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The Macau public libraries have registered a substantial growth in the number of book loans

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Simon Lam competed in the Pyongyang Marathon. Interviewed by the Times, he provides insights into the reclusive country

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# Times

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

**WORLD BRIEFS**

**CHINA's** second-ranking general recently visited the country's man-made islands in the South China Sea, underscoring defiance in the face of calls by the U.S. and others to cease construction work that they say is raising tensions in the region.



**HONG KONG** The world's only museum chronicling the Chinese government's brutal 1989 crackdown on student protesters in Beijing's Tiananmen Square say it faces closure because of a legal dispute. **More on p10**

**ECUADOR** The strongest earthquake to hit Ecuador in decades flattened buildings and buckled highways along its Pacific coast, sending the Andean nation into a state of emergency. As rescue workers rushed in, officials said yesterday at least 233 people were killed, over 580 injured and the damage stretched for hundreds of miles to the capital and other major cities. **More on p15**

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**FINANCIAL TIMES**

**Iraq - What happens next?**

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# ID: Marathon winner may be **disqualified.**

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Death toll from Japan quakes climbs to 41

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# Public consultation open for the 10-year plan for rehabilitation services

Renato Marques

**T**HE Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) opened the public consultation period on their 10-year plan for rehabilitation services on Friday.

In a press conference held at the IAS facilities, the plan for the period 2016 to 2025 was presented to the press at which time it became public and open to comments and suggestions.

Under the theme "Create a society based on equal rights and cohesion," the plan, which will be under public consultation until May 30, establishes goals at 3 different levels (short term, mid-term and long-term). All goals focus on obtaining achievements in 13 different areas, as said Choi Siu Un, Head of the Department of Social Solidarity



Choi Siu Un (center)

of the IAS.

The plan has been in preparation since the end of 2013 by the "Interdepartmental study group for the ten-year planning and

development of rehabilitation services" in collaboration with a team from the City University of Hong Kong. Among the extensive list of goals and objectives to

be achieved by this "action plan" is a particular focus on the area of Medical Rehabilitation wherein there is a goal to "Reinforce the technical training of the health care professionals [...] through the revision of the Legal Qualifications and Registration for Health Care professionals and the creation of a Faculty of Medicine in Macau."

Education is also an important focus of the plan, as it sets goals to "provide adequate financial support to schools for an integrated education."

Another of the goals set within education is "to introduce, from 2016, interpretation in sign language for all education-related information, including on website pages of the Social and Youth Affairs Bureau [DSEJ]."

The vast and comprehensi-

ve plan also aims to promote changes in Public Housing design and construction, setting "instructions for the conception and construction of barrier-less public housing," seeking to improve the lives of the physically handicapped.

These rules and instructions would also extend to other areas of public life such as "market places, streets and flyovers and for pedestrian subways."

Another area for development is the Application of the Information and Communication Technologies, highlighting the goal to "support the development and provision of audio-description."

In total, the plan lists 347 items with most (44 percent) goals to be achieved during 2016 and 2017.

## EDUCATION

### Student art exhibition held at MAC

Daniel Beittler

**A**N art exhibition was held at the Macau Anglican College (MAC) last week to showcase the coursework of some 40 art students across forms four, five and six. Some of these students will shortly submit their work for grading and monitoring at the University of Cambridge, in the U.K.

For many of the students, the exhibition on Thursday night was a chance to display the fruits of many months of work and preparation, ahead of the examinations for the subject that then took place over the weekend.

Paul Bishop, the head of the Art Department at MAC, explained that few guidelines are given for the art project aside from a general theme for each year group,



except form six..

"Form four students have been given the theme, 'Object as a Metaphor,' while form five has been assigned 'Sense of Place,'" Bishop explained to the Times, "which involves coming to terms with some sort of location."

Form five student, Sin Ian Si Tou, motioning toward her painting said, "You can see [in the painting] my room where I have lived for about 10 years. [The theme] is a 'Sense of Place' so it has to have some emotio-

nal attachment. Since I have looked out of that window for years [...] it has a lot of significance to me."

Her classmate Melody has also painted a picture of her room. "It's what I see at the beginning of the day and at the end of the day. The sky above is what I want to reach, though it's quite small and quite far."

Sin says that she likes art but "it's not like other subjects as you have to put in a lot of extra time," while Melody jokingly adds, "Yeah, there is no real

syllabus."

Paul Bishop, who is now in his second year at MAC, said that form six has "more freedom," in its coursework as there is no assigned theme.

Most of the artwork exhibited on Thursday were paintings, though some are drawings and others include elements of collage.

MAC art teacher, Bernita Schröder stressed during the evening the importance of holding an exhibition to showcase the students' work. "It's very important for the students to see their teachers, friends and parents celebrate their art."

Her colleague, Robert Smerdon who is in his first year teaching at the school, echoed Schröder's statement, adding that it is especially the case for art "as it can tend to be a very solitary subject."

### Higher taxes on cross-border e-commerce products going to mainland

**A**Guangdong-Macau conference on cross-border e-commerce took place last week at the World Trade Centre, where businessmen from both regions shared their own experiences developing popular online shopping platforms.

The conference, now in its third edition, was co-organized by the Guangdong Cross-Border E-Commerce Association (GD-CBEA) and the E-Commerce Association of Macau, as a result of the cooperation between DSE and the Department of Commerce of Guangdong Province.

Tai Kin Ip, the director of the Macau Economic Service (DSE), believes the conference will stimulate the flow of trade between both regions and create new business opportunities for participants.

"The mainland has a huge number of customers who demand overseas products of good quality. Macau possesses an international business network, especially with Portuguese-speaking countries," he noted.

Scott Ma, president of the E-commerce Association of Ma-

cau, said that Macau is a communication platform between the mainland and Portuguese-speaking countries, and that many mainland tourists also appreciate Macau's local products.

On April 8, the mainland implemented new tax rates for cross-border e-commerce goods. Before the adjustment, the tax rates applying to personal postal articles were between 10 and 50 percent. They now range between 15 and 60 percent.

According to Wu Mu Zhen, deputy secretary-general of GD-CBEA, the change will benefit sectors such as cosmetics and wines, but may result in increased prices for food and clothing items.

The new regulations have also doubled the spending limit for single purchases. Previously, a single purchase could amount to a maximum of RMB1,000, a limit that has since been increased to RMB2,000. However, an individual can still only buy RMB20,000 worth of goods within a year. **Staff reporter**

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# ID: Marathon winner may be disqualified



Flomena Chepchirchir crosses the finishing line in Macau

Renato Marques

**T**HE Macau Marathon organizers are considering disqualifying Flomena Chepchirchir, the female runner who won the 2014 race while being banned by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF).

As the Times reported first-hand on Friday April 8, Chepchirchir, a 35-year-old athlete from Kenya, won the 2014 Macau International Marathon while she was banned for doping. The long-distance Kenyan female runner was in the middle of a ban period decreed by IAAF after testing positive for a controlled substance at the Birell Prague Grand Prix Marathon, Czech Republic, on September 6, 2014. According to IAAF News Issue 159, the athlete was banned from competing for a 6-month period between September 6, 2014 and March 3, 2015.

Replying to questions posed by the Times, the Sports Bureau (ID) said that it “discovered in January 2015 via news that Flomena Chepchirchir might have participated in the 2014 Macau International Marathon while serving a ban given by IAAF.”

“Since the discovery of the issue, the Organizing Committee had immediately written to IAAF to seek confirmation and further information on the issue. But to date IAAF, has yet to provide an official reply and provide us confirmation of Ms Chepchirchir’s case,” ID stated.

The bureau also says that besides seeking conformation from IAAF, they have also tried to contact Chepchirchir’s agent who suggested that the runner was intending to appeal the IAAF’s ban.

The bureau’s statement adds that “pending the outcome of the case, retrospective action would be taken to disqualify” the Kenyan athlete and “adjust

the results of the runners who finished in subsequent positions accordingly.”

According to the ID, Flomena Chepchirchir was asked to perform an anti-doping test after the conclusion of the Macau Marathon. She tested negative.

ID stated that the local marathon organizing committee “takes the issue of anti-doping in sports very seriously and we have always had a standard procedure and performed thorough checks to ensure the participating athletes are eligible to take part in our competition,” highlighting that Chepchirchir’s case was “isolated.” However, it is stressed that the case shows “there are still improvements to be made to our checking procedure, and in the future, we intend to seek more proactive communications and collaboration with international federations [...] in order to prevent similar issues from happening in the future.”

## SPORTS BUREAU REPLY TO THE TIMES

“The Organizing Committee discovered in January 2015 via news that Ms. Flomena Chepchirchir might have participated in the 2014 Macau International Marathon while serving a ban given by IAAF for the effective period from 6 September 2014 to 5 March 2015. Since the discovery of the issue, the Organizing Committee has immediately written to IAAF to seek confirmation and further information on the issue, but to date IAAF has yet to provide us an official reply and provide us confirmation of Ms. Chepchirchir’s case. We have also been in touch with the representing agent of Ms. Chepchirchir to seek clarification of the situation, and we were advised that they were intending to appeal to IAAF against the ban.

Pending on the outcome of the case, retrospective action would be taken to disqualify Ms. Chepchirchir’s result in the 2014 Macau International Marathon and adjust the results of the runners finished in subsequent positions accordingly if it is confirmed that Ms. Chepchirchir should have been banned from running in the 2014 Macau International Marathon.

Elite runners from all over the world have participated in the Macau International Marathon. For all invited athletes who participate in the Macau International Marathon, including Ms. Chepchirchir in 2014, the Organizing Committee perform a standard and thorough procedure to check if any of the athletes are serving bans imposed by IAAF before they are allowed to run in the race. At the time of the 2014 Macau International Marathon, there was no information from IAAF that Ms. Chepchirchir was ineligible to run in competitions hence her registration for the event was approved.

After the conclusion of the event, an anti-doping test was also performed on Ms. Chepchirchir and the result was negative. As Ms. Chepchirchir’s case only came to light in January 2015, the Organizing Committee could not have prevented her participation in the 2014 Macau International Marathon.

