry, Macau does not anticipate reducing entry fees,

Macao Daily News reported that the famous Canton Fair will charge between RMB3,000 to RMB5,000 less than the last edition, as an act of support for Chinese international trade companies. Some Macau MICE businesses view this reduction as a token gesture rather than a necessity for the fair.

According to a Macao Daily News report, the local MICE industry can demand approximately MOP10,000 per exhibitor, a price considered reasonable by some customers since it is one third of the heretofore amount required by the Canton Fair.

However, according to a source, the two major obstacles when attending exhibitions in Macau are logistics and accommodation. The source indicated that since local hotels have been lowering their prices, the reduction of costs on the logistics front is now the focus of the industry.

In order for mainland goods to get to Macau, they need to pass through Shenzhen, then through Hong Kong, from where they are shipped to Macau. Zhuhai still lacks a special department which could supervise goods, whereas in Shenzhen and Guangzhou an optimized, smooth operation has already been established, despite the associated high costs.

Filipinos begin casting ballots in presidential election

OVERSEAS Absentee Voting for the Philippine presidential election started around the world, including in Macau, on Sunday.

According to the country's Department of Foreign Affairs, it is the first time in the history of Philippine voting that one million overseas registered voters for an election was surpassed. Macau alone has 5,000 such individuals.

Philippine consul general Lilybeth Deapera hopes that all of the registered voters will exercise their right of suffrage between now and May 9.

"We're hoping that 100 percent of the over 5,000 [registered voters] will vote because what they [the Philippine consulate] experienced last time is that they don't really make an effort to come and vote even when the voting is open for a month."

Some voters said the manual voting process was "simple and easy" while some expressed the desire that a vote counting machine could be used to avoid fraud. However such a machine will only be used if over 10,000 individuals register as electors in any one region.

Meanwhile the consul general admits there are problems regarding "registered voters" whose names have not appeared on the list of registered voters issued by the Commission on Elections (COMELEC), explaining to the Times that they report to COMELEC every registration to vote.

Volunteers handing election leaflets outside the AIA building (where the consulate is located) said they are campaigning for the candidate who they think is against corruption, as



The Philippines is renowned for its high levels of corruption.

Airysh Acupan, one of the volunteers, admits that they fear electoral fraud will take place within the consulate.

"We sometimes doubt whether our votes are being accounted for. Even those people that we give fliers to would have doubts but we'll leave it up to God," Acupan explains.

However Ms Deapera said that the special board of electoral inspectors underwent training

to supervise the polling station, adding that daily reports are shown to COMELEC.

Moreover, the consulate has warned the campaigners that they have to be at least 30 meters away from the polling station, as instructed by the commission. Deapera said they strongly prohibit voters campaigning for a candidate through t-shirts with a name or picture of the candidate and reminded the public that the use of a cellphone inside the polling

“We’re hoping that 100 percent of the over 5,000 [registered voters] will vote.

LILYBETH DEAPERERA

station is an electoral offense.

Conversely, she added that even if presidential campaigns were already held, the consulate is not in control of campaigners endorsing a presidential candidate outside their office's premises.

"We cannot stop them if they're already outside the building [...] we cannot force them to leave, it's their right," declared Deapera. **Staff reporter**

Duterte tops recent PH presidential survey

WITH less than four weeks to go before Filipinos can vote for their next president, a nationwide survey conducted by the Social Weather Stations shows that Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte has taken back the lead as the favored candidate.

The survey, conducted from March 30 to April 2, reveals that 27 percent of respondents say they would vote for the combative Davao mayor if polls had been held at that time.

Meanwhile, Senator Grace Poe, the candidate who allegedly received "political donations" from one of Macau's biggest junket operators, Suncity group, was a close second with 23 percent.

According to the pollster, Vice-President 'JoJo' Jejomar Binay came in third with 20 percent, former Interior Secretary Mar 'Daang Matuwid (Righteous Path)' Roxas, the ruling party's standard bearer, acquired 18 percent; while 3 percent of respondents chose Senator



Presidential candidates, from left, Jejomar Binay, Rodrigo Duterte, Grace Poe and Mar Roxas, participate in a debate

Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

Except for Duterte and Poe, all other candidates saw their numbers rise relative to the previous survey. Duterte had topped a survey by the same polling firm in December 2015.

The vice presidential survey also saw Senator Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr, the running mate of presidential candidate Santiago, being supported by more than a quarter (26 percent) of total respondents.

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AUTOMAKERS

Demand for SUVs
boosts China auto sales
by 10 percent in March

Kelvin Chan, Hong Kong

CHINESE auto sales rose by nearly 10 percent in March, led by strong demand for SUVs that more than offset slipping passenger car sales, an industry group said yesterday.

The China Association of Automobile Manufacturers said that 2.06 million sedans, SUVs and minivans were sold last month in the world's biggest auto market. That's 9.8 percent higher than the same month last year.

The group said sales of sport-utility vehicles rose by nearly half and minivan sales increased nearly 18 percent. Sedan sales, however, dipped 3.3 percent.

Total vehicle sales, including trucks and buses, rose 8.8 percent to 2.4 million.

China's auto sales growth has been cooling since it peaked at 45 percent in 2009 but the country remains a key market for global automakers, which are relying on Chinese consumers' growing appetite for driving to power revenue.

Auto sales in China totaled 21.1 million units last year,

hit by an unexpectedly sharp contraction last summer that unsettled carmakers. Sales rebounded after Beijing responded by cutting taxes in September on vehicles with small engines.

Sales of China's lower-priced homegrown car brands nearly kept pace with the market's overall growth, expanding 8.5 percent last month. Chinese-brand passenger sedan sales fell 21 percent but SUV sales jumped 46 percent and minivan sales rose 19 percent.

— General Motors Co. said deliveries of GM-branded vehicles by the company and its Chinese partners slipped 0.6 percent to 296,939 in March. SUV deliveries jumped 124 percent compared with last year and Cadillac sales grew 14 percent.

— Ford Motor Co. sales rose 5 percent to 114,788, with SUV sales surging 29 percent. The company's Lincoln brand, which only entered China recently, reported that sales in the first quarter tripled to 5,484.

— BMW AG deliveries, including vehicles under its Mini brand, rose nearly 11 percent to 127,105. **AP**

Chinese stocks decline
as Premier Li flags
pressures on economy

CHINA'S equities swung into losses, with industrial stocks leading the retreat, as Premier Li Keqiang flagged downward pressures on the world's second-largest economy.

The Shanghai Composite Index fell 0.3 percent. Machinery maker Citic Heavy Industries Co. led declines for industrial stocks, while brokerage Shenwan Hongyuan Group Co. dropped after saying its net income nearly halved in the first quarter.

China's real economy faces multiple difficulties, and the nation will promote supply-side structural reforms to ensure growth is in a reasonable range, Premier Li was cited as saying by China Central Television. Equities in Shanghai surged on Monday, rising the most this month after official data showed producer prices registered their first monthly increase since 2013.

"The market has doubts about the sustainability of a pick-up in the economy and needs to see more data to confirm the trend," said Wang Zheng, Shanghai-based chief investment officer at Jingxi Investment Management Co. "Particularly after yesterday's decent run-up, investors are very cautious about buying shares and driving stocks higher." He is keeping his equity position unchanged at about 50 percent of asset holdings.

China's leaders are trying to



Li Keqiang

revive the economy amid uncertainty in the currency and equity markets. There have been increasing signs of a turnaround of late, with industrial profits breaking a seven-month run of losses, factory activity rising and the nation's foreign-exchange reserves increasing for the first time since October.

The Shanghai Composite fell to 3,023.65 at the close, while the CSI 300 Index dropped 0.4 percent. Hong Kong's Hang Seng China Enterprises Index climbed 0.4 percent and the Hang Seng Index rose 0.3 percent for a fifth day of gains, the longest winning streak in a year. Trading volumes on the Shanghai index were 17 percent lower than the 30-day average yesterday, while the 30-day volatility fell to the lowest in a year.

Gauges of telecom and industrial stocks lost at least 0.7 percent for the biggest declines

among the CSI 300's industry groups. ZTE Corp. retreated 2.4 percent in Shenzhen. Daqin Railway Co., the operator of China's biggest coal transport network, lost 2 percent after saying it expects first-quarter net income to fall about 50 percent from a year earlier.

China's statistics bureau is due to release data on first-quarter economic growth on Friday. Gross domestic product probably expanded 6.7 percent in the January-March period, slowing from 6.9 percent growth in the previous quarter, according to the median estimate in a Bloomberg survey.

Margin traders increased holdings of shares purchased with borrowed money for the first time in three days on Monday, with the outstanding balance of margin debt on the Shanghai Stock Exchange rising by 0.5 percent to 512.1 billion yuan (USD79.2 billion). **Bloomberg**



BYD introduces its latest Hybrid Plug-in mini SUV named "Yuan" during the BYD Dreams Conference ahead of the Beijing Auto Show

corporate bits

SANDS RESORTS AWARDED
'BEST RESORT IN CHINA'

Ruth Boston

Sands Resorts Cotai Strip Macao was awarded the 'Best Resort in China (Non-beach)' in the 9th Annual TTG China Travel Awards 2016 last week in Shanghai. This is only the latest accolade for the inte-

grated resort.

This is the second time the resort has been crowned the "Best Resort in China (Non-beach)". In addition, the newly opened hotel within the integrated resort, The St. Regis Macao, Cotai Central, has been recognized as the "Best New Hotel in Macau".

According to a press release, Ruth Boston, vice president of Destination Marketing & Sales of Sands China Ltd, attended the ceremony and accepted the trophy on behalf of the company.

