



FIBER OPTIC BROADBAND USAGE DOUBLES

A total of 166,300 households used the internet in 2015, accounting for 86.3 percent of total households

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Statistics indicate that monitoring stations on the Macau peninsula and in Taipa saw an improvement in daily air quality recordings

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WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA The Defense Ministry says a military plane was dispatched to one of China's new man-made islands in a disputed area of the South China Sea in what is believed to be the first openly acknowledged landing of its kind. [More on p11](#)

S. KOREA The country's president says there are signs that North Korea is preparing for a fifth nuclear bomb test amid reports of increased activity at the country's main nuclear test site.



JAPAN The U.S. military joined relief efforts in southern Japan for areas devastated by two powerful earthquakes as local rescuers comb through debris looking for 10 people still reported missing. Authorities say at least 42 people have died and nearly 1,100 were injured in the two quakes that hit the region near Kumamoto city Thursday and Sunday. [More on p13](#)

CAMBODIA The latest crackdown on illegal logging in Cambodia is "just a game" and big timber traders are winning, says Ouch Leng, a former government official who has spent two decades helping poor villagers fight poaching of precious tropical forests. [More on p12](#)



AUSTRALIA Actor Johnny Depp's wife Amber Heard pleads guilty to providing a false immigration document amid allegations she smuggled the couple's dogs to Australia, but managed to avoid jail time over what was dubbed the "war on terrier" debacle. [More on p13](#)

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JOANA MARQUES VIDAL VISITS MACAU

Attorney General: Judicial independence is vital

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New report says tourists spending more money in Las Vegas

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Fiber optic broadband usage doubles

A total of 166,300 households used the internet in 2015, accounting for 86.3 percent of total households, up by 2 percentage points year-on-year, according to information released by the Statistics and Census Service. Of these, households using mobile broadband to access the internet increased by 1.5 percent year-on-year to 141,400, while those using a fiber optic broadband connection doubled to 36,200.



Median spending on online shopping was MOP1,000 in Q4

Total internet penetration in 2015 amounted to 77.6 percent, up by 7.8 percentage points year-on-year, and that figure was proportional to around 470,800 internet users aged three and above. As many as 94.3 percent of these users accessed the internet daily, up by 0.9 percentage points from 2014.

The penetration rate for those aged 15 to 24 continued to hold the lead at 96.1 percent, up slightly by 0.2 percentage points

year-on-year.

As for the purpose of internet usage, 90.4 percent used the internet for communication and 76.8 percent for web entertainment, up by 3.5 and 1.2 percentage points respectively year-on-year. Meanwhile, online shoppers increased by 7 percent to 62,300.

Median spending on online shopping was MOP1,000 in the fourth quarter of 2015, similar to that in the corresponding quarter of 2014. Median spending on travel services and electronic products stood at MOP5,000 and MOP1,125, up by 53.8 percent and 127.3 percent year-on-year.

Mobile phone users increased

by 0.6 percent year-on-year to 559,500, with the mobile phone penetration rate standing at 92.2 percent, similar to that in 2014. Additionally, the proportion of the population using mobile phones to access the internet rose 11.8 percentage points year-on-year to 91.3 percent.

Owing to the greater functionality available on mobile phones and other devices, the proportion of households having computer equipment (152,200) decreased by 2.1 percentage points year-on-year to 79 percent. The computer penetration rate for those aged 3 and above increased by 0.5 percentage points year-on-year to 61.1 percent. **DB**

Aviation maintenance center slated for August

ZURICH-BASED Jet Aviation has announced that it is close to opening its new business jet maintenance, repair and overhaul services (MRO) facility at the Macau International Airport. The facility is expected to commence operations in August. The exact date for the commencement of operations will be subject to approval by the Macau government.

The new MRO facility will allow Jet Aviation to alleviate congestion in other airports in the region – notably Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) – by providing maintenance, aircraft cleaning and parking services in Macau. According to the aviation publication, AIN Online, Jet Aviation has previously found congestion restrictions at HKIA “challenging.”