Taking this opportunity, we would like to emphasize the Organizing Committee takes the issue of anti-doping in sports very seriously and we have always had a standard procedure and performed thorough checks to ensure the participating athletes are eligible to take part in our competition. However, Ms. Chepchirchir’s isolated case highlighted that there are still improvements to be made to our checking procedure, and in the future we intend to seek more proactive communications and collaboration with international federations such as IAAF to ensure all participants in the major sporting events are eligible to take part so that we can prevent similar issues from happening in the future.”

Renato Marques

**A** bid at the auction for 250 taxi operating licenses held by the Transport Bureau (DSAT) at the Macau Polytechnic Institute (IPM) sports pavilion, caused an immediate uproar in the room when the sum of MOP8,816,800 was added to the bidding panel.

The sum, tendered by Chan Kam Soi represents a cost of almost MOP92,000 a month for the total period of the license (8 years). According to TDM, DSAT suspects that the unusual bid was the result of human error.

# 755 tender applications for 250 taxi licenses



In total, the DSAT services received 755 bids, a number that represents over 3 times more than the number of licenses available at this time.

According to the information in the public tender, these licenses are non-transferrable, valid for an eight-year period and must be held by local residents. The minimum price for the bidding was set at MOP200,000, a value that was far exceeded by all the bids.

The government opened

this new public tender subsequent to the expiration of the previous taxi licenses and in response to a high public demand for taxi services that have ignited several disputes, leading also to the introduction of services such as Uber in the territory.

Last Thursday, while exiting the plenary meeting of the Traffic Advisory Board that took place at DSAT headquarters, the Secretary for Transport and Public Works, Raimundo do Rosário

said that “this public tender [that is now ongoing] will be the last under the current regulation because, the Transport Bureau, the Legal Affairs Bureau and the police are currently preparing new regulations for the taxi industry. We hope that the next public tender next year, will be already under the new legislation.”

The secretary added that the revision of the “taxi regulation” will be ready either this month or, at the latest, next month.

## Foreign reserves slip in March

The Monetary Authority of Macau has announced that the preliminary estimate of Macau's foreign exchange reserves amounted to MOP152.5 billion (USD19.09 billion) at the end of March. This means that the reserves were down by 0.5 percent from the revised value of MOP153.2 billion (USD19.13 billion) for the previous month. Macao SAR's foreign exchange reserves at end-March 2016 represented 12 times the currency in circulation. The trade-weighted effective exchange rate index for the MOP dropped 0.48 points month-to-month in March, but rose 0.74 points compared with March in the previous year. Overall, this means that the MOP depreciated against the currencies of Macau's major trading partners on a monthly basis, but appreciated on an annual basis.

## Cameras removed from female changing room

The Director of Macau Sports Bureau (ID), Pun Weng Kun, advised that the department has already removed the camera from the female changing rooms of Piscina Estoril, TDM reported. According to Pun, the department took action immediately after listening to the suggestions from the Officer for Personal Data Protection (GPDP). Pun noted that ID took over several exercise facilities from the Civil and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) earlier this year, and that the cameras in the pool had been installed prior to the transfer. It is believed that the cameras were installed for security reasons. Pun claimed that "relevant images were never sent to the monitoring room, and they will be recorded over."

## Woman detained for carrying 18,000 stamps

Gongbei customs detained a female passenger who was carrying 18,000 "Lunar Year of the Monkey" stamps, TDM reported. According to Gongbei customs, the stamps were hidden in the stroller she was pushing, as well as in her backpack. The items were worth over RMB60,000. The woman claimed that the stamps were intended for her friends. The Gongbei customs reminded all passengers that it is only acceptable to bring a limited number of stamps through customs. Moreover, any stamps, post cards, envelopes, or postal packages, which have been issued before 1949, are not allowed to cross the border. Furthermore, any such items before that date that contain forbidden content are not allowed in mainland China.

# More readers using local libraries

Renato Marques

**T**HE Macau public libraries have registered a substantial growth in the number of book loans during 2015, revealed Ophelia Tang, director of Public Libraries Management Department within the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC).

The IC organized a press conference to outline the program of the 2016 "Macau Library Week." According to the information offered during the press conference, book loans registered a year-on-year growth of about 25 percent when compared with 2014.

The number of requests for the libraries' "Reader Card" grew exponentially, seeing an increase of 69 percent year-on-year. According to Tang, this "represents a growth of over 4,000 new readers."

Tang claims the opening of the Taipa Library in 2015 has had "a very positive effect" on readership numbers.

The "Library Week" has been held annually since 2002 and is having its 15th year. The event also falls on the World Book Day



on April 23, and aims to promote a culture of reading in Macau. It includes a series of activities promoted by the IC.

Cheong Kuai San, director of

DSEJ's Center of Permanent Education, said that besides the "Book Exchange" and "Back Periodicals Charity Sale," that have become popular over the years, the DSEJ will promote several workshops, including some specifically aimed at parents and teachers also following the bureau's efforts to promote reading in schools.

To further this goal, the main event will be a workshop held on May 7 and 8 with guest Alice Tung, from Hong Kong's Association of Innovative Reading. The workshop will focus on strategies for the promotion of creative reading.

The extensive program is set to kick-off on April 23 in the Old Court Building and run until the end of May. Further information can be found at a purpose-built website, with versions in English, Portuguese and Chinese ([www.macaulibraryweek.gov.mo](http://www.macaulibraryweek.gov.mo)).

### PATANE LIBRARY TO OPEN THIS YEAR

**THE NEW** Patane Library is set to open before the end of 2016, according to Ophelia Tang. "In July, we are planning to start work on the interior decoration," she said. On a different note, Tang revealed that the trial version of the system which will allow some public libraries

to be open round-the-clock would start at the end of September. The first library to work with this system will be the Red Market Library. She also noted that the system will be "automatic" and will not require staff from the library to be physically present overnight.

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# Portugal's Attorney General visits region 'to deepen cooperation'

**T**HE Portuguese Attorney General Office (PGR) is "available to deepen cooperation with Macau in areas such as the fight against corruption, or training of judges," Joana Marques Vidal said yesterday to news agency Lusa.

On the first day of her visit to the territory, Vidal had a meeting with the Macau Lawyers Association (AAM) where she expressed that the PGR is aware of the importance of the Portuguese legacy on Macau's legal system, and thus the continued cooperation between Portuguese and Macau authorities is vital.

"The Public Prosecution's Office is aware and understands this importance and is available to deepen this cooperation which can happen in many ways," providing the example of "cooperation agreements in the fight against corruption" or in the "training of judges."

Neto Valente, president of the Macau Lawyers Association, expressed his optimism and delight in the cooperation between the authorities of Macau and Portugal saying, "it's always useful to be able to have the opportunity to exchange views and see that there is an easy sharing of views on the collaboration with the Public Prosecutions Office (MP) and in the need to bring to Macau prosecutors from Portugal," he said.

During her three-day visit, the Portuguese Attorney General will also have the chance to meet with the MSAR's Prosecutor General. After Macau, Vidal will visit Beijing.

# Pearl Horizon homebuyers resume protests

**A** large crowd of buyers involved in the "Pearl Horizon" group returned to activity yesterday. This time, as the protesters went back to Polytec Assets' Headquarters the traffic nearby was forced into a slow march.

Hundreds of pre-sales buyers of Pearl Horizon units, staged a protest, urging the government to protect their interests. "I want to meet Chief Executive, Give back my home quick!" - the main sign reads. Other signs say: "2018, I want my flat ready."

The crowd of protesters walked all the way through from Polytec Assets' office to the government headquarters, where a large number of policemen awaited them. "The goal of this dispute is to safeguard both the life of Macau and the city's universal values," said Kou Meng



Pok, president of Pearl Horizon Proprietors Association. The man claimed to be the first activist. The Public Security Police said that around 680 people participated in the demonstration. One hundred and twenty PSP officers were deployed to follow the protest.

When crossing through Avenida 10 De Maio, the long line of people caused drivers who were waiting at the crossroad to sound their car horns to express their frustration at being stuck in traffic.

Representing the views of his fellow protesters, Kou

expressed that the "situation is now heading into a deeper level of desperation." Kou further criticized the government for taking no action since the previous protests. Kou urged the Chief Executive to solve the problems: "we hope that the Chief Executive, as a leader, can be brave to face the reality." He also advised the crowd of protestors to always engage in peaceful public displays of discontent when it is necessary to do so.

According to Kou, buyers have been acting in a more decisive manner now be-

cause they have been assembling every Sunday. They will continue to do so near the border gate and at another location.

The local government was not willing to communicate with the protesters, according to Kou. He acknowledged that this fact alone had prompted people to organize frequent protests.

When referring to the loan payments between buyers and banks, Kou said that the situation had been previously brought to the attention of the banks.

The group arrived at the government headquarters around 5 p.m., then left funeral music playing to show their disapproval of this government and Or Wai Sheun, president of Polytec Asset Holdings Ltd. During the demonstration, a large number of police officers were deployed to the scene.

Staff reporter

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PYONGYANG INTERNATIONAL MARATHON

# Macau runner ventures to Pyongyang in

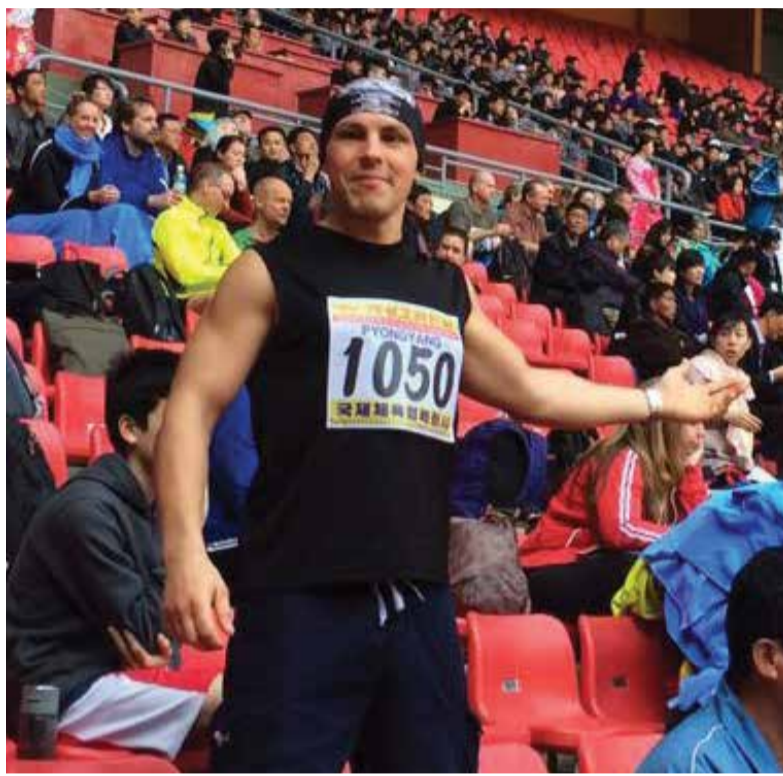
Daniel Beittler

**T**HIRTY-THREE-year-old Macau resident, Simon Lam, travelled to North Korea earlier this month to participate in the annual Pyongyang international marathon race as, according to Lam, the only runner representing the MSAR.