The TTG China Travel Awards honors the best travel and tourism organizations in Asia Pacific.

TURBOJET EXTENDS ITS TUEN
MUN-MACAU ROUTE

TurboJET's Tuen Mun-Macau service has been "popularly received since its launch," according to a press release. In response to the various travel needs of passengers, effective from yesterday, service of the route will be extended to cover the Taipa Temporary Ferry

Terminal, with the following adjustments made to the sailing schedule:

The 08:10 Macau-bound sailing and 16:10 Tuen Mun-bound sailing previously servicing the Outer Harbour will now run between Tuen Mun and the Taipa Temporary Ferry Terminal.

MGM GETS 'BEST BUSINESS HOTEL' ACCOLADE

For the seventh consecutive year, MGM Macau has been awarded the "Best Business Hotel in Macau" accolade at the 9th Annual TTG China Travel Awards 2016. The resort has been the recipient of the award for the past six years, after winning the "Best New Hotel in Macau" in 2009.

MGM offers diversified amenities and services fit for business and leisure purposes. According to a press release issued by the gaming operator, being recognized with this award is an assurance from travel consultants, travel experts, tour operators, destination management companies and other industry elites, of



its quality service and the manifold experiences found at its property.

After its beginning in 2008, the 9th Annual TTG China Travel Awards 2016 Ceremony and Gala Dinner took place at the Grand Kempinski Shanghai last week, celebrating 61 winners.

Chinese tourists are turning Japanese

Enda Curran

CHINA'S overseas tourism bonanza is starting to resemble the unleashing of Japanese visitors on the world following the yen's appreciation in the mid-1980s.

Except, unlike the Japanese boom that began to deflate with the economy in the 1990s, China's outbound push - already 120 million strong a year - shows no signs of abating. A vast rural population still to urbanize and a rapidly expanding middle class will underpin a dramatic expansion of overseas travel, according to analysis by Natixis SA.

In both the Japanese and Chinese cases, rising household wealth has been the catalyst for a shift in spending "to more sophisticated goods and services, with overseas tourism being one of the preferred ones," Natixis economists led by Alicia Garcia Herrero wrote in a note. "A strong currency has also supported" this.

Around half of China's 1.38 billion people are classed as poor, with an annual income



A group of Chinese tourists stand with shopping bags at the Canal City Hakata commercial complex in Fukuoka, Japan

between zero and USD3,000, and most live in rural areas. The government wants to move an additional 81 million residents into urban zones by 2020, a policy set to further bolster demand for outbound travel.

Similar to China, Japanese tourism took off as the middle class expanded and incomes rose; the yen's appreciated after

the 1985 Plaza Accord accelerated the process. Trips to the U.S. were top of the list for the Japanese, with France the most popular European destination. But the bursting of Japan's real estate and stock market bubbles that led to deflation and stagnation diminished the travel bug.

Natixis points out that China's

bonanza is also no sure thing. A slowing economy, a turn away from travel abroad due to Europe's refugee crisis and the threat of terrorism are among the risks, while China's own aging population could also cool the ardor to head abroad. But the push to expand Chinese cities suggests any slowdown is likely to be short lived, accor-

China's travelers have so far tended to remain closer to home, in Hong Kong and Macau. But that is changing

ding to the economists.

Where the Japanese roamed far and wide in the 1980s, China's travelers have so far tended to remain closer to home, in Hong Kong and Macau. But that is changing. "We are already starting to see Chinese tourism becoming increasingly interested in traveling further away," the Natixis economists said. "The reality is that such growth starts from a large base given China's massive population. Already now, the number of Chinese visitors to France is twice as large as Japan's tourists." **Bloomberg**

TAIWAN

Taipei says Kenya guards used tear gas to force deportations

ARMED Kenyan guards used tear gas to dislodge a group of Taiwanese citizens from a detention center and force them to board a flight to China, a top Taiwanese diplomat said yesterday, amid a complicated diplomatic tussle that threatens to cause further rifts between Taipei and Beijing.

Director General of the Foreign Ministry's Department of West Asian and African Affairs Antonio Chen told reporters that 22 Taiwanese had boarded the flight voluntarily, but that 15 others refused to do so.

"So, Kenyan police tried to break through the wall and launched tear gas in attempting to pull them out by force," Chen said.

Chen said Taiwan was considering suing the Kenyan police over the incident, although Taiwanese diplomats have so far been unsuccessful in using legal means to stop the deportations.

The confrontation began Monday when eight Taiwanese were flown from Nairobi, Kenya's capital, to Beijing after Kenyan au-

thorities dropped fraud charges against them that were originally brought in late 2014.

Taiwan's Foreign Ministry and the Cabinet agency responsible for contacts with China have lodged complaints with Beijing and demanded that the eight be sent home. Taiwanese authorities said the deportations violated a tacit agreement between the sides not to interfere in the affairs of their citizens while abroad.

China considers Taiwan Chinese territory and says that only it can represent the island in international society, although it has softened its stance in recent years in order to avoid further alienating residents of the self-governing island. Diplomatically isolated Taiwan has no formal ties with Kenya.

The Nairobi incident could be an indication that Beijing is toughening its attitude again ahead of the May 20 inauguration of Taiwanese President-elect Tsai Ing-wen, who has refused to agree to China's demand that she recognize

Taiwan and mainland China as parts of a single Chinese nation.

In Beijing, Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang declined to comment on specifics of the case, but reiterated that China requires other countries to embrace the "one-China policy" before it establishes bilateral relations.

"We think highly of the long-standing position of Kenyan government in sticking to the one-China policy," Lu said.

The detention center in Beijing believed to be holding the Taiwanese nationals declined to verify the information yesterday, and the spokesman's office for the city's police department did not immediately respond to faxed questions about the issue. Taiwan's Central News Agency cited unidentified Chinese officials saying the eight were being investigated for possible crimes committed in China before they departed for Kenya.

China has close ties with Kenya, extending generous financial assistance to the East African nation. **AP**

China report sounds alarm on groundwater pollution

MORE than 80 percent of China's underground water drawn from relatively shallow wells used by farms, factories and mostly rural households is unsafe for drinking because of pollution, a government report says.

The Water Resources Ministry study posted to its website yesterday analyzed samples drawn in January from 2,103 wells used for monitoring in the country's major eastern flatland watersheds.

The ministry said that of those samples, 32.9 percent were classed as suitable only for industrial and agricultural use, while 47.3 percent were unfit for human consumption of any type. None were considered pristine, although water in wells in the Beijing area was rated better overall than elsewhere in the northeast.

Following the report's release, officials sought to reassure the public that most household water used by urban Chinese households is safe because it comes from reservoirs, deep aquifers or rivers that are treated to ensure safety.

"The quality of drinking water is good overall," Chen Mingzhong, director of the ministry's Department of Water Resources, told reporters at a news conference.

Most public attention in recent years has focused on heavy air pollution in Chinese cities, although water and soil contamina-

tion are also regarded as serious by environmentalists.

Water shortages are also expected to pose an increasing challenge to agriculture, with much of the arid North China Plain reliant on aquifers whose levels are falling fast. China's major lakes are also heavily polluted, largely due to fertilizer run-off and the dumping of untreated factory waste.

Environmental group Greenpeace called the ministry's report "another stark warning of the extent of groundwater pollution in China."

In a statement, Greenpeace's east Asia toxics campaign manager Ada Kong applauded the ministry's recognition of the problem and said taking serious action to tackle the problem was the next step.

"Water pollution in China is every bit as serious an issue as air pollution," Kong said.

Part of the problem is that the Water Resources Ministry and Ministry of Environmental Protection have yet to clarify their roles and responsibilities in carrying out a National Groundwater Pollution Prevention Plan issued in 2011 and promised 34 billion yuan (USD5.2 billion) in funding, Kong said.

The authorities should also regularly test the deep groundwater that urban areas rely on, Greenpeace said. **AP**

Didi Tang, Beijing

CHINESE women are being taken on roller coaster ride by social media, getting bombarded on one side by extreme expectations about physical beauty while getting support for female independence in a society where women who aren't married by their late 20s are considered "leftovers."

In recent months, social media here has been swept by a series of body image crazes. The "A4 waist" fad challenged women see how skinny they were by posting photos of their middles to show that a piece of standard copy paper 21 centimeters wide covered their waists.

Then "iPhone knees" tested whether a mobile phone would cover the knees, an indication of slender legs. Most recently, the "100-yuan wrist" had women showing they could wrap a bank note around their wrists.

The online fads — slammed by women's advocates as unhealthy and emotionally harmful to women who feel like they don't measure up — come even as Chinese women are attaining higher educational, professional and economic status than ever. Yet as they try to break old barriers, women still feel pressure to meet cultural expectations about getting married in their early 20s, having children and being the main caregiver — as well as traditional notions equating slenderness with feminine beauty.

"Male-oriented aesthetics still dominate the mainstream, and the Internet or the new media have magnified this proclivity," said Beijing-based social scholar Wu Qiang.

Women getting mixed social signals on beauty, roles



Women's rights advocate Li Tingting talks about a print highlighting the gender ratio imbalance in number of female lavatories during an interview about the recent SK-II ad about leftover women in Beijing

Taking the opposite tack — and also garnering lots of attention — has been a four-minute online ad by a cosmetics brand SK-II that depicts the struggles of unmarried women in their late 20s.

The video starts with several women talking in painful tones about the pressures they face from family and society. A few parents also appear, including one father who tells his daughter he won't be able to go peacefully to his grave until she's married

off. But it ends with the women speaking confidently about their right to choose their way of life, including one who says she's happy being single.