Simon Lam, who is originally from Wroclaw in Poland, has lived in Macau for five years and describes himself as an “enthusiastic runner.” He ran in the 10km marathon race in Pyongyang on Sunday, April 10. This is only the third year that foreign amateurs have been permitted to take part in the event.

Lam told the Times that he completed the race in less than 45 minutes and finished as best in his group, remarking that had he not stopped out of curiosity to observe the locals and tempt them into chatting with him, the Polish-born runner might have finished even earlier.

“I like to travel to remote pla-



Simon Lam

ces, like Tibet and parts of Sichuan Province. As North Korea is maybe the most remote country in the world, I wanted to visit,” he explained in an in-

terview.

He says that while he was the only representative from Macau, there were plenty from China (as many as 90 percent

of the participants) as well as some runners from Hong Kong. There was also a surprisingly large number of Americans competing, Lam testified.

His journey began in the early hours of Saturday morning as he prepared to board an Air Koryo plane. Lam says that he was perusing an English-language newspaper from the country and found the rhetoric praising the ‘Supreme Leader’ humorous. But he was to change his mind days later by the return trip.

“I changed my mind 180 de-

grees after visiting the country,” he said. “It was not at all what I expected.”

“I don’t think that Western media portrays the country, or its people, accurately,” he added. “I mean, part of it is accurate, but in a way by being too accurate, it becomes misleading.”

“What is in the North Korean newspapers is believed as genuine there. People stand behind the newspaper [and what is written in it]; this is their way. The people are not trying to pretend that they believe in what they are told about their leader and their country; they truly, culturally and holistically believe it.”

After speaking with the few people who could and were willing to speak with him, Lam told the Times that “they all believe that the Koreans will unite within the next few years – or certainly within a decade.” When asked about the potential ramifications of unification, such as an exodus from the North to the South, Lam said that North Koreans, like some of his han-

**I don't think that Western media portrays the country, or its people, accurately.**

SIMON LAM

AD

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# race that changes his mind

SIMON LAM



dlers (guides), noted that they didn't have all the answers and sometimes avoided addressing the question.

Lam said that the people were good-natured, polite and very hospitable.

"The language barrier was the real problem in trying to speak to the locals. Not very many of them speak either Chinese or English, but we exchanged smiles, and said 'hello', and gave high-fives."

He also said that the children were very friendly and less shy than the adults, echoing similar reports from other travelers to North Korea. "They [the children] smile like other children around the world. However the older people ran away from cameras as they didn't want to be in the photos."

"I was a bit worried about the photos," he admitted, "because I took photos of things that I was not supposed to. But I removed the SD card from my camera and hid it well."

According to accounts from other participants, unlike in previous Pyongyang races, taking photos and video footage during the event was not

banned. However, competitors were required to adhere to detailed rules when it came to photographing statues of North Korea's leaders during the race.

Accounts from other travelers to the country say that, when taking a picture of a statue or image of a North Korean leader, they were required to ensure that the whole object was included. That excluded close-ups which may later embarrass or misrepresent the country's revered leaders.

"The police were checking the cameras [of other runners and tourists] on entering and

leaving [the country] to see the photos, but they were not looking for SD cards," he said.

Lam was also impressed by the fluency and diversity of languages spoken by the soldiers working at the immigration services.

"They [immigration officials] spoke English to me, but I saw a French man whose books [that were in French] were being checked [by the officials]. The man asked whether they could speak French [so as to understand the nature of the books] and they replied to him in [proficient] French," he recalled.

Although Lam has never visited South Korea and did not express any great desire to go as "it is probably quite similar to other places in the region, like China and Japan," he says he "will definitely go back to North Korea to see more of the country - probably with my family and by train."

"I think that we need more meetings and cultural exchanges to better understand the people [of North Korea] and so that they can better understand us," he stressed numerous times during his interview with the Times. "It is about changing

perceptions."

"For example, many of them believe that Westerners are no good," he said, referring to North Korean state news coverage that insists the U.S. and their South Korean allies are plotting to overthrow the regime and invade the country. "So it is a good thing for us to show them that we are not all like that by visiting the country."

Lam also visited Kaesong, a city near the border with Sou-

th Korea, and the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). He travelled there in a tour group, organized by Uri Tours, a company which specializes in taking foreigners around North Korea. The group entirely consisted of foreigners according to Lam, most of them Western expatriates living in China.

According to some media reports as many as 1,600 runners may have taken part in the Pyongyang marathon, of which nearly 1,000 were foreign amateurs, marathon organizers said. North Korea's own Pak Chol won the men's professional full marathon, completing the course in 2 hours 14 minutes and 10 seconds.

It was the best-attended marathon that has taken place in the North Korean capital. Its success can most certainly be attributed to foreigners' fascination with the mysterious country, but perhaps also because the run gives tourists slightly more freedom to see parts of the country without the watchful eye of North Korean handlers than conventional tours currently do.

The marathon is officially called the "Mangyongdae Prize Marathon," after the place in which North Korean founder Kim Il Sung was born. It is just one of many events staged to celebrate the anniversary of his birth. When asked by the Times regarding his plane journey out of the isolated country, via Shanghai, Lam said that he didn't find the English-language North Korean newspaper as humorous as he had days before.

**I was a bit worried [...] because I took photos of things that I was not supposed to.**

SIMON LAM



SIMON LAM



# China's finance minister accuses credit-rating firms of bias

Bonnie Cao

**C**HINA'S finance minister accused international credit-rating companies of "bias" against the country after Standard & Poor's Rating Services and Moody's Investors Service lowered their sovereign outlooks on the world's second-largest economy.

"Historically, the market performance of most of China's sovereign debt was higher than the assessment of the credit-rating agencies," Lou Jiwei said Friday at a press briefing in Washington after a Group of 20 meeting. "That means there's bias." Lou was responding to a question from China's official Xinhua News Agency.

The March downgrades didn't reflect China's "economic reality," and the first quarter's 6.7 percent growth rate was still very high, Lou said. While the pace was slower than last year, it was expected and in line with China's target range of 6.5 percent to 7 percent, according to Lou. China is also taking measures to control the increase and size of local government debt, a concern cited by Moody's and Standard & Poor's, he said.

Lou's comments were China's strongest against the credit-rating agencies, after the



Lou Jiwei, China's finance minister

ministry last month said they underestimated the country's ability to handle any economic risks. Standard & Poor's reduced the outlook for China's AA- long-term credit rating to negative from stable in March, following a similar move by Moody's earlier in the month.

China's economic officials have repeatedly tried to calm investors' concerns over the nation's outlook and flagged that there's room to act with increased fiscal and monetary support. Lou previously said in March that the nation's leaders "didn't care that much" about the Moody's cut, because the move had little market impact.

At the same time, the minis-

ter said Friday that China's economy is facing headwinds, mainly from an increasingly aging population. The country is taking on strong measures and reforms to tackle the "downward pressure," he said.

"I'm afraid the credit rating agencies are not familiar with these reforms, so I don't blame them," Lou said, citing a debt-to-equity swap program for which the government hasn't released a detailed plan yet.

China's economy stabilized last quarter and gathered pace in March as a surge in new credit helped the property sector rebound while raising fresh questions over the sustainability of the debt-fueled expansion. **Bloomberg**

## Chinese group said seeking to seal AC Milan takeover by June

Jonathan Browning and Tariq Panja

**T**HE Chinese investor group pursuing a takeover of the AC Milan football club, which is controlled by former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, is targeting a deal by June, people with knowledge of the matter said.

The consortium, whose investors have a background in renewable energy and media, has agreed on most key terms and is seeking a deal in time for the summer transfer season, the people said, asking not to be identified because the talks are confidential. Berlusconi's Fininvest SpA and the Chinese group have already discussed plans to strengthen the squad, and the initial investment would be used to make the team more competitive rather than pay down debt, one of the people said.

Berlusconi, who has owned Milan for 30 years, is seeking a buyer at a low point in the club's history. Once considered football royalty, the team is languishing in sixth place in the Italian league and fired its manager last week. A deal would also mark the second major Chinese investment in a European football club in less than six months, after a group led by China Media Capital Holdings bought a USD400 million stake in Manchester City Football Club's owner.

The Chinese consortium is targeting at least a 50 percent stake, which could rise to about 70 percent, one of the people said. The investors are now conducting due diligence on AC Milan's debt as well as player contracts, another person said.

Berlusconi serves as honorary club president, and his daughter, Barbara, joined the board in 2011. The billionaire three-time premier has been in separate talks with Thai investor Bee Taechau-

bol since at least last year. Bee has been forced to look at new ways of raising financing after an arm of Chinese conglomerate Citic Group Corp. pulled the funding it was going to provide for Bee's bid, according to two people familiar with the matter.

Bee, who is chairman of Bangkok-listed Electronics Industry Pcl, remains interested in buying into the club, though he's unlikely to invest as much as he had previously expected, according to one of the people. The Chinese group had discussions with Fininvest about acquiring a stake before negotiations started with Bee, another person said.

Italy's La Gazzetta dello Sport reported in January that Bee was offering 480 million euros (\$540 million) for a 48 percent stake. Milan is worth \$775 million, according to Forbes.