"The campaign really is to inspire women to overcome their limitations, to make their own destiny," said Markus Strobel, global president for the cosmetic line, which is owned by Procter & Gamble Co.

Since being posted on the brand's official microblog on April 7, the video has received

nearly 5,000 likes and been shared more than 25,000 times. Altogether, the video has been viewed nearly 10 million times globally on all platforms, garnering more than 3.9 million comments, likes, shares and reposts, Strobel said.

The company chose to feature "leftover women" in China because it's a topic much discussed, he said. All characters in the video — the women and their parents — are non-actors discussing their real-life struggles, he said.

Women's rights activist Zheng Churan said she welcomed the ad despite its obvious commercial motives. Too often, however, the stereotype of the "leftover woman" ignores the struggles of poor, less-educated women, she said.

"We only see white-collar, elite women in this ad, but an 18-year-old factory girl pressed into marriage still has no voice," Zheng said.

Fellow advocate Li Tingting said the popularity of the video is a sign that Chinese women have become more independent.

"It's progress, compared to most other ads where women are expected to get married," Li said. "The fact it has gone viral shows there have been changes in women's attitudes."

While seeking to empower women, the ad also speaks to how

Chinese women have grown more conscious of their looks than ever. Workplace discrimination has frequently prompted women to undergo cosmetic surgery in hopes of gaining an edge in the job market, and in many cases, attracting a desirable husband.

Before the most recent body image crazes, the test to pass for being slender was whether a woman could wrap one of her arms around her back to reach her navel. Then came a test to see how many coins a woman could balance on her collarbone — supposedly to demonstrate a sculpted figure.

While women's attitudes are changing, those of parents and society are taking much more time. The SK-II video depicts the Shanghai "marriage market," where parents display information about their daughters in public parks in hopes of finding a suitor.

Zheng Lei, a 30-year-old Beijing man, said that while women have worked hard to become attractive, they also have become too picky and demanding.

"They demand the men to have money, houses, cars and urban residency permits. But there are only one thousand men who are able to meet this demand. Of course these women are left," Zheng said. "So women should lower their demands and be realistic." AP

TAIWAN-USA

Navy officer accused of espionage; now held in Navy brig

Robert Burns, Washington

THE U.S. military has charged a Taiwan-born Navy officer with espionage for allegedly passing military secrets to China or Taiwan, U.S. defense officials said yesterday.

A Navy document that describes multiple charges against Lt. Cmdr. Edward C. Lin accuses him of failing to report foreign contacts and says that on multiple occasions he gave or attempted to give secret national defense information to representatives of a foreign government. Lin is being held in pre-trial confinement in a Navy brig in Virginia.

Uncensored portions of the charge sheet do not identify the accused, but multiple officials said it is Lin. The document does not reveal whom he is accused of spying for, but officials said the country involved is China or Taiwan, and possibly both. The officials were not authorized to discuss an ongoing investigation and so spoke on condition of anonymity.

A military hearing was held in Norfolk, Virginia, last Friday. A decision on whether there is enough evidence against Lin to pursue a court-martial, or military trial, will be made by Adm. Philip S. Davidson, commander of U.S.

Fleet Forces Command at Norfolk.

The charges against Lin were first reported Sunday by USNI News, which said he served on some of the Navy's most sensitive intelligence-gathering aircraft. It said he was a signals intelligence specialist on the Navy's EP-3E Aries II reconnaissance planes.

The list of charges, a copy of which was provided to The Associated Press, cites two counts of espionage and three of attempted espionage. It says Lin provided or attempted to provide secret national defense information to a representative of a foreign government "with intent or reason to

believe it would be used to the advantage of a foreign nation."

He also is accused of knowingly providing false official statements related to his foreign travel.

An attorney for Lin was not identified.

An official list of Lin's Navy assignments says he joined the service in December 1999 as an enlisted sailor and attended Navy nuclear training at Charleston, South Carolina, from 2000 to 2002. He then attended Officer Candidate School and gained his commission in May 2002.

He served with Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron 1, based at Whidbey



U.S. Navy, Lt. Edward Lin

Island, Washington, from 2004 to 2007. Among his other assignments, he attended the Navy War College at Newport, Rhode Island, and served for nearly two years in Washington on the staff of the assistant secretary of the Navy for financial management and controller.

His official Navy biography says he was assigned to the Special Projects Patrol Squadron at Kaneohe,

Hawaii, from Feb. 15, 2014, to March 25, 2016.

A Navy press release about Lin's attendance at his naturalization ceremony in Hawaii in December 2008 said he was 14 when he and his family left Taiwan.

"I always dreamt about coming to America, the 'promised land,'" Lin was quoted as saying. "I grew up believing that all the roads in America lead to Disneyland." AP

NORTH KOREANS

Brutal work abroad better than life back home

Hyung-jin Kim, Seoul

ONE North Korean who worked abroad says that as a waitress in China, she was forced to put up with male customers who groped her and tried to get her drunk. Two others recall the frozen bodies of their countrymen stored in Russian logging camps. Another says he toiled for up to 16 hours a day at a Kuwaiti construction site surrounded by wire fences.

As difficult as those lives were, the four workers told The Associated Press, it beat staying in the North. The jobs actually conveyed status back home, and were so coveted that people used bribes and family connections to get them.

"I beat the odds of 1 in 12 to become a waitress [...] People's views of jobs in North Korea are totally different from here," said Lee Soung Hee, 42, who worked at a North Korean-run restaurant in the northeastern Chinese city of Dalian in the early 2000s and now lives in South Korea. "Women in North Korea have a fantasy about an overseas waitress job."

The stories of Lee and the other three workers, all of whom have also defected to rival South Korea, add a twist to the plight of tens of thousands of workers North Korea has sent abroad with a mission to bring in foreign currency. Human-rights organizations have called those workers modern-day slaves, while also decrying human-rights abuses North Koreans face back home. Last week, South Korea announced the defections of 13 North Koreans who had worked abroad together at a restaurant.

The defectors, who worked overseas from the 1990s until the early 2000s, said they had to submit much of their salaries to Pyongyang authorities and never received some of their promised wages. But they said the money they did receive, sometimes earned through moonlighting, still greatly exceeded what they had earned at home.

They said they were also fed relatively well, placed under less strict surveillance and given a rare chance to see the world and learn truths about their homeland.

Lee had expected her overseas experience to elevate her social standing so that she could have a husband with a better job. The other three workers, all men, wanted to buy televisions, cassette players and refrigerators after their typical three years of



North Korean defector Lee Yong-ho, who often worked 12-14 hours per day as a truck driver at the Russian camp, speaks during an interview at his house in Geumchon, South Korea

service.

"I had seen people who had returned home after foreign service smoking good cigarettes and going out for a beer," said Lim Il, who worked at a Kuwait City construction site in the late 1990s. "For ordinary people, things like those were 'rice cake in a picture,'" a Korean expression equivalent to "pie in the sky."

North Koreans working overseas more recently hold similar views, according to South Korean experts and activists who have interviewed current workers or defectors with recent foreign service experience.

The average monthly wage for ordinary North Korean workers is less than USD1, according to defectors. Many North Korean families now make money via businesses in unauthorized markets.

"From our viewpoint, it's labor exploitation. But for them, going abroad is a special benefit. They view it as a chance to get away from abysmal lives at home," said Go Myong-Hyun of the Seoul-based Asan Institute for Policy Studies, co-author of a 2014 research paper on North Korean workers. "The problem is that North Korea is making bad use of this."

North Korea denies its workers suffer abuses, calling international criticism a plot to undermine its system.

South Korea's spy agency says 50,000 to 60,000 North Korean workers are in about 50 countries, mostly Russia and China; some experts believe the number of foreign workers is much higher. The Seoul-based North Korea Strategy Center said in a 2012 paper that the country's foreign workers earned the North

between \$150 million and \$230 million annually.

There is consensus among outside experts that North Korea is pushing to expand labor exports because long-running international sanctions have left the country with few legitimate sources of foreign currency.

They are employed in factories and restaurants in China; and logging camps and construction sites in Russia. Others work construction in the Middle East, or are in Africa building giant political statues, teaching taekwondo or providing health care. Their monthly average income was estimated at \$120 to \$150, according to the Asan Institute.

The North usually sends relatively affluent, loyal citizens who it believes can be less affected by foreign cultures. The vast majority are married men whose families must stay home, discouraging would-be defectors, analysts and activists specializing in North Korea said.

Lee was teaching literature to North Korean middle- and high-school students when she jumped at the chance to be a waitress abroad. Lee said her father gave local officials up to 15,000 won (about \$70) to help her land the waitress job. Others chosen were fellow teachers, doctors and new college graduates.

Lim used 20 bottles of high-quality liquor and 30 packs of cigarettes as bribes. Kim Sae-gil, a truck driver at a Siberian logging camp, said a relative pulled some strings.

"When I was informed I would go abroad, I felt really, really happy," said Kim, 49, who worked in Siberia from 1995 to 1998. "It was a feeling that I've never experienced since then. It's still probably the best mo-

ment in my life."

Much of the workers' actual experiences overseas, however, was grim.

Lee Soung Hee said she was given only one day off per month and had to work even when she learned her mother had died. She said secret police agents monitored waitresses and beat them for hiding tips.

■ S. Korea's spy agency says 50,000 to 60,000 North Korean workers are in about 50 countries, mostly Russia and China

"There were customers who were touching our bodies, but we must not refuse that because our mission was to curry favor with them as much as possible to make them spend all their money," she said. "When customers poured drinks for us, we had to drink them all. But we could not get intoxicated or we would have been criticized for failing to be loyal to the party."

She said colleagues who failed to earn target incomes had to go to motels to have sex with customers who would pay about 650 yuan (\$100).

Lee found some positives. She said she enjoyed fruits she had never eaten before, including pineapples, prickly pears and longans.

Lim, a novelist, was a carpen-

ter during his several months in Kuwait. He said he never received his promised \$120-a-month salary, though he worked from dawn to midnight at a site surrounded by wire fences. He said he was frustrated when he learned Bangladesh and Indonesian workers nearby earned at least \$450 per month.

Lim said he was allowed to moonlight at other construction sites after promising North Korean officials a cut of the extra income.

Lee Yong-ho, a defector who was a truck driver at a Russian logging camp, said he often worked 12 to 14 hours per day but never thought about his working conditions.

"Slaves? Well, I didn't actually think about something like that. I only thought how much I could earn each month," said Lee, now a manual laborer in South Korea.

Kim, who worked at a different Siberian logging camp with about 900 other North Koreans, said dozens of workers died during his stay, many after being hit by falling trees. He said dead workers were stored for months in some vacant houses, with their entire bodies except their heads wrapped by blankets.

"It was so cold there that they hadn't decomposed. Their faces looked just the same as before," he said. "I once touched some of their faces and it was like touching ice."

Lee Yong-ho also saw frozen bodies stored. It was cheaper to store them home in groups.

Kim said he had some extra income because he was sometimes allowed to collect wild fruits to sell. He enjoyed drinking alcohol with colleagues and deriding then-leader Kim Jong Il — the late father of current leader Kim Jong Un.

"We just called him 'Kim Jong Il' though we called him 'the general' when we were in North Korea," he said. "We sometimes even called him a 'little child' as he was small. We had such freedom there."

All four workers eventually escaped while working overseas.

"I didn't want to go back to an inferior country," said Lee Soung Hee, who ran away with a South Korean customer who is now her husband. Lee now teaches defector students in Seoul.

She later learned authorities in North Korea forced her relatives to move to remote places or put them under stricter surveillance systems in reprisal against her defection.

The other three workers know nothing about their families' fates.

Kim said that although he decided not to return to North Korea "after getting a taste for freedom," he misses his family, including a baby daughter he left behind.

"She should be 22 now," said Kim, who is now a janitor near Seoul. "I'm still thinking about her." AP

Yuri Kageyana, Tokyo

Japan prepares for release of tritium from Fukushima plant

TO dump or not to dump a little-discussed substance is the question brewing in Japan as it grapples with the aftermath of the nuclear catastrophe in Fukushima five years ago. The substance is tritium.

The radioactive material is nearly impossible to remove from the huge quantities of water used to cool melted-down reactors at the Fukushima Dai-ichi plant, which was wrecked by the massive tsunami in northeastern Japan in March 2011.

The water is still accumulating since 300 tons are needed every day to keep the reactors chilled. Some is leaking into the ocean.

Huge tanks lined up around the plant, at last count 1,000 of them, each hold hundreds of tons of water that have been cleansed of radioactive cesium and strontium but not of tritium.

Ridding water of tritium has been carried out in laboratories. But it's an effort that would be extremely costly at the scale required for the Fukushima plant, which sits on the Pacific coast. Many scientists argue it isn't worth it and say the risks of dumping the tritium-laced water into the sea are minimal.

Their calls to simply release the water into the Pacific Ocean are alarming many in Japan and elsewhere.

Rosa Yang, a nuclear expert at the Electric Power Research Institute, based in Palo Alto, California, who advises Japan on decommissioning reactors, believes the public angst is uncalculated for. She says a Japanese government official should simply

get up in public and drink water from one of the tanks to convince people it's safe.

But the line between safe and unsafe radiation is murky, and children are more susceptible to radiation-linked illness. Tritium goes directly into soft tissues and organs of the human body, potentially increasing the risks of cancer and other sicknesses.

"Any exposure to tritium radiation could pose some health risk. This risk increases with prolonged exposure, and health risks include increased occurrence of cancer," said Robert Daguillard, a spokesman for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The agency is trying to minimize the tritium from U.S. nuclear facilities that escapes into drinking water.

Right after the March 2011 disaster, many in Japan panicked, some even moving overseas although they lived hundreds of miles away from the Fukushima no-go zone. By now, concern has settled to the extent that some worry the lessons from the disaster are being forgotten.

Tritium may be the least of Japan's worries. Much hazardous work remains to keep the plant stabilized, and new technology is needed for decommissioning the plant's reactors and containing massive radioactive contamination.

The ranks of Japan's anti-nu-



A worker, wearing protective suits and masks, takes notes in front of storage tanks for radioactive water at the tsunami-crippled Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant, operated by Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO), in Okuma

clear activists have been growing since the March 2011 accident, and many oppose releasing water with tritium into the sea. They argue that even if tritium's radiation is weaker than strontium or cesium, it should be removed, and that good methods should be devised to do that.

Japan's fisheries organization has repeatedly expressed concerns over the issue. News of a release of the water could devastate local fisheries just as communities in northeastern Japan struggle to recover from the 2011 disasters.

An isotope of hydrogen, or

radioactive hydrogen, tritium exists in water form, and so like water can evaporate, although it is not known how much tritium escaped into the atmosphere from Fukushima as gas from explosions.

The amount of tritium in the contaminated water stored at Fukushima Dai-ichi is estimated at 3.4 peta becquerels, or 34 with a mind-boggling 14 zeros after it.

But theoretically collected in one place, it would amount to just 57 milliliters, or about the amount of liquid in a couple of espresso cups — a minuscule

quantity in the overall masses of water.

To illustrate that point, Shunichi Tanaka, chairman of the Nuclear Regulation Authority, showed reporters a small bottle half-filled with blue water that was the equivalent of 57 milliliters.

Public distrust is running so high after the Fukushima accident that Tokyo Electric Power Co., or TEPCO, the utility that operates the Fukushima plant and oversees its decommissioning, has mostly kept quiet about the tritium, pending a political decision on releasing the water.

Privately, they say it will have to be released, but they can't say that outright.

What will be released from Fukushima will be well below the global standard allowed for tritium in the water, say Tanaka and others favoring its release, which is likely to come gradually later this year, not all at once.

Proponents of releasing the tritium water argue that tritium already is in the natural environment, coming from the sun and from water containing tritium that is routinely released at nuclear plants around the world.

"Tritium is so weak in its radioactivity it won't penetrate plastic wrapping," said Tanaka. **AP**

SOUTH CHINA SEA

Philippine diplomat to Beijing: Don't turn shoal into island

A Philippine diplomat warned yesterday that any Chinese move to turn a disputed shoal, where the U.S. Navy recently spotted a suspected Chinese survey ship, into an island will escalate the disputes in the South China Sea and asked Washington to convince Beijing not to take that "very provocative" step.

Philippine Ambassador to Washington Jose Cuisia Jr. told a news conference in Manila that a senior U.S. Navy official reported spotting a suspected Chinese survey ship in the Scarborough Shoal a few weeks ago and expressed concern about its presence in the disputed offshore area.

The Philippine military checked but found nothing, possibly because



A Chinese man is reflected on a glass as he reads China's nationalistic tabloid Global Times' front page article with a headline that reads: "the U.S., Philippine and Japanese military steer tension in the disputed South China Sea" posted on a public newspaper bulletin board in Beijing

the Chinese ship later left the shoal, he said.

China has said it has completed construction work to turn seven reefs into islands in the disputed Spratlys archipelago in the South China Sea, raising alarm in the re-

gion and sparking calls by Asian and Western governments for China to stop taking provocative actions that can lead to confrontations. Beijing says it owns the Spratlys, which it calls the Nansha Islands, and has a right to

undertake construction there.

The U.S. Navy sighting of the survey ship in Scarborough, a rich fishing area about 230 kilometers west of the Philippines, has reinforced suspicions that Beijing is eyeing the vast atoll as its next target in its island-making spree, Cuisia said.

"That I think will be very provocative if they will build on Scarborough Shoal," Cuisia said, adding such an action "will further escalate the tensions and the conflict."

The Philippines is incapable of stopping China from constructing an island in the shoal, where Filipino fishermen have been barred by Chinese coast guard ships, Cuisia said. "We hope that the

U.S. and other countries [...] would convince China not to proceed with that," he said.

Washington does not take sides in the disputes involving China, the Philippines and four other governments but has declared that ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight in the busy waters is in its national interest.

Cuisia said he was involved in a U.S. State Department-brokered deal for China and the Philippines to withdraw their ships simultaneously from Scarborough to avoid a potential clash during a tense standoff in 2012.

Meanwhile, British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond has urged claimants of the Sou-

th China Sea to refrain from the use of force and uphold international law in resolving their disputes.

"It is our firm view that claimants [of the South China Sea] should refrain from the threat or use of force and from unilateral actions such as deployment of military forces and equipment on disputed maritime features," Hammond told reporters yesterday at a press briefing with his Vietnamese counterpart Pham Binh Minh in Hanoi.

He said Britain has "strong national interests in the continued stability and security of this region."