Under the plan being discussed, Berlusconi would retain a senior title at the seven-time European champion, according to the people.

President Xi Jinping is pushing to turn China into a soccer force and last year published a national plan to grow the sport. Chinese teams have been the biggest spenders on talent in 2016, and some of the nation's richest businessmen have invested in clubs and training programs at home and overseas. **Bloomberg**



AC Milan's Alex (1st right) celebrates for goal during a Serie A football match against Juventus, April 9

## corporate bits

### CITIGROUP'S PROFIT SINKS 27 PERCENT



Citigroup's profit fell nearly 27 percent in the first quarter, hurt by weak results at its consumer bank and trading business. But the company's earnings still beat Wall Street expectations.

The New York-based financial conglomerate quarter continued to clean up its balance sheet and slim itself down from the depths

of the financial crisis. Citi Holdings, the so-called bad bank that holds most of Citi's toxic assets left over from the bubble years, posted its seventh straight quarterly profit. The value of Citi Holdings' investments fell 44 percent from a year earlier as the bank sold off complicated derivatives, bonds and other assets.

### H&M REVEALS 2015 SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

The H&M Conscious Actions Sustainability Report 2015 shows a steady increase in sustainably sourced materials and progress when it comes to the company's use of renewable electricity.

According to a H&M press release, the use of sustainably sourced materials is growing every year – this figure now represents 20 percent of total material use. The clothing company claims that it has also gradually raised the use of sustainably sourced cotton. Organic cotton, recycled cotton and Better Cotton made up close to one third of H&M's cotton use in 2015, bringing the company closer to its goal of only using cotton from sustainable sources by 2020. The recycled cotton comes from garments collected through the H&M Garment Collecting program.

Moreover, the share of renewable electricity within the clothing company's total global electricity use increased to 78 percent in 2015 from 27 percent in 2014. At the same time, total emissions were reduced by 56 percent compared to 2014.

### SJM MACAU DERBY HELD YESTERDAY

This year marked the 14th consecutive year of title sponsorship by Sociedade de Jogos de Macau, SA (SJM) for the Macau Derby.

In addition, SJM was the title sponsor of the Grand Lisboa Cup, SJM ec card Cup and Oceanus Cup, which were held at the Taipa racecourse yesterday. The racecourse also hosted the Macau Hong Kong Trophy and the Chairman's Challenge Cup races.

According to a press release, SJM Macau Derby (Group 1 Race, 1,800 meters) attracted twelve 4-year-old horses to compete for a total prize-money of HKD2.6 million, the championship title going to "Turquoise Power". "Golden Double" won the first place at the Grand

Lisboa Cup, a 1,500-meter race with a total prize-money of HKD650,000.

Moreover, "Mission GDragon" won the SJM ec card Cup, a 1,500-meter race, while "Sheng Li Win" scored victory in the Oceanus Cup, which is a 1,500-meter race.

The total prize-money for yesterday's race meeting amounted to HKD9 million.





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Great size double bedrooms built in wardrobe in bedroom. Fourth floor of a walk up building very close to cafes, shops, banks, bus stop, a unique chance to live in Central Macau.



**Studio in Soi Cheong**  
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**Modern Apartment Old Taipa - Nam Long**  
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**Rent Houston Court**  
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The apartment has a modern open plan kitchen, dining & living area, good size master bedroom with built in storage, separate walk in shower room, second bedroom has built in cabinets could be a large office or small double bedroom.



**The Buckingham, Mid Floor**  
(Ref: 16020558)  
1,350sq. ft. HKD 18,000

Newly furnished apartment in Taipa's latest complex. Fully furnished inc. linens & kitchen ware. Open kitchen inc. built in Siemens appliances. Spacious living area with 3 metre L shape sofa bed. Good size balcony for two. Two bedrooms & one Bathroom.



**Manhattan F Unit, Central Taipa**  
(Ref: 16020569)  
1,720sq. ft. HKD 21,500

Large master bedroom with en suite bathroom. Two guest bedrooms (one single & one double). Each bedroom has plenty of free standing storage. Open plan living / dining room. Galley style modern kitchen with built white goods. Small laundry balcony. Resort style facilities; lap pool kids pool, kids playroom, playground, private kitchen, BBQ terrace, sauna, steam, 1500 sq ft gym, golf simulator, work out room.



**One Central, Tower 7, Unit E Macau**  
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Fabulous spacious two terrace duplex Asian contemporary furnished apartment for rent in Macau. The terrace is completely surrounded by a beautiful view with a some greenery which includes patio furniture and grill for entertaining. Lots of sunlight. It's includes: 3 on suite master bedroom, one office room, 4 bathrooms, Maids room, Laundry room washer and dryer, Good size kitchen with Granite tops, stainless steel appliances (oven, microwave) etc... Near walking distance to shops, banks, supermarkets and 3 minutes by taxi to China

## For Sale



**Kam Long, Lilau Square, Macau**  
(Ref: 15085452)  
1,100sq. ft. HKD 4.9M  
Rate: HKD4,454sq ft

Originally two apartments renovated in 2004, this owner redesign the properties into a lovely 3 bedroom apartment with one spacious bathroom.

The open plan living / dining area is a great space with a large western style kitchen adjacent to the dining area. Most of the furniture items and kitchen white goods will be sold with the property if required.

Office: (853) 2835 2699



**Jou Fai Kuok, St Pauls Ruin's Macau**  
(Ref: 15075447)  
570sq. ft. HKD 3.88M  
Rate: HKD 6,188sq ft

One bedroom apartment in Heritage Area of Macau. A five minute from the Ruins of St Pauls. Renovated 3 years ago. Good size master bedroom with built in wardrobes. Modern shower room with built in under counter cabinet.

Well equipped kitchen. S shaped living / dining area with small nook for desk. Available from 3rd Quarter 2016

Email: [Info@JMLProperty.com](mailto:Info@JMLProperty.com)



**Family apartment in Hellene Gardens**  
(Ref: 16020571)  
1,663sq. ft. HKD 7.8M  
Rate: HKD 4,690sq ft

Good size open plan living & dining area. The kitchen has been renovated a few years ago enclosing the original balcony, maids room & toilet.

There are three double bedrooms all with open views and two shower rooms, one is en suite.

Views from the living room across the tennis courts. Price includes one parking space.



**Car Park Space in Chun Leong - Taipa**  
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Car park for Sale.

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## opinion

Kelvin Chan, AP Business Writer

HAS CHINA'S SLOWDOWN  
BOTTOMED OUT?

China's economic growth slowed in the first quarter to 6.7 percent, largely in line with expectations, but its slowest pace since the global financial crisis.

Data reported Friday showed that the annualized growth rate for the world's second-largest economy ticked lower from the previous quarter's 6.8 percent.

But carefully targeted stimulus helped to prevent it from slowing even further, analysts said, raising hopes that growth may be stabilizing.

A prolonged slowdown took annual growth last year to 6.9 percent, the weakest annual expansion in a quarter century. The communist leadership is seeking to steer the economy toward greater reliance on services and private consumption, and away from a growth model based on export manufacturing and investment.

Officials were cautious.

"The economy is at a critical stage of climbing uphill and getting over the structural adjustment's hurdles and the pain of the adjustment process persists," National Bureau of Statistics spokesman Shen Laiyun said at a press conference. "In the meantime the real economy is still in relative difficulty. Therefore the downward pressure on the economy cannot be ignored."

Still, the latest numbers matched most economists' expectations and suggest the economy is on track to meet the official full-year growth target of 6.5 to 7 percent. Growth was the most subdued since a 6.2 percent pace seen in the first quarter of 2009 during the global financial crisis.

Fixed asset investment expanded 10.7 percent in the January-March period while industrial output grew 5.8 percent and retail sales increased 10.3 percent, according to the data released by the National Bureau of Statistics.

On a monthly basis, those categories improved in March from the previous two months, indicating that momentum is building. Inflation came in at 2.1 percent.

"The recent data has been too strong to pin on seasonal factors alone and leave us hopeful that growth has now bottomed out for the time being," Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics in Singapore said in a report.

Resorting to their usual policy tools, Chinese officials have cut interest rates repeatedly and lavished money on public works construction to counter the unexpectedly sharp downturn over the past two years.

"Data from the investment-industry nexus show that the tried and tested stimulus measures of recent months have stirred up the physical part of the economy, especially towards the end of [the first quarter], while consumption remained relatively robust," said Louis Kuijs of Oxford Economics.

While such measures slow progress toward the goal of cutting reliance on investment, they reduce the risk of politically dangerous increases in job losses.

Last month, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang outlined market-opening reforms, seeking to reassure investors that Beijing can keep growth on track after a tumultuous year of stock selloffs and gyrations in the value of the yuan.

Li also outlined plans to shrink bloated steel and coal industries, part of a sweeping effort to reduce capacity, cut the government's role in business and improve efficiency. About 1.8 million workers will lose their jobs at unprofitable government-owned companies, but leaders say they will be retrained for new work.

China's exports grew for the first time since last summer in March, in annual terms, while private and official surveys of factory purchasing managers showed activity rebounded strongly. Auto sales jumped by 10 percent.

While China's economy has slowed from the breakneck, double-digit boom of the previous decade, it remains a key driver of the world economy and the envy of advanced nations grappling with stagnation.

Earlier this week, the International Monetary Fund trimmed its outlook for global growth, lowering it to 3.2 percent from the 3.4 percent forecast in January. At the same time, it cited China as one of the few global bright spots thanks to its resilient consumer spending and thriving service industries.

HK Disneyland cuts staff  
after attendance declinesRachel Chang and  
Christopher Palmeri

HONG Kong Disneyland cut jobs after sustaining its first loss in four years amid a slump in mainland visitors to the city.

Radio Television Hong Kong reported Friday that Walt Disney Co.'s theme park had fired fewer than 100 workers, citing unidentified people. Hong Kong Disneyland reviews operational needs from time to time to improve efficiency, the company said in a statement Friday.

"It is important for the company to maintain a solid foundation for sustainable, long-term growth," Disney said. "We regularly make operational adjustments to ensure we deli-



The Sleeping Beauty Castle stands illuminated at night at Walt Disney Co.'s Disneyland Resort in Hong Kong

ver great guest and cast experiences in the most efficient way possible, in order to pave the way for future development."

Business at the park has suffered amid political unrest in Hong Kong and a weaker economy

on mainland China. Attendance fell 9 percent to 6.8 million guests in fiscal 2015 from a year earlier, according to an annual review released by the company. Hong Kong Disneyland employed more than 5,300 full-time

and 2,500 part-time staff last year, making it one of the city's largest employers.

Hong Kong Disneyland recorded a loss of HKD148 million (USD19 million) in the year that ended in early October. The resort had posted seven years of losses since its 2005 opening, before turning its first profit in 2012.

In March, managing director Andrew Kam resigned and was replaced by Samuel Lau, who was vice president of operations at the park.

Disney is continuing to invest in new attractions in Hong Kong including the forthcoming Iron Man Experience ride and the resort's third hotel, Explorers Lodge. Still, there may be more competition coming from Disney itself as the company is set to unveil its first theme park on mainland China in Shanghai in June. That park is three times bigger than Hong Kong Disneyland. **Bloomberg**

## HONG KONG

Tiananmen  
Museum faces  
closure threat

Kelvin Chan, Annie Ho

THE world's only museum chronicling the Chinese government's brutal 1989 crackdown on student protesters in Beijing's Tiananmen Square say it faces closure because of a legal dispute, its Hong Kong operators said Friday.

The pro-democracy group behind the tiny Hong Kong museum said it has decided to look for another space rather than fight a costly lawsuit launched by other owners of the building where the museum is located.

The June 4th Museum, which opened two years ago, is dedicated to preserving the memory of one of the darkest chapters of modern Chinese history through photos, videos, artifacts and written histories. Its exhibits include a replica of the Goddess of Democracy statue famously erected by protesters in Tiananmen Square.

Located in a small office building in the specially administered Chinese region's Kowloon peninsula not far from a major tourist district, the 75 square meter museum is aimed at challenging the Communist Party's official verdict that the mostly student-led protests were a "counterrevolutionary riot."

Unlike in mainland China, where the crackdown remains a taboo, memory of the Tiananmen protests remains strong in Hong Kong, which retains civil liberties 17 years after Britain ceded control of the city to China.

The lawsuit claims the group is breaking building rules by not using the space as an office, said Lee Cheuk-yan, a lawmaker and secretary of the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements in China.

"They have a very expensive lawyer team to challenge us so it takes up a lot of our time and resources in facing this lawsuit," Lee said, calling it a form of politically motivated harassment.

He said his group has decided to find a new and bigger space and will hold a crowdfunding campaign to raise 3 million Hong Kong dollars (USD387,000). **AP**

Beijing criticizes  
Taiwan for releasing  
fraud suspects

Gerry Shih, Beijing

A Chinese spokesman criticized Taiwan after the self-ruled island released 20 fraud suspects just one day after they were deported from Malaysia, citing a lack of evidence.

China and Taiwan have been tussling over which side would prosecute an international ring of Taiwanese who allegedly targeted hundreds of mainland Chinese in telephone scams.

Malaysia authorities on Friday deported 20 suspects despite protests from China, which claims jurisdiction because its citizens were victimized.

The spokesman for the Chinese State Council's Taiwan Affairs Office An Fengshan said Saturday that Taiwan had "disregarded many victims' interests and harmed them a second time" after releasing the suspects, and urged Taiwan to "immediately rectify their mistakes," according to a statement on the office's website.

An said releasing the suspects harmed the two sides' years-long cooperation on criminal investigations and called on Taiwan to "prevent greater damage to the development of cross-strait relations."

The spat has become the latest source of friction in relations between Taiwan and mainland China, which split amid civil war in 1949.

Officials in Taiwan have viewed the fight over deportees as a sign that China, which claims Taiwan as part of its territory and has sought to isolate it diplomatically, is interfering with its citizens' affairs abroad and exerting its influence over Kenya and Malaysia. Beijing, meanwhile, has voiced frustration that it cannot deal with criminal suspects targeting its own citizens despite extensive investigations.

The international criminal gang, mostly based out of Southeast Asia, is accused of swindling Chinese through telephone calls by pretending to be police.

Earlier this month Kenya sent 45 Taiwanese fraud suspects to China instead of Taiwan, infuriating Taipei officials. **AP**

# 11 missing in Japan quakes; US to join relief effort



People walk near a fallen tree and house damaged by an earthquake in Mashiki

Mari Yamaguachi, Minamiaso

**E**LEVEN people remained missing yesterday in southern Japan from two powerful earthquakes that killed 41 people, as the U.S. military announced it was preparing to join relief efforts and Toyota said it would suspend vehicle assembly in Japan.

Thousands of rescue workers fanned out in often mountainous terrain to search for the missing. Rescue helicopters could be seen going into and out of the area, much of which has been cut off by landslides and road and bridge damage.

With 180,000 people seeking shelter, some evacuees said that food distribution was a meager two rice balls for dinner.

U.S. Forces, Japan said it is getting ready to provide aerial support for Japan's relief efforts. The U.S. has major Air Force, Navy and Marine bases in Japan, and stations about 50,000 troops in the country.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said, "We are extremely grateful, and we would like to coordinate quickly and have the emergency relief be transported in as soon as possible."

Shiori Yatabe, an official at the Kumamoto prefecture crisis management department, said 11 people were missing. She didn't have a breakdown, but Japanese media reported that eight were in Minamiaso village.

Minamiaso is in a mountainous area southwest of 1,592-meter-high (5,223-foot-high) Mount Aso, the largest active volcano in Japan. Aerial footage from Japanese TV showed teams of rescuers going through small clusters of destroyed buildings.

Earthquakes on successive nights struck Kumamoto city and the surrounding region late last week. Nine people died in the first earthquake, and 32 in the second. Kumamoto, a city of 740,000, is on the southwestern island of Kyushu.

The hardest-hit town appears to be Mashiki, on the eastern border of Kumamoto city, where 20 people died.



In this aerial photo, the landslide caused by the earthquake disrupts the road in Minamiaso town

Overnight rainfall did not appear to cause any more landslides, as had been feared, and the skies had cleared by yesterday morning.

About 80,000 homes in Kumamoto prefecture still didn't have electricity yesterday, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry said. Japanese media reported earlier that an estimated 400,000 households were without running water.

More than 1,000 buildings were damaged in the two earthquakes, including at least 90 that were destroyed.

Many residents were still recovering from the shock of the destruction, while struggling to bring their lives, and spirit, together.

"Without water and electricity, we can't do anything. Without the TV on, we can't even get information about disaster relief operations," said Megumi Kudo, 51, standing in a line for water outside a community center in Aso city. "We can't take a bath, not even a shower."

Kudo came with his wife and a 12-year-old daughter, carrying several empty gallon-size plastic containers to get water while his 80-year-old mother waited at home. "It's better to be prepared than sorry, as we learned the hard way," he said.

His house survived, despite major roof damage, but like many, the family is sleeping in their cars outside.

A few blocks away, 75-year-old Tokio Miyamoto said he's too afraid to sleep alone in his house, so he lugs his futon bedding every evening to an evacuation center. "It's a hassle, but it's too scary to be alone," he said.

Miyamoto said there was not sufficient food at the evacuation center, only a couple of rice balls each time.

Toyota Motor Corp. said it would shut down the assembly of vehicles in Japan over the course of this week because of parts shortages stemming from the earthquakes.

The shutdown will begin today at a factory in Kyushu and progress to other plants in Japan through Friday. Toyota said on its website yesterday that resumption of operations would depend on the availability of parts.

Other companies, including Sony, have announced stoppages of some of their factories in Kyushu. **AP**

## Macau tourists safe, request for quicker flight arrangements

**T**WO Macau tour groups in Japan have been reported safe after the country was again struck by a 7.3-magnitude earthquake on Saturday. The Tourism Crisis Management Office (GGCT) received requests for information regarding flight arrangements to expedite their return to Macau.

The Office also received a request for assistance from

two female Macau residents who were staying in the remote area of Aso Kyushu city, who departed yesterday to Osaka.

Meanwhile, the president of Macau's Travel Industry Council, Andy Wu, testified that the two tour groups involving a total of 45 people, are safe in Fukuoka.

"They were originally planning to head to Kuma-

moto prefecture, but they changed to Beppu city due to the earthquake. Both groups are now safe in Japan, although the airport in Kumamoto is now closed. Air Macau has flights arriving in Fukuoka, but not Kumamoto, so it's not a big problem at all," said Wu speaking to TDM.

The GGCT stated that the flight, upon which another 25 Macau tourists

were to head to Fukuoka today, has been cancelled.

Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau technician Chou Chi Kuan claimed that the recent earthquake was rare, saying "The earthquake in Kumamoto prefecture was very uncommon because the magnitude of the foreshock and the main shock were very similar."

Moreover, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China and the Consulate General of China in Fukuoka has advised Chinese citizens to reconsider their travel plans to Kyushu area in addition to advising travelers to not travel to Kumamoto Prefecture. The two departments in conjunction with the SAR's Government Tourist Office Representation Office in

Japan have been maintaining contact with local government offices and police in order to arrange appropriate assistance.

A statement also reported that the GGCT is assisting in the provision of transportation arrangements from the domestic airport to the international airport, as well as hotel accommodation.

**Staff reporter**

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Shawn Pogatchnik

MIGRANTS

# Libyan smuggling route grows one year after mass drownings

**W**HEN more than 800 people drowned last year on an overcrowded ship bound for Italy's southernmost isle of Lampedusa, the European Union deployed a round-the-clock flotilla that has saved thousands of lives on what remains one of the world's most perilous journeys.

But one year after Europe's deadliest migrant disaster, humanitarian and security efforts off the lawless coast of Libya face a growing challenge to catch smugglers and bring asylum-seekers to safety. Experts say crackdowns on migration at other EU borders mean that the southern Mediterranean crossing plied daily by smugglers operating out of Libya already is busier now than it was 12 months ago.

So far this year, 24,000 migrants have arrived in Italy via this route and tens of thousands more are waiting in the pipeline, according to the International Organization for Migration.