His comments come at a time when massive land reclamation by China and increased military action in the South China Sea have raised concerns among countries in the region and the United States. **MDT/Agencies**

INTERNET

Why you might soon text robots as often as your friends

Brandon Bailey, San Francisco

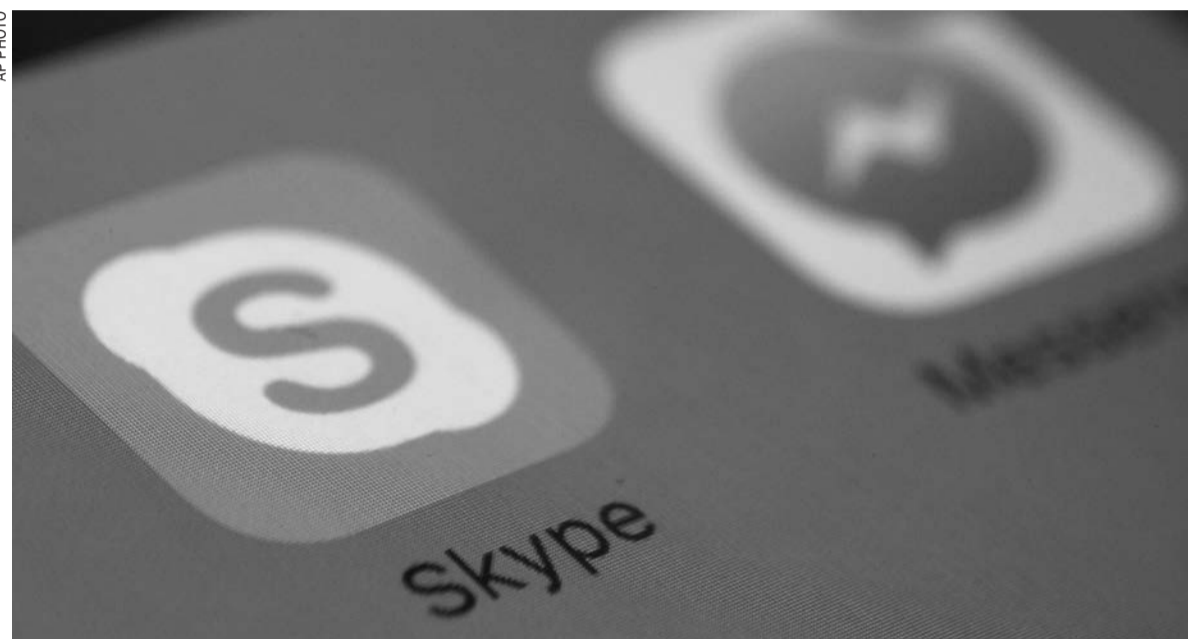
THE robots are coming — to help run your life or sell you stuff — at an online texting service near you.

In coming months, users of Facebook's Messenger app, Microsoft's Skype and Canada's Kik can expect to find new automated assistants offering information and services at a variety of businesses. These messaging "chatbots" are basically software that can conduct human-like conversation and do simple jobs once reserved for people. Google and other companies are reportedly working on similar ideas.

In Asia, software butlers are already part of the landscape. When Washington, D.C., attorney Samantha Guo visited China recently, the 32-year-old said she was amazed at how extensively her friends used bots and similar technology on the texting service WeChat to pay for meals, order movie tickets and even send each other gifts.

"It was mind-blowing," Guo said. U.S. services lag way behind, she added.

Online messaging has become routine for most people, offering more immediacy than email or voice calls, said Michael Wolf, a media and technology consultant. Messaging services are now growing faster than traditional online social platforms such as Facebook or Twitter, according to research by Wolf's firm, Activate.



And experts say messaging bots can handle a wider range of tasks than apps offered by retailers and other consumer businesses. In part, that's because bots can recognize a variety of spoken or typed phrases, where apps force users to choose from options on a drop-down menu. Reaching a chatbot can be as simple as clicking a link in an online ad or scanning a boxy bar code with a smartphone camera. A special-purpose app requires a download and often a new account sign-up.

"Bots are the new apps," Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella said last month. Microsoft has just created new programming tools for businesses to build bots that will interact with customers on Skype, the Mi-

crosoft-owned Internet voice, video and messaging service.

Facebook is widely expected to unveil similar tools for its Messenger chat service at the company's annual software conference starting today. It's already partnered with a few online retailers and transportation companies so consumers can use Messenger to check the status of a clothing purchase from online retailer Zulily, order car service from Uber or get a boarding pass from KLM Royal Dutch Airlines.

At those services, automated chatbots handle some interactions, with supervision from human operators. Similarly, Facebook has been testing a digital assistant called "M" — sort of like Apple's Siri or Mi-

crosoft's Cortana — that can answer questions or perform tasks like ordering flowers in response to commands on Messenger. It uses a combination of artificial intelligence and input from human overseers.

Another messaging service, Kik, which is popular among U.S. teenagers, opened a new "bot shop" last week. Kik users can talk to bots that will answer questions about the weather, show funny videos or help with online shopping. Slack, a messaging service used by businesses, has partnered with Taco Bell to introduce a "Taco Bot" that helps Slack users order ahead for meals at a local outlet.

In Asia, many smartphone owners are used to playing ga-

mes and buying items through messaging services like WeChat, which claims 700 million active users. One in five WeChat users has added bank or credit card information so that person can check balances, pay bills or send money to friends, according to the Andreessen Horowitz venture capital firm.

Tech experts are particularly eager to see what Facebook does with Messenger, since its 900 million users make it the world's second biggest chat platform after WhatsApp, which claims 1 billion users. Facebook bought WhatsApp in 2014.

Both are free to users and don't produce much revenue for Facebook. But if Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg has given WhatsApp's co-founders leeway with their service, executives have signaled they are increasingly looking for ways to make money from Messenger.

Although Facebook has not ruled out advertising on Messenger, analyst Ken Sena of the Evercore investment firm says a more immediate revenue source could be fees from businesses, such as hotel and travel companies offering to provide reservations and other services through the chat app.

With the help of artificial intelligence programs that learn from interactions, Sena said in a recent report, chatbots "are becoming scarily good" at carrying on human-like conversations.

Or sometimes just scary. Microsoft last month shut down an experimental chatbot, known as Tay, after malicious Twitter users taught the program to repeat racist and sexist statements. Undeterred, the company has pledged to learn from the experience and build better software in the future. **AP**

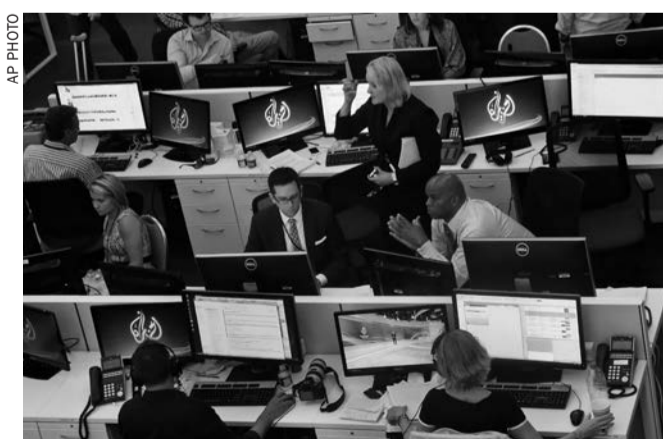
MEDIA

Al-Jazeera America network shuts down today

AL-JAZEERA America, which couldn't attract an audience to another cable news network in the United States, signs off this morning [Macau time] following a three-hour live farewell designed to highlight its work since a 2013 launch.

The farewell begins at 6 p.m. EDT and will be repeated immediately before Al-Jazeera America goes dark. Local cable and satellite operators will decide what replaces the channel in their markets.

The Qatar-based Al-Jazeera network announ-



Al-Jazeera America editorial newsroom staff preparing for their first broadcast in New York

ced in January that it was shutting down the U.S.-based offshoot, calling it an economic decision. Backed by a deep-po-

cketed parent company, Al-Jazeera America began with lofty goals of offering serious-minded news and won some

awards for its work. But when few people watched and oil prices plummeted, there was a limit to how much the company would spend.

Al-Jazeera America aired a four-part documentary produced with the BBC, "The Limits of Hope: Inside Obama's White House," that wrapped up on Sunday.

"We have time and time again given voices to those across America whose stories would not have been told in such depth without the attention of our reporters," said Kate O'Brian, Al-Jazeera America president. "We

are incredibly grateful to our audience in the U.S., and we are deeply proud of the coverage."

Its most attention-getting work included a December documentary linking professional athletes to performance-enhancing drugs. One player mentioned, quarterback Peyton Manning, called the report "complete garbage."

Between CNN, Fox News Channel and MSNBC, many viewers and cable operators believed the marketplace had enough news options. Al-Jazeera bought the Current TV network founded

by Al Gore and closed it in order to get space on cable systems.

The Al-Jazeera name had also proven an impediment for some viewers at a time the U.S. was entangled in conflicts in the Middle East. Last year, AJAM ousted its top executive amid charges of anti-Semitism and a culture of fear among employees.

It was not immediately clear how many journalists are losing their jobs as a result of the shutdown. AJAM had brought in some TV journalists familiar to U.S. audiences, such as Antonio Mora and Ali Velshi. **AP**

WHITE HOUSE

Blame to share for failed Libya aftermath

Josh Lederman & Kathleen Hennessey, Washington

THE White House sought to share the blame for the failed aftermath of the 2011 intervention in Libya, arguing the U.S. and its NATO allies asked too few questions about what would follow after dictator Moammar Gadhafi was toppled.

A day after President Barack Obama called that failure the worst mistake of his presidency, the White House said Obama believed more should have been done to fill the power vacuum. Although the U.S. played a leading role in that effort, White House spokesman Josh Earnest said Obama's regrets extended to what "the United States and the rest of the members of our coalition didn't do."