Rescue officials seek to ensure no repeat of the night of April 18, 2015, when a boat packed with an estimated 850 mostly African passengers capsized as a civilian freighter approached. Most were locked below decks; only 28 survived. Several other smuggling vessels sank in the first months of 2015, some without trace at a cost of untold lives, before EU naval reinforcements arrived that June to cast a safety net.

Experts say that net is fragile. "There could be a shipwreck tomorrow. Two boats could collide on the high seas. Even a strong multinational presence can't provide a 100 percent safety net," said Federico Soda, director of the IOM's office in Rome, which oversees the central Mediterranean and North Africa.

Most of those 24,000 migrants were scooped up by Italian coast guard and EU vessels from recklessly overloaded vessels that were left drifting, engines dead, between Libya and Italy in a body of water dubbed the Lampedusa



Rescued migrants are seen aboard MP01 ship of the Italian border police in the Mediterranean Sea

Triangle. Even if their amateur pilots had the requisite navigation skills, few vessels carry enough fuel to complete the approximately 300-kilometer crossing to Lampedusa from Libya.

Soda said about 350 people have died so far this year trying to cross the southern Mediterranean route, nearly as many deaths over the same period as the far busier smuggling routes between Turkey and the eastern islands of Greece.

Now, as EU authorities work to halt that eastern Mediterranean flow of migrants and deport them from Greece back to Turkey, analysts anticipate that asylum-seekers from the Mideast and Asia may see Libya once again as the most temptingly open gateway to

Europe.

They note that Libya's paramilitary chaos may make the North African nation a particularly attractive launching point for Europe-bound migrants because EU authorities won't deport migrants back to such a danger zone. Virtually all of this year's arrivals from Libya have been Africans — but observers say that could be about to change.

"We should expect tens of thousands to attempt to depart this spring and summer bound for Lampedusa. With the closure of the EU-Turkey border to migrants, we may learn once again how closing one route pushes people to another route," said Matteo de Bellis, an Amnesty International researcher who just completed a fact-finding mission to Italy's main migrant processing center on Lampedusa.

"Even with the best search-and-rescue framework in place, we must expect hundreds of more deaths this year. When you pack 100 people or more into a rubber dinghy for what is arguably the most dangerous crossing of them all it will never be possible to save everyone," de Bellis said.

EU nations are maintaining a fleet anchored primarily in Lampedusa that operates under the codename Operation Sophia. It includes Italy's largest warship, the aircraft carrier Cavour, and is coman-

ded by an Italian rear admiral, Enrico Credendino. It uses surveillance aircraft and satellite imagery to identify boats leaving Libya's shores, particularly Zuwara west of Tripoli and Misrata to the east, and pounces on them once they exit Libyan territorial waters.

The fleet's official mission is to confront smugglers and deter illegal immigration to Italy, but in practice the effort has become one of the 28-nation bloc's biggest rescue missions in its history. It works in tandem with an older search-and-rescue effort codenamed Operation Triton overseen by the EU border agency Frontex, which deploys ships to rescue migrants from the seas nearer Sicily and Malta.

On Monday last week, these

two operations rescued more than 2,000 people from eight boats that had been spotted by a Luxembourg-provided surveillance plane. A Norwegian vessel took 898 migrants to Sicily, including 224 children, while a German ship delivered 738 others to Lampedusa. Doctors on board the Cavour performed a life-saving abdominal operation on an African man airlifted onto the carrier.

The U.N. Security Council in October empowered the EU fleet to begin arresting smugglers and seizing their craft in international waters north of Libya. The force temporarily grew to nine ships, a submarine, three surveillance aircraft, five helicopters and a drone as it destroyed 67 smuggler boats and arrested 46 smugglers, according to Credendino's January report on the fleet's first six months.

Credendino suggested that smugglers were increasingly relying on rigid inflatable craft — many of them ordered from China and shipped to Libya via Turkey and Malta — rather than larger wooden vessels, because of the fleet's seizure and destruction of larger craft. He noted that around 8 percent of the smuggled travelers had started their sea journey on Egypt's coast, choosing to travel west for rescue by the EU fleet.

His report pointed to the need to rebuild a credible Libyan government that would allow EU ships into Libyan waters and EU law officials into the ports themselves to confront smugglers more decisively. He wrote that the EU naval force could not safely end its deployment before helping to create "a capable and well-resourced Libyan coast guard."

Analysts, however, say Libya is nowhere close to being a stable partner, with three rival governments still feuding in Tripoli and the eastern port of Tobruk. The United Nations-backed "unity" government has only recently returned to Tripoli from exile in neighboring Tunisia but remains confined to a naval base defended by a militia and can enter and leave the country only by boat.

"Europe cannot solve the problem in the central Mediterranean on its own. It needs a stable government in Libya," Soda said. "Until that day comes, this migrant route will keep producing tragedies." AP



Migrants wait to disembark from the Italian Coast Guard ship Peluso, onto the tiny Italian island of Lampedusa

**“ We should expect tens of thousands to attempt to depart this spring and summer bound for Lampedusa.**

MATTEO DE BELLIS  
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

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# Iran vows to defend Muslim nations against terrorism, Israel

IRAN'S President Hassan Rouhani yesterday vowed to defend Muslim countries against terrorism and Israel while insisting that its neighbors should not feel threatened.

Speaking during a National Army Day parade in which Iranian forces displayed sophisticated air defense systems recently acquired from Russia, Rouhani praised Tehran's role in helping the Syrian and Iraqi governments roll back the Islamic State group.

"If tomorrow your capitals face danger from terrorism or Zionism, the power that will give you a positive answer is the Islamic Republic of Iran," he said. But he added that Iran would only help if Muslim countries asked it to, and said its military power was purely for defensive and deterrent purposes.

"The power of our armed forces is not against our southern, northern, eastern and western neighbors," he said.

He appeared to be referring to Gulf Arab states, which have long viewed Iran as seeking to dominate the region. Saudi Arabia and Iran are long-time rivals that back opposite sides in the Syrian and Yemeni civil wars. AP

# Earthquake kills 233 in Ecuador; emergency workers rush in

THE strongest earthquake to hit Ecuador in decades flattened buildings and buckled highways along its Pacific coast. President Rafael Correa said at least 233 people had died and rescuers were struggling to reach survivors trapped in the rubble.

The magnitude-7.8 quake, the strongest to hit Ecuador since 1979, was centered on Ecuador's sparsely populated fishing ports and tourist beaches, 170 kilometers northwest of Quito, the capital.

Correa reported the death toll on his official Twitter account while flying back from Rome to deal with the crisis. Officials earlier had reported more than 580 people injured.

Vice President Jorge Glas said there were deaths in the cities of Manta, Portoviejo and Guayaquil — all several hundred kilometers from the center of the quake struck shortly after nightfall Saturday.



A woman cries as she stands next to house destroyed by the earthquake in the Pacific coastal town of Pedernales

In Pedernales, a town of 40,000 near the quake's epicenter, dozens of scared residents slept in the streets while men equipped with little more than car headlights tried to rescue survivors who could be heard trapped under rubble.

Glas said 10,000 armed forces had been deployed to help. In addition, 4,600 national police were sent to the towns near the epicenter.

Officials said shelters had been set up and field hospitals were being deployed in Pedernales and Portoviejo. More than 3,000 packages of food and nearly 8,000 sleeping kits were being delivered. Electricity in Manabi province, the hardest hit, remained mostly down as authorities focused on finding survivors.

"Compatriots: Unity, strength and prayer," Glas told a throng of residents gathered in the streets of Manta as he instructed them on how to look for survivors.

Homes were reduced to rubble along the quake's path, while in Guayaquil a shopping center's roof fell down and a collapsed highway overpass crushed a car. In Manta, the airport closed after the control tower collapsed, injuring an air traffic control worker and a security guard.

In the capital Quito, terrified people fled into the streets as the quake shook their buildings. It knocked out electricity in several neighborhoods and a few homes collapsed but after a few hours power was being restored.

Among those killed was the driver of a car crushed by an overpass that buckled in Guayaquil, the country's most populous city. The city's international airport was also briefly closed. Hydroelectric dams and oil pipelines in the OPEC-member nation were shut down as a precautionary measure but so there were no reports of damage to them.

Towns near the epicenter were evacuated as a precautionary measure in case of hazardous tsunami waves but several hours later authorities said was safe for coastal residents to return to their homes. AP

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## what's ON

HIDDEN LANDSCAPE – WORDS BY SEASON LAO AND TANG KUOK HOU

TIME: 12pm-7pm (Closed on Sundays and public holidays)

UNTIL: April 23, 2016

VENUE: Estrada da Areia Preta No. 52, Edificio da Fabrica de Baterias N.E. National, 3rd Floor, Macau

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6064

MOIST AND SALTY – GALO FANZINE PHOTO EXHIBITION

TIME: 12pm-7pm (closed on Tuesdays, open on public holidays)

UNTIL: May 1, 2016

VENUE: Ox Warehouse, at the intersection of Av. Coronel Mesquita and Av. do Almirante Lacerda

ADMISSION: Free

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ADMISSION: Free

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MACAU GRAND PRIX MUSEUM & WINE MUSEUM

TIME: 10am-8pm daily (Except Tuesdays)

VENUE: Rua Luis Gonzaga Gomes, 431, basement (Tourism Activities Centre-CAT)

Admission: Free

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## Offbeat

## WITH THIS RIGATONI, I THEE WED: THE FIRST PASTAFARIAN WEDDING



Bride Marianna Fenn and bridegroom Toby Ricketts stand on a jetty in Akaroa harbor, New Zealand

The wedding rings were made of pasta, the ceremony was held on a pirate boat, and when it came time for the kiss, the bride and groom slurped up either end of a noodle until their lips met.

New Zealand on Saturday hosted the world's first Pastafarian wedding, conducted by the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster. The group, which began in the U.S. as a protest against religion encroaching into public schools, has gained legitimacy in New Zealand, where authorities recently decided it can officiate weddings.

Saturday's ceremony was all about having fun. The guests came dressed as pirates and shouted plenty of hearty "Aaarrrhs." The groom, Toby Ricketts, vowed to always add salt before boiling his pasta, while bride Marianna Fenn donned a colander on her head.