"The president has tried to apply this lesson in considering the use of military and other circumstances," Earnest said, "that asking the question about what situation will prevail and what sort of commit-



President Barack Obama shakes hands with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg during their meeting in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, on April 4

ments from the international community will be required after that military intervention has been ordered by the commander in chief."

Obama, in an appearance on "Fox News Sunday," said his

biggest mistake was "probably failing to plan for the day after what I think was the right thing to do in intervening in Libya."

The U.S. in 2011 joined the air campaign in an attempt to prevent Gadhafi's forces from

killing thousands of civilians amid an uprising against his government. Five years later, the country is in chaos, with a U.N.-brokered unity government trying to assert itself and an alarming presence of Isla-

mic State fighters and other extremists.

Obama has conceded that the intervention "didn't work."

Last month, in interviews published in The Atlantic magazine, Obama called out European countries close to Libya that he said had been unwilling "to put any skin in the game" to ensure stability after the intervention, referring to them as "free-riders."

Earnest said yesterday that the international community had failed to come up with a plan to compensate for the deterioration in Libya's governing structures following decades of dictatorship.

"The point that the president was making was not that any specific ally of the U.S. had utterly failed to follow through on a specific commitment that they had made," Earnest said. "But rather, that the U.S. and our broader coalition had not succeeded in mobilizing the necessary resources to bring about the scenario that we would have eventually liked to see." AP

AD



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Tong Jia de Ramirez
Phone Number : +853 6668 1771.

what's ON



"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

US: GOAT WANDERS AWAY FROM
HOME, GOES ON STARBUCKS RUN

Police say a goat apparently needed a caffeine fix when it wandered into a Starbucks in Northern California.

Rohnert Park police Sgt. Rick Bates says dispatchers received several calls Sunday morning about a goat named Millie wandering around a strip mall on the city's eastern edge.

Bates says employees who were opening the Starbucks tried to give Millie a banana, but she kept walking into the coffee shop and started chewing on a box.

Bates took the goat into custody and brought it to the animal shelter — but not before snapping photos of her sniffing around the Starbucks and posting them on the police department's Facebook page.

He says word spread to Millie's owner, and the animal has made it home.

He says Millie didn't travel far; she lives around the corner from the mall.

Rohnert Park is about 80 kilometers north of San Francisco.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
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	Drama
00:40	Fillers

cinema



CINETEATRO

07 APR - 13 APR



THE HUNTSMAN: WINTER'S WAR_

ROOM 1

(2D) 2.30, 6.30, 9.30 pm

(3D) 7.30 pm

Director: Cedric Nicolas-Troyan

Starring: Chris Hemsworth, Charlize Theron,

Emily Blunt

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 114min

BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE_

ROOM 2

2.15, 7.00 pm

Director: Zack Snyder

Starring: Amy Adams, Jesse Eisenberg, Diane Lane

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 153min

ZOOTOPIA_

ROOM 2

5.00, 9.45 pm

Director: Byron Howard, Rich Moore

Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)

Duration: 108min

TRIVISA_

ROOM 3

2.15, 4.00, 5.45, 9.30 pm

Director: Jevons Au, Frank Hui, Vicky Wong

Starring: Richie Jen, Jordan Chan, Ka Tung Lam

Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)

Duration: 97min

ZOOTOPIA_

ROOM 3

7.30 pm

Director: Byron Howard, Rich Moore

Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/English)

Duration: 108min

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

1975 BEIRUT STREET BATTLE
LEAVES 17 DEAD

At least 17 people have been killed and 30 wounded in an ambush by right-wing Lebanese forces on a bus carrying Palestinians in Beirut.

Reports are confused but it appears the Lebanese Phalangist gunmen attacked the bus, killing at least 14 and injuring about 20 more, as it drove through a Christian suburb of Beirut.

The trouble began earlier when Palestinian guerrillas, driving jeeps through the district of Ayn-al-Rummanah, reportedly opened fire on the congregation outside a Maronite Christian church.

Christian Phalangist leader, Pierre Gemayel, was attending Mass at the church and his Phalangist supporters on guard outside seized one of the jeeps and a scuffle broke out.

When the bus passed, the Phalangist gunmen who were staked out around the church raked it with gunfire. Most of the dead were Palestinian.

Tension has been running high following the attempted kidnapping of Amin Gemayel, the son of Pierre Gemayel, leader of the most influential Christian group.

Pierre Gemayel founded the Phalangist militia to protect the Maronite Christian community, which has dominated Lebanese politics and leadership of the army since the formation of Greater Lebanon in 1920.

But the Christians have faced increasing resentment from the various Muslim groups, who have grown rapidly in numbers, but remain under-represented by the government.

Feelings among the Christians have been exacerbated by the arrival of Palestinian refugees, who have set up their headquarters under the leadership of Yasser Arafat in Beirut.

The leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization has tonight called on Arab nations to exert pressure on Lebanon to punish the Phalangists.

He sent a telegram accusing the Phalangists of ambushing a civilian bus, killing many of its passengers including women and children.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The final number of dead was 26. The clash marked the beginning of 15 years of civil war in Lebanon. The Maronite Christian groups, led by Shaikh Pierre Gemayel's Phalangists, had the backing of Israel, while the Muslim militias were mainly supported by Syria.

However, allegiances often switched and Syria's invasion in 1976 helped the Christian Maronites. From 1978 Israel occupied a southern border or "security zone". Then in 1982 it launched a full-scaled invasion, which led to the siege of Beirut. The Syrians were forced to withdraw and the PLO moved its headquarters to Tunisia.

Following heavy losses, Israel ultimately withdrew in 1984, leaving the rival factions to fight it out among themselves.

The Taif Accord or Charter for National Reconciliation held out the prospect for constitutional reform in 1989.

It was only with the world focus switching to the Gulf states in the build-up to the war that Syria was able to re-occupy Lebanon and enforce the accord which guaranteed equal representation for the Muslim communities.

There have been growing calls for the Syrian forces to leave Lebanon since the assassination in Beirut in 2005 of former prime minister Rafiq Hariri.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 You are feeling half-hearted. You have ambition, but only on paper. If you can't generate any enthusiasm for work, it could be time to explore your options. One option is to renew your dedication and commitment.

Taurus April 20-May 20 If you were buying for yourself, you wouldn't rush out and purchase the first thing you stumbled across. You need to shop around for the best buy for work, too. Treat your office and its books as if it were the family company.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Someone is offering unsolicited advice. Instead of jumping down their throat, be thankful that they took the initiative. What they have to tell you may be hard to swallow but it could make or break your career.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 If you're going to be suspicious of someone, make it yourself. Doubt everything you want to say. The last thing you should do is speak before you have a chance to think. And rethink.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 If you never thought of yourself as a dullard, welcome to the club. Even the most boring of tasks can be made to seem interesting, and you can have fun out of just about anything. Enjoy it while it lasts.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Being lively and vivacious is fine, but high-spirited has different connotations. Don't act all high strung if someone wants to share your resources. There's only one office, and you all have to share.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Your inner turmoil is getting in the way of work. Selfish, selfless, great, awful -- real productivity falls somewhere in between. The extremes are just what you generate yourself while you should be generating something else.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 You're attracting like-minded people. In this case, you're not the only one feeling selfless. Even such lofty emotions can lead to conflict if points are involved. Things could get ugly, so watch out.

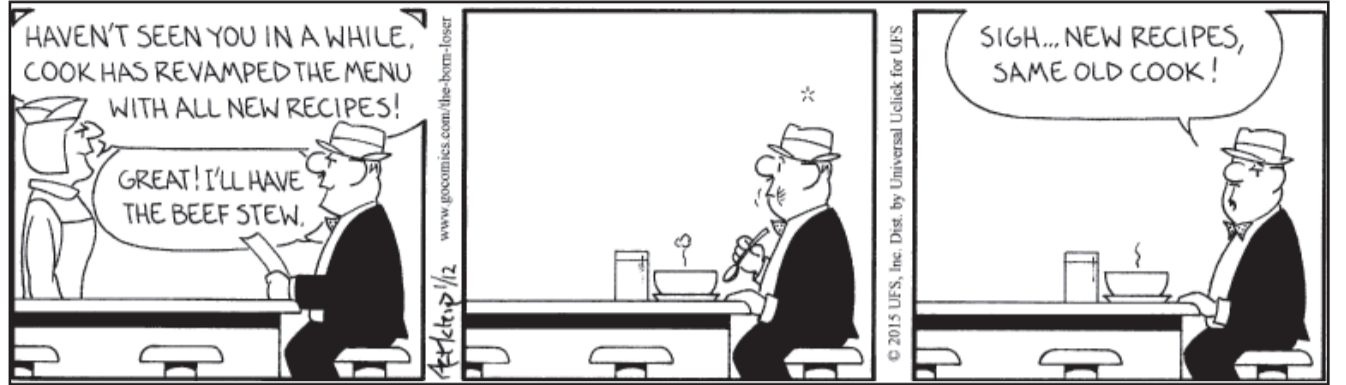
Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 You wouldn't want to go back in time, even if you could, but feeling childish can put the spring back in your step. Small pranks are acceptable only if they remain anonymous.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You're worried, about family, career and everything in between. Give yourself a bone to chew instead of gnawing on yourself. You have much more stability in all areas than you realize today.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 There is electricity in the air, and it might be the only thing connecting everyone in the office. You'll get much more accomplished if you can figure out a way to keep yourself together instead of unravelling at the edges.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 It takes a master to recognizing a forgery, and a master you are not. Even if your head weren't in the clouds you would have a hard time spotting this imitation. Let someone else do the firing.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzles categorized by difficulty: Easy, Easy+, Medium, and Hard. Each puzzle is a 9x9 grid with some numbers pre-filled.