The church claims that global warming is caused by pirates vanishing from the high seas, and that there is a beer volcano in heaven.

"The Flying Spaghetti Monster created the world. We know that," said marriage celebrant Karen Martyn, aka the Ministeroni. "We weren't around then and we didn't see it, but no other religion was around to see it either, and our deity is as plausible as any other."

The church has been battling to gain legal recognition around the world, with mixed success. It was formed in 2005 as a way to poke fun at efforts in Kansas public schools to teach not only evolution, but also "intelligent design" — the idea that the universe must have had a creator.

Church founder Bobby Henderson said in an email that he thought it was odd that most weddings still have such an entanglement between religion and government.

"It's sad that so many people feel pressured to do the traditional Christian wedding even when they don't relate to much of the religion," he said. "If people can find some happiness in having Pastafarian weddings, that's great, and I hope no one gives them any flack about it." AP

## TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
15:00	RTPi Live
17:35	Fillers
17:40	Trail of Lies (Repeat)
18:30	Contraponto (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Oepra
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Sports
22:10	Trail of Lies (The End)
23:00	TDM News
23:30	UEFA Champions League 2015/2016 Magazine Programme
00:05	Fillers
00:10	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:40	RTPi Live

## cinema

## CINETEATRO

14 APR - 20 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



10 CLOVERFIELD LANE

ROOM 2  
2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm  
Director: Dan Trachtenberg  
Starring: Mary Elizabeth Winstead, John Goodman  
Language: English (Cantonese)  
Duration: 106min

TRIVISA

ROOM 3  
2.15, 4.00, 9.45 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  
5.45 7.45 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



## 1994 KILLING SPREADS IN RWANDA

The ethnic violence in the Rwandan capital Kigali is now spreading throughout the country, aid officials have said.

Tens of thousands of people are believed to have died since Rwanda's president died in a suspicious plane crash on 6 April.

The killing has mainly been carried out by Hutu gangs, who blame Tutsi rebels for downing President Juvénal Habyarimana's plane in a rocket attack. The President of Burundi was also killed.

Witnesses in Kigali say Hutu soldiers have been hacking Tutsi civilians to death with machetes in the street.

A spokesman for the International Committee of the Red Cross, Jean-Luc Thevoz, said hundreds of thousands of Rwandans had also been forced to leave their homes by the violence.

"The situation is catastrophic, not just in Kigali, but in the rest of Rwanda," he said.

About 3,600 rebels from the mainly Tutsi Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) have infiltrated the capital. The group has said it will continue to fight until the Hutu-dominated government stops the massacres.

The RPF is currently moving to take the city and has blown up a radio station that it said was broadcasting propaganda inciting Hutus to slaughter Tutsis.

The 420 Belgian United Nations peacekeepers present in Rwanda are expected to withdraw within the next few days. Ten of their number were killed by government troops when the fighting began 12 days ago.

The planned withdrawal follows a stalemate at the UN Security Council over how best to deal with the unfolding disaster. In the last few hours, an official from the RPF met the Rwandan ambassador in the Ugandan capital Kampala to discuss ways of ending the violence.

But UN spokesman Moctar Gueye told reporters no accord had been reached. "My impression is that the fighting is dying down in the capital. Unfortunately we have no ceasefire agreement for the time being," he said.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

The massacre in Rwanda continued until July, when the RPF finally captured Kigali.

About 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus died in the violence, making it one of the worst atrocities of the 20th century.

The United Nations Secretary Kofi Anan has admitted he did not do enough in 1994 to prevent the slaughter.

The UN has set up an international court in Tanzania to try the ringleaders of the massacre, but in its first eight years of operation it convicted only 17 people.

Other militia members have been tried in Rwanda - many in traditional village courts called "gacaca" - but many thousands were released.

Genocide survivor groups have protested strongly at the releases, but the Rwandan government said it would take 100 years to try all 120,000 people arrested after the massacre.



YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Your people need to hear the word from you - so compose yourself and then let them know what's going on.

Taurus April 20-May 20 You're getting too far ahead of yourself - which could mean that you have to go back and repeat today's activities to get them done right.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 It's a great day for communication, so if you've got any difficult messages to deliver, now is the time.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 You need to take a walk on the wild side - if you're not already there, that is. Sometimes you need a break from all the work and responsibilities going on in your life.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 If you feel frustrated, now is the time to express yourself. You've got hopes and desires - and you've also got people who can help you out.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 This is not a good day for mushy sentimentality - you need to make sure that you're rigorously logical, as much as you can be.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 You need someone to hear you out - even if you're not feeling especially frustrated or upset. Your social and emotional energies are in sync, but it's hard to deal without a friendly ear.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Things seem to be chugging along just fine until you're stopped by one crazy detail. It's hard to say what it could be, but once you spot it, you find it hard to focus on anything else.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 The situation all comes down to you. What are you willing to do to bring about a happy ending? Your energy is resonant with the situation in a way that makes you the key player.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You need to avoid the temptation to just flit from one person or project to the next. Focus as much as possible - things aren't going to be easy for you if you lose your discipline.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You've got to take care of a relationship that seems to be heading in a surprising new direction. This may or may not have anything to do with romance, but your great energy can help it become what you want.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 This is not a good time for change - but you may still have to deal with something big. You have to draw on allies and family in order to cope, but that ends up strengthening you in the end.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Easy+

9x9 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Medium

9x9 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

Hard

9x9 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle with some numbers filled in.

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Office fill-in; 5- As \_\_\_ resort; 10- Cookbook amts.; 14- Controversial orchard spray; 15- Tubular pasta; 16- Yours, in Tours; 17- Unerring; 19- Hollow grass; 20- Plant swellings; 21- Make hostile; 23- Withstands; 25- Sensational; 26- Data; 28- Fit badly; 31- Dole (out); 34- Bandleader Puente; 36- Pursue; 37- Old English letter; 38- Singer Etheridge; 40- Camera type, briefly; 41- Simmons rival; 43- Harper's Bazaar illustrator; 44- Thing; 45- Tips off; 47- Big rigs; 49- \_\_\_ evil...; 51- Snappy comebacks; 55- One of the two schools of Buddhism; 58- Low bow; 59- Yes, there is \_\_\_; 60- Capable of being penetrated; 62- Invalid; 63- Architectural piers; 64- Follow; 65- "Smooth Operator" singer; 66- It's human; 67- Coup d'\_\_\_; DOWN: 1- Stun gun; 2- Evade; 3- Female horses; 4- Proposition; 5- Renegade; 6- Sign of summer; 7- Architectural pier; 8- Fishhook line; 9- Lack of variety; 10- Sully; 11- Unwavering; 12- Ovid, e.g.; 13- Pro or con; 18- Swift; 22- Writer Jong; 24- Subway turner; 27- Agitates; 29- \_\_\_ of Man; 30- Division of a school year; 31- City near Phoenix; 32- Pulitzer-winning biographer Leon; 33- Entrance to a house; 35- Blender brand; 38- British buddy; 39- Academic session; 42- Foot lever; 44- Quarantine; 46- Be short with; 48- \_\_\_-Tass (Russian news agency); 50- Bridge bid, briefly; 52- Morocco's capital; 53- Actress Shire; 54- Refine metal; 55- \_\_\_ best friend; 56- Juan's water; 57- Get in a hand; 61- Organ of hearing;



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# Venetian Macao hosts China Music Awards



VIXX



Sands China president and COO, Wilfred Wong (center)



Psy



Twins



Hsu Hsi Ti



Li Qi



Kenji Wu



Momo Wu (front)



Nishino Kana

**THE 20TH** Channel [V] China Music Awards and Asian Influential Power Grand Ceremony returned to The Venetian Macao on Friday for the fifth consecutive year, holding the award ceremony at its Cotai Arena.

A press release issued by Sands China described how The Venetian's main lobby was the location for hundreds of fans as they tried to get a glimpse of their favorite singers and actors walking the glittering red carpet.

Celebrities who attended the event include Twins, Raymond Lam, Jonathan Wong, Vincy Chan, PSY, VIXX, iKON, JJ Lin, Wang Lee Hom, Jam Hsiao, Kenji Wu, Hsu Hsi Ti and many more, alongside Dr Wilfred Wong, president of Sands China Ltd and representatives from Star China Media Ltd.

The theme for this year's ceremony was "Initial Dream, Born for Music" seeking to pay tribute to the singers who have contributed to the music industry over the past 20 years.

A total of 43 awards were presented at the star-studded ceremony, including Most Popular Male Singer (HK & Taiwan), Most Popular Female Singer (HK & Taiwan), Asian Most Popular Korean Artist, Most Popular Male Singer (Mainland China), Most Popular Female Singer (Mainland China), Best Cross Time Composing Singer and Asian Most Popular Versatile Chinese Artist, alongside many others.

The China Music Awards was originally launched in 1994 and is the only Chinese music awards show that is telecast in China and around the world.

FORMULA ONE

# Rosberg wins Chinese GP for sixth straight victory

Justin Bergman, Shanghai

**N**ICO Rosberg of Mercedes captured the Chinese Grand Prix with ease yesterday to extend his perfect start to the Formula One season and become just the fourth driver in history to win six straight races.

Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel, who collided with teammate Kimi Raikkonen at the first corner, finished second, 37.7 seconds behind Rosberg, while Red Bull's Daniil Kvyat used an aggressive race strategy to take third — only the second podium of the 21-year-old's career.

Rosberg started on pole position and led nearly the entire race by a wide margin to win his third race to start this season



Daniel Ricciardo and Nico Rosberg of Germany lead the field into turn one at the start of the Chinese Formula One Grand Prix

and his sixth consecutive dating back to last year.

Every driver who has started an F1 season with three straight wins went on to win the title that year.

"It was a great weekend here for me in China. It's a special place for me — first pole, first win here [in 2012]," Rosberg said. "I was just pushing to try

to get the best gap possible. I'm glad that it worked out so well."

Vettel recovered nicely from the first corner setback and worked his way through the field to claim a creditable second.

"Disappointed that I made contact in lap one. Lucky that the car was still intact," Vettel said. "We had a different stra-

tegy from most people with the super-soft tire, which helped me to clear the traffic and make progress. It was good fun — a lot of cars. I didn't count but it felt like a lot."

Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo led the race initially after getting off the line better than Rosberg, but he suffered a puncture while leading on lap three and finished fourth. Raikkonen was fifth after having been knocked to the back of the field by the first-corner accident.

With Rosberg's victory never really in doubt, most of the action took place behind him as Lewis Hamilton moved his way up through the field after starting on the back row and battled with Ricciardo, Raikkonen and Williams driver Felipe Massa late in the race.

Massa held off Hamilton to take sixth place, while the reigning world champion had to settle for seventh.

Hamilton had been forced to start in the back row after an engine problem on Saturday prevented him from setting a time in qualifying, and was also a victim of the first-corner chaos. He lost his front wing, triggering the first of an extraordinary six pit stops for the reigning F1 champion.

The trouble at the first bend came when Kvyat made an aggressive pass on the inside of Vettel, causing the German to swerve outwards to avoid contact and colliding with Raikkonen on his outside.

An angry Vettel fumed on his radio, "Kvyat's attack was suicidal, there was no way he could have made the corner with that speed."

When Raikkonen returned to the track, Sauber's Felipe Nasr swerved to avoid him and collided with Hamilton, dislodging the front wing of his Mercedes, which briefly got trapped beneath his car. AP

FOOTBALL | LA LIGA

## Madrid keeps pressure on Barca, Atletico

Karim Benzema ensured Real Madrid kept the pressure on the Spanish league's front-runners by scoring one goal and assisting on two more as bottom-side Getafe was defeated 5-1 on Saturday. Madrid, which this week advanced to a Champions League semifinal against Manchester City, provisionally passed Atletico Madrid into second place and moved to within one point of struggling leader Barcelona. Benzema scored Madrid's first goal before setting up Francisco "Isco" Alarcon and Gareth Bale to put the result beyond doubt early in the second half. After James Rodriguez made it 4-1, Cristiano Ronaldo rounded off Madrid's seventh consecutive league victory in stoppage time with his tournament-leading 31st goal. "We are doing our job and are getting closer and closer," said Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane, whose team trailed Barcelona by 12 points just four rounds ago. "We are going to be one point behind, but we can't look beyond that." AP

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COLOANE REDUX

MSAR government has always been confident to be on the side of those who pledge to protect Coloane as a nature safe haven, as an ecological reserve - or with whatever exaggeration we dare to dress the already spoiled big island. But that does not matter. Of course we are not referring to a pristine oasis, we are talking about Macau's last green window, and yes, Coloane is under siege.

Whenever officials, businessmen and urban addicts smooth talk about the need to strike a balance between environment and development, builders are already on the beach. But this time, for a change, 10 NGOs are also wired to Save Colane from an obviously menacing 100-metre tall residential project planned for the top of Coloane Hill.

Even though the approval of Sio Tak Hong project seems to be in a bureaucratic limbo similar to that one made célèbre by a well-known idiot of the non-denial denial, the NGOs launched an open petition and some action to promote awareness among Macau residents about the perversity of the project, while alerting to the risks of what Macau Green Student Union Joey Chan calls the chain effect. If this one residential project goes ahead, so muddled up with an unknown rationale, non-binding EIAs, non-approval approval, one has to fear 100-metre towers would pop-pop in the other mountains (hills), enough to grow another Taipa.

Before we can describe it as a chain effect, there is the preliminary strategy to induce further developments. There is, or there was, a non-written understanding that Coloane would be spared by the casino industry. So much so that now the second wave of the Cotai development is not roaring as before the squeeze of the new normal. However... uber luxury 13 is allegedly demanding a few baccarat tables, over there in the atrium of the island. Can we presume another chain-effect situation further in the Coloane area?

Macau Civic Power Agnes Lam, usually an assertive but composed voice on public issues, took the outrage and assumed anger: we people in Macau are not just living here, it is not just a place to sleep and go to work, we are not pigs. We need somewhere to go.

Macau residents are doing their part... now it is the turn of lawmakers.

Chief Executive Chui Sai On will attend a plenary session on April 22 to answer the questions legislators intend to raise on government policy and social issues; no doubt the Coloane hill station project would qualify. It would be an inconvenient waste of political time if the house did not take this window to speak its mind on behalf of what lawmakers may think to be in the public interest. But we would bet that besides pro-democracy Ng Kwok Cheong, New Hope number two, Kwan Tsui Hang, and perhaps the Chan Meng Kam ticket, nobody would give the environment issue a word other than one of submission to economic development.

We do have to wait and in the meanwhile entertain a little guessing game about the issues lawmakers will ask CE about. On the nay column we would include the public consultation on the revision of the Legislative Assembly Electoral Law; on the aye column we would safely bet on the five measures contained in the "Words of the Chief Executive". Either way, Chui Sai On wins.

Final note dedicated to the Panama Papers. Tax paradises are perfectly legal. On the illegal activity using tax havens we have two types: the corrupt ones and the evading ones. Capital flight is served by 85 airlines all around the world. Dedicated to the conspiracy theorists or naïve souls (same thing) we have the Vladimir Putin angle: an unknown source gave the Panama Papers to the *Suddeutsche Zeitung*; SZ gave it to a few selected papers; Goldman Sachs owns *Suddeutsche Zeitung*; Putin rests his case.

THE KENYA SHOCKS FIJI TO WIN SINGAPORE SEVENS

Kenya shocked Fiji 30-7 in the final of the Singapore Rugby Sevens yesterday to claim its first World Series title.

Collins Injera scored two of six tries as Kenya won the Cup competition at a World Series leg for the first time in 114 tournaments, adding their name to the list of prospective Olympics gold medalists in Rio de Janeiro

later this year.

Fiji entered the tournament as the World Series leader and favorite but were overwhelmed in the final by Kenya which jumped out to a 20-0 lead at halftime.

Injera scored twice in the first half and Kenya snuffed out a brief Fiji rally after halftime, scoring two late tries to win convincingly.

'House of Cards' interest spurs rise of Spacey in China



Kevin Spacey pictured in Macau

AMERICAN actor Kevin Spacey recently recounted his visit to Macau in 2014, describing how the overwhelming response in China to the political drama "House of Cards" has turned the actor into an instantly recognizable personality in Macau.

"I went to Macau and walked on stage and it was like some rock star had walked on stage," Spacey told Abu Dhabi's English-language publication, *The National*. "About 300 Chinese rushed the stage and spent the whole concert taking selfies with me in the background. I got back

to my hotel and asked my friends, 'What has happened?' They said, 'House of Cards. It's huge in China'."

Spacey was in Macau in 2014 to support the local chapter of Best Buddies International, a charity dedicated to helping people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The charity held a gala event in the Venetian Macao's ballroom.

His rise in popularity was all the more surprising to Spacey, the American actor recalls, as he was relatively unknown in Mainland China only a few years earlier.

"I did a film in China a

few years ago and I could walk down the street with its star, Daniel Wu. He's a huge star over there - it's like walking down the street with Tom Cruise. Next to him everyone just thought I was his bodyguard or something," he told *The National*.

The Chinese interest in an American TV drama that exposes the scandalous and ruthless rise of political figures may be unexpected in a country that strictly monitors its citizens' access to information and prohibits criticism of the ruling elites. Indeed, the show remains unavailable on Netflix, where "House of Cards" premiered, within Mainland China.

"I have heard, and understand totally, that many members of the Chinese government are fans," Spacey explained. "But my friends told me that for the common man in China, Francis [the character portrayed by Spacey] is perceived as someone fighting corruption."

"That took a while to get my head around," he added. **DB**

'Chaplin's World' honors cinema legend with first museum

AS Charlie Chaplin finished out his long life on his bucolic Swiss manor, the former silent film star worried about drifting into oblivion, his connoisseurs say.

Little chance of that. The legacy of the Hollywood legend behind "The Dictator" and "Modern Times" lives on today in the minds of stars like Johnny Depp and Robert Downey Jr., in Broadway plays and in the general cultural consciousness. But he never had bricks-and-mortar museum honoring his life and achievements.

That changed yesterday with the public opening of "Chaplin's World," a multimillion-dollar project in the Swiss village of Corsier-sur-Vevey. Its director-general says the museum is the first of its kind in the world to honor Chaplin, and has added value because it's at a place he called home for years.

The "Manoir de Ban" is where Chaplin lived his last 25 years raising children, writing music and movie scripts, and contemplating his legacy far from the



glare of the Hollywood spotlight. Visitors can see his trademark bowler hat and cane, a replica studio, black-and-white photographs from his career, and the bedroom where he died at age 88 in 1977.

About two dozen of his children and grandchildren were on hand for a ribbon-cutting ceremony Saturday, which was Chaplin's birthday.

Organizers are hoping for more than 300,000 visits per year, Pigeon said, boosted by a nearby chocolate factory and a medieval castle. **AP**

Station	Air quality
Roadside	20-40 Good
High Density Residential Area	30-50 Good
Ambient	15-35 Good

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

**BURUNDI** Four members of the country's ruling party were killed in an attack in continuing violence associated with the extended tenure of President Pierre Nkurunziza. The attack was on supporters of the ruling party who had gathered for an environmental clean-up exercise, said Jerome Ntakirutimana, chief of Mugamba district in Bururi province.

**CHILE** Heavy rains have caused severe flooding and cut water service to millions of people in the country's capital, Santiago. Authorities say the Rio Mapocho flooded several districts of the city and landslides killed at least one person.



BLOOMBERG

**GREECE**'s creditors are considering proposing additional austerity measures that would kick in if the nation missed budget targets, according to a European official familiar with the talks who asked not to be identified.

**GREECE** Pope Francis made an emotional visit to the Greek island of Lesbos Saturday, plucking 12 Syrian refugees to take back to Rome with him and draw attention to what he called Europe's most serious humanitarian crisis since the end of World War II.

**SYRIA** Ten children have been killed by rebel shelling in Aleppo this weekend, as the U.N. warned of "desperate" conditions inside a war-ravaged Palestinian refugee camp in Damascus.

**MYANMAR**'s new president pledged to continue efforts to release remaining political prisoners as part of the sweeping democratic changes his government envisions after a half-century of military control.