WEATHER

Weather forecast table with columns for MIN, MAX, and CONDITION. It lists weather for various cities in CHINA and the WORLD.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Coarsely ground corn; 5- Blueprint detail; 9- For ___ sake!; 14- Tax experts; Abbr.; 15- Long skirt; 16- Halt, salt!; 17- ___-poly; 18- Tied; 19- Skin layer; 20- One of the Baldwins; 21- Person who makes lime; 23- Fancy schmancy; 24- Best; 25- Put Down; 26- Blanket; 29- Sleeps briefly; 33- Whisk; 36- Bach's "Mass ___ Minor"; 37- Arch type; 38- Ready ___; 39- Mayberry ___; 40- Cognizant; 41- Neeson of "Rob Roy"; 42- Yes, to Yves; 43- Raised; 44- Broadway beginning; 45- Desk with slanted top; 47- Fannie ___; 49- Cool ___ cucumber; 50- "___ you dare!"; 54- Unerring; 58- ___ she blows!; 59- Prince Valiant's wife; 60- South American monkey; 61- Fabled loser; 62- Send payment; 63- "Titanic" heroine; 64- "___ Tu" ('70s hit); 65- Thaw before takeoff; 66- Addition column; 67- Nitti's nemesis;

DOWN: 1- Deep-six; 2- Speed skater ___ Anton Ohno; 3- Men; 4- Hallucinatory; 5- Ore refinery; 6- Paver; 7- Typical instance; 8- Movie theater; 9- "The Taming of the Shrew" setting; 10- From time to time; 11- Mountain lake; 12- Salinger girl; 13- The closest one to us is the sun; 22- Air bubble; 27- Fido's appointment; 28- Not Rep. or Dem.; 30- Thickening agent; 31- Dijon dad; 32- Tournament favorite; 33- Gaucho's weapon; 34- Clapton of rock; 35- Med school subj.; 39- Bemoan; 40- ___ Lingus; 42- Butter substitute; 43- Prepares; 46- Deadly fly; 48- worse than death; 51- Chicago hub; 52- Nostrils; 53- Lock of hair; 54- Reddish-brown gem; 55- Peter Fonda role; 56- Do followers; 57- Other, in Oaxaca

Yesterday's solution crossword puzzle grid with filled-in words.

A large crossword puzzle grid with some numbers and letters pre-filled.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
Fire department 28 572 222
Water Supply - Report 1990 992
PJ (Open line) 993
Telephone - Report 1000
PJ (Picket) 28 557 775
Electricity - Report 28 339 922
PSP 28 573 333
Macau Daily Times 28 716 081
Customs 28 559 944
S. J. Hospital 28 313 731
Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
IACM 28 387 333
Tourism 28 333 000
Airport 59 888 88



FOR SALE and FOR RENT advertisement for JML Property, including website and contact information.

Real estate advertisement for H Unit Gladiolus Court Coloane and Cherry Court, Ocean Garden Taipa.

Real estate advertisement for Chun Leong Car Park, Taipa and Houston Court Coloane Village.

Real estate advertisement for Kam Long, Lilau Square Macau and Modern Apartment Old Taipa.

Real estate advertisement for Family Apartment Hellene Gardens, Macau and The Buckingham Taipa.

JML Property logo and contact information, including '卓雅物業' and 'since 1994'.

Australia, Japan in Group B for Asian World Cup qualifying

ASIAN Cup champion Australia and Japan have been grouped together in the last round of qualifying for the 2018 World Cup in Russia.

The Socceroos and Japan were drawn into Group B at a ceremony in Kuala Lumpur and will be joined by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq and Thailand.

Iran and South Korea were the top-seeded teams in Group A, which also includes China, Uzbekistan, 2022 World Cup host Qatar and Syria.

The teams were drawn into two groups of six, with the matches starting in September. The top two teams in each group qualify automatically, with the third-place teams playing off for a shot at an inter-continental qualifier against the fourth-place team from CONCACAF.

The teams were seeded and drawn from six pots based on the April 7 FIFA rankings, meaning Iran and Australia — the top teams in the rankings — could not meet, and nor could



AFC General Secretary Windsor John holds the country name card of China in the draw for 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia Asian qualifiers final round

South Korea and Japan.

Australia is expected to open against 2007 Asian champion

Iraq at home on Sept. 1 before traveling to the UAE. In October, the Australians travel to

Saudi Arabia before returning for a home match against Japan, which has qualified for the last five World Cups.

Japan is the only team in the group with a winning record against Australia, with eight wins and eight draws in their 23 international meetings.

"If you want to make it to such a prestigious tournament, you've got to beat the best. I'm excited," Australia forward Tim Cahill, who scored twice in a comeback win over Japan in his World Cup debut in 2006, told Fox Sports Australia. "This is

what football is all about. We've done so well in the Asian Cup by winning it — this is where it's going to separate the men from the boys. We're ready for it. We want to play the best."

South Korea is growing in confidence after reaching the final of the 2015 Asian Cup, topping their second-round group with 24 unanswered goals.

"We played exceptionally well in 2015, so we're full of confidence. I'm very optimistic that we'll make it to Russia," South Korea coach Uli Stielike said ahead of the draw.

War-torn Syria reached the final round despite the ongoing upheaval, forcing the national team to play the entire second round away from home.

The Syrians finished behind Japan in the previous stage, to progress as one of the four best second-place teams. **AP**

Indonesia among four countries hoping to host 2023 Asian Cup

INDONESIA is bidding to host the 2023 Asian Cup despite being under a FIFA-imposed ban from international competition because of government interference in the running of the national football federation.

The Asian Football Confederation issued a statement yesterday saying its competition committee had received expressions of interest from China, South Korea, Thailand and Indonesia for the continental championship.

Indonesia's clubs and national teams have been barred from international competition since last May, including World Cup qualifiers for Russia 2018 which also doubled as qualifiers for the 2019 Asian Cup in the United Arab Emirates.

The AFC said it planned to send the bidding agreement and host candidate questionnaire to Indonesia, China, Thailand and South Korea and seek government guarantees and legal opinion on the bids.

AD

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Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

FOOTBALL

China development plan envisions 50 million players

SEEKING to close a glaring gap in its international sporting prowess, China has announced an ambitious football development plan that envisions 50 million players joining in the game by the end of the decade and the transformation of the country into a "first-rate major footballing power" by the middle of the century.

To achieve those goals, China will put into service 70,000 soccer pitches, including those newly built and others refurbished, according to a lengthy document released late Monday by the Chinese Football Association.

The initiative especially targets long-neglected youth programs, with more than 30 million primary and secondary schools to play regularly, and the training of 10,000 coaches. It would also more than double the number of specialized academies to 20,000.

The plan is to be rolled out in three stages, with the short term goals set for 2020, midterm for



Zhao Mingjian (c) of China vies with Adey Ashadh (r) of Maldives during a World Cup qualification football match in Wuhan

It is very hard to buy such success in a team sport, not only football, because such sports are deeply anchored in popular culture.

ANDREI MARKOVITS

2030 and long-term for 2050. No figures were given on how much the government plans to spend on the project.

The aim, the document says, is to "strive to realize the goal of becoming a first-rate major footballing power, realize the all-around development of Chinese football, fulfill the football dream of the sons and daughters of China, and fulfill our obligations to world football."

Despite its success in other sports at the Olympics and other glo-

bal competitions, China has been a perennial underperformer in international football. Its men's team has qualified for only one World Cup finals competition, in 2002, and is given poor odds of making it to Russia in 2018.

A recent USD300 million splurge to bring big-name foreign talent to the Chinese Premier League has raised the level of play among top-flight domestic clubs. It's far from clear though, whether their skills will rub-off on local talent. Of the

16 goals scored in the league's opening round, not one could be attributed to a homegrown Chinese player and the influx of overseas goal-scoring talent could further reduce local players' chances to shine.

Despite that, President Xi Jinping has made boosting Chinese football's fortunes a top sporting priority, ordering the cabinet to help guide the plan announced Monday and demanding results.

As befits a document produced

by a Communist Party-led government accustomed to dictating top-down solutions, the plan comes laden with political jargon and patriotic exhortations.

Football "is an important vessel of the national spirit. Football has an important education function that benefits the propagation of socialist core values," the document said.

Despite the government's encouragement, analysts questioned whether parents would be willing to allow what is often their only child to spend more time on sports programs that take time away from their studies. While football is hugely popular in China, participation in the sport is not as deeply embedded in the culture as in European nations, they said.

"It is very hard to buy such success in a team sport, not only football, because such sports are deeply anchored in popular culture and have everything to do with little kids playing them from when they start to walk," wrote Andrei Markovits, a professor of comparative politics at the University of Michigan and author of "Gaming the World: How Sports Are Reshaping Global Politics and Culture."

"In other words, one cannot 'plan' these things from above like one can individual sports," Markovits wrote in a comment on the Chinese football plan. **AP**

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Simeone needs a win over Luis Enrique to oust Barcelona

Tales Azzoni, Madrid

DIEGO Simeone needs to find a way to beat Luis Enrique, because only a win will be enough.

Atletico Madrid will face

Barcelona in the quarter-finals of the Champions League today, a week after losing to the defending champions 2-1 in the first leg.

Simeone's Atletico has lost all seven matches

against Barcelona since Luis Enrique took over the club in 2014. The Argentine's overall record as a coach against the Catalan club boasts only one win in 16 games.

Simeone's defensive-minded style has succeeded against most teams across Europe, but not when facing Luis Enrique's Barcelona.

Atletico has lost every league game, and two Copa del Rey matches, after Luis Enrique's arrival in Catalonia. He had not yet taken the job when Atletico eliminated Barcelona in the Champions League quarterfinals in 2014.

The only time Simeone succeeded was when Luis

Enrique was in charge of Celta Vigo, winning their two encounters.

Last week's loss was certainly one of the toughest for Simeone, who saw Atletico dominate and open a 1-0 lead at the Camp Nou until Fernando Torres' sending off in the 35th minute allowed Barcelona to mount a comeback.

"We played a fantastic first half up to 30 minutes. In the second half, we tried to stay alive for the second leg," Simeone said. "We are still alive. I imagine the Calderon packed and chanting throughout the whole game with enthusiasm."

Atletico is trying to return to the semifinals for



Barcelona's Luis Suarez celebrates after scoring his side's second goal during a Champions League quarter-final

the first time since the runner-up finish to Real Madrid in 2014, when it eliminated Barcelona after a 1-1 draw at the Camp Nou and a 1-0 win at the Calderon. Atletico is the only team to have kept Barcelona from reaching the semifinals in the last eight seasons.

Only twice the Catalan club has failed to advance after winning the first leg in its previous 40 attempts in UEFA competitions,

but Atletico has to remain optimistic after reversing 2-1 first-leg losses five out of six times it happened in European competitions.

A draw today will be enough to keep alive Barcelona's hopes of repeating the treble of Spanish league, Copa del Rey and Champions League titles.

"We are still close to reaching our goals," Barcelona midfielder Andres Iniesta said. "We depend on ourselves." **AP**

HEIGHTENED RIVALRY

THE INTENSE first leg at the Camp Nou heightened the rivalry between the Spanish clubs, which are also in a close fight for the Spanish league title with only a few matches left. Barcelona's big lead dwindled to three points last weekend after a third consecutive game without a victory, while Atletico is

continuing to pick up wins and gain confidence. "We know what we have to do," Atletico defender Lucas Hernandez said. "We know that we must go step by step and it is the only way to move forward, going step by step. Now we have to play a very important match and we'll see what happens."

opinion

Made in Macao

Jenny Lao-Phillips



EXPLORING NEW WAYS OF MAKING A LIVING

Months ago, a quite successful small restaurant closed down, to the disappointment of customers in the neighbourhood. That place was one of the favorites of many living in the area due to their delicious low-cost savory food. The restaurant maintained its low costs by offering a simple menu and a smooth service process which required only four staff (presumably relatives). The restaurant never lacked customers, in fact at times needing to refuse orders because they were too busy. For a restaurant like this, one would assume they were at least successful enough to survive, so it was quite a shock when one day they suddenly closed down.

After inquiring around the neighborhood, I found that the reason for its closure was none other than a significant increase in rent which forced the small restaurant to either close down or increase their prices by a large percentage. So, if even a business that managed to keep costs extremely low and enjoy an impressive revenue cannot survive, what do entrepreneurs have to do to run a small business in Macao?

Year after year, research about local SMEs conducted by my students reported the same major difficulties faced by small business owners – rent and labor. That is nothing new, of course, with inflation and the high salaries offered by the gaming industry, SMEs have been facing staffing issues for a long time. So, a small business that managed to function efficiently with only four people should be at an advantage. But even then they couldn't survive the ever increasing rent. The more traditional firms who own their own shops thus do not face the pressure of high rent, still complain about not being able to hire staff. For a small business to survive, perhaps entrepreneurial individuals need to come up with businesses that do not require renting of spaces or hiring of people.

Well, that seems to be the new trend now. Browsing through the mighty Facebook, one might notice more and more shops where orders are placed via social media, and products are delivered to the customers' homes. These products can vary widely: organic food, natural cosmetics, latest fashion from Japan or Korea, homemade soup and desserts, locally designed accessories, to name a few. Perhaps some of these companies have a physical location, but quite a few of them are run from home. These businesses are often run by young people who may have a full time job, and are doing this on the side for extra income to combat inflation. Those who have managed to acquire steady profit have left their full time employment to run their tiny business. According to one of these "home-made" entrepreneurs, the profit margin from her business is not very high, perhaps a few hundred to a thousand dollars a day. But that is enough for a living, and more importantly, she enjoys her work and the fact that she no longer has to deal with workplace stress. For the new generation of entrepreneurs like her, they do not consider what they are doing a business, it's a way to turn what they enjoy doing into an income stream.

It is still too soon to know if any of these 'sources of income' will be developed into successful businesses that contribute to the economic development of Macao in the future. But these young entrepreneurs surely contribute to the diversification of local SMEs, perhaps not in the form of new products or services, but a different view of running a business. The joy in doing what they like, and the hope and dreams they communicate when talking about how they "make their living", allow others to see possibilities, and perhaps even opportunity for new business models.

THE TURTLE SMUGGLER FROM CANADA FACES SENTENCE IN US COURT

Prosecutors in Michigan are seeking a five-year prison sentence for a Canadian man who says he smuggled more than 1,000 turtles to China to help pay for his college education.

Kai Xu is returning to Ann Arbor federal court yesterday. He has pleaded guilty and says his crime was a "shameful" effort to relieve the financial burden on his parents.

In 2014, he was caught at the Ontario, Canada, border with 51 turtles taped to his legs. The government says he shipped turtles to China from Canada and the U.S., or hired someone to fly to China from the U.S. with turtles in luggage.

Xu has been in custody for 19 months and hopes to avoid more time behind bars.

AP PHOTO

As British royals head to Indian wildlife park, rhino killed



Wasbir Hussain, Gauhati

WITH the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge set to visit the world's largest one-horn rhino park in remote northeastern India, conservationists hope the British royals can help raise global alarms about how black-market demand for rhino horns and other animal parts is fueling illegal poaching and pushing species to the brink.

But just days before their arrival, park officials said yet another rhino had been poached, bringing the total number of rhinos killed in Kaziranga National Park this year to six.

Poachers shot the rhinoceros and, while it was still alive, sawed off its horn before fleeing before dawn Sunday, wildlife official Subasis Das said. Once the dying animal was discovered, park officials rushed to try to save it but were unsuccessful, he said.

Prince William and his wife, Catherine planned a visit to Kaziranga specifically to focus global attention on conservation. The 480-square-kilometer grassland park is home to the world's largest population of rare, one-horned rhinos as well as other endangered species including swamp deer and the Hoolock gibbon.

The park has overseen

major conservation success, with its rhino population increasing from just 75 in 1905 to 2,200 last year. Many give credit to Lady Mary Curzon, a British baroness who reportedly persuaded her husband, Lord George Curzon, to take steps to protect the rhino when he was governor general and viceroy of India in 1899-1905 when it was still part of the British Empire.

"The Royals should focus on global awareness and the success of Kaziranga, a conservation story started by Lady Curzon," said industrialist Ranjit Borthakur, who heads the Balipara Foundation conservation group in the state of Assam.

But as the neighboring human settlements continue to expand, the animals find themselves in increasingly tense competition for habitat.

All five of the world's rhino species are under constant threat from poachers seeking their horns to sell on the black market. Demand is high in countries such as China and Vietnam, where people mistakenly believe consuming rhino horns can increase male potency. It does not.

Already six rhinos have been poached this year, after 20 were killed in 2015.

"The Duke will use this visit to speak out against

the lies and violence that threaten this valuable species and the communities that rely on it," Buckingham Palace said in a statement. "Traffickers in South East Asia are now marketing Indian rhino horn as 'fire horn' and lying about its increased potency when compared to African horn."

Conservationists say the royal visit couldn't be coming soon enough.

"The British royals' visit will certainly increase the level of awareness on rhino conservation," said Bibhab Kumar Talukdar, who heads the local wildlife protection group Aaranyak. He wants the royals to press China and other countries to curb consumption of rare animal parts, including rhino horns as well as tiger bones and pangolin scales.

"We would expect the Duke and the Duchess to convince them to clamp down on such use," Talukdar said.

The royals are expected to arrive early today [Macao time] in the garrison town of Tezpur, in the northeast Indian state of Assam. From there they will travel to an exclusive, 12-cottage jungle resort with thatched rooftops overlooking fields and a river, according to local officials who spoke on customary condition of anonymity. AP

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

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS

CAMBODIA Cambodian police have charged an opposition lawmaker who has been a strong critic of the government's handling of demarcating the border with neighboring Vietnam, reviving a campaign of pressure Prime Minister Hun Sen launched last year against his foes and critics.

INDIA Five people who fled after a weekend fire killed at least 110 people at the southern Indian temple where they are board members have surrendered to police to face prosecution, police said yesterday.

AP PHOTO



SYRIA Islamic State militants recapture a vital border crossing in northern Syria and shoot down a government warplane in the country's west as the U.N.'s special envoy urges the warring parties to respect a fragile cease-fire ahead of peace talks set to resume in Geneva this week.



USA Tensions frayed in both the Democratic and Republican presidential races as Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump tried to stave off the prospect of a lengthy battle for the nomination with big victories in New York. Bernie Sanders is still behind when it comes to delegates and votes, but he has one clear advantage over his Democratic and Republican presidential rivals – a lot of people actually like him.

USA The Justice Department announces a USD5 billion settlement with Goldman Sachs over the sale of mortgage-backed securities leading up to the 2008 financial crisis.

ISRAEL A 12-year-old Palestinian girl who was imprisoned after she confessed to planning a stabbing attack in a West Bank settlement will be released early, Israel's prison service says, capping a saga that drew attention to the dual legal system in the West Bank.