Nigel Parker, managing director at the HKIA maintenance facility, told AIN Online that, “Jet Aviation Macau will help relieve some of the congestion experienced in the region by providing

quality MRO services from a proximate location.”

The company has leased some 4,000 square meters of hangar space and an additional 1,000 square meters of back shop space, including a wheel shop and a battery servicing facility.

In these spaces general maintenance of business jets will be performed under the company's Gulfstream and Dassault Falcon authorized service center credentials. These services will be undertaken in line with U.S. and European aviation safety regulations. Similar certification from Macau's Civil Aviation Authority is expected soon.

Jet Aviation's aircraft management and charter operations at HKIA received the 2015 Asian Business Aviation Association award for “best management company.” The management arm of the Jet Aviation now counts 331 aircraft among its fleet in the Asia-Pacific region. **DB**

SCHOLAR

Macau could become ‘a regional financial center’

A public lecture entitled ‘The Financial Markets in China and Hong Kong,’ hosted by the Faculty of Business Administration of the University of Saint Joseph, was held yesterday at the institution, attracting nearly 30 Master of Business Administration students from Portugal.

The talk highlighted a few aspects that are needed in order to improve the market in China and to make the stock market functional in allocating resources.

Wayne Wu, a professor at the City University of Hong Kong, claimed that Hong Kong is the seventh-largest stock exchange in the world, and the third-largest in Asia, with a market capitalization of over USD3 trillion with over 1,800 listed firms.

“Hong Kong has done really well. Although it's a very small territory, the financial market is well developed. [Hong Kong] helps the Chinese economy substantially too, especially in the region's early years. [...] Hong Kong was a major source of capital for many major companies,” Prof Wu revealed to the Times.

Conversely, he emphasized that Macau needs to diversify its economy, as it

is “vital” to the continuous growth of the city, especially after the recent gaming downturn.

“Having a functional capital market is also vital to Macau's future, so I think there's a lot of room to improve. It's not easy to imagine Macau being something like Hong Kong, but at least we can be a regional financial center for the Pearl River Delta.”

Meanwhile, Alexander Kocsis, a lawyer from Hylands Law Firm, discussed challenges that businesses face in mainland China. He stated that the overall business climate in China offers various opportunities. However, it's a platform where businesses have to be “quick on their feet,” especially foreign companies.

“There are a lot of challenges in terms of language, but there are certainly a lot of opportunities as well. But it does require people who can act fast,” says Kocsis, adding that Beijing's policy is “to encourage business and domestic consumption in the mainland.”

Moreover the lawyer believes that Macau also provides a variety of opportunities to business start-ups and that the SAR should expand business opportunities and its offerings.

“Macau was heavily reliant on casino gaming business. But even though there has been a drop, it's still quite strong. [...] The issue with Macau is that [the region] is accustomed to the gaming industry and I think it really needs to start looking a little bit further afield,” adds Kocsis. **Staff reporter**

It's not easy to imagine Macau being something like Hong Kong.

WAYNE WU



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DIRECTOR AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF_Paulo Coutinho paulocoutinho@macaudailytimes.com
MANAGING EDITOR_Paulo Barbosa paulo.barbosa@macaudailytimes.com
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS_Eric Sautedé, Leanda Lee, Severo Portela

DESIGN EDITOR_João Jorge Magalhães magalhaes@macaudailytimes.com | NEWSROOM AND CONTRIBUTORS
Albano Martins, Annabel Jackson, Daniel Beitter, Emilie Tran, Grace Yu, Irene Sam, Jacky I.F. Cheong, Jenny Lao-Phillips, João Palla Martins, Joseph Cheung, Juliet Risdon, Renato Marques, Richard Whitfield, Robert Carroll (Hong Kong correspondent), Rodrigo de Matos (cartoonist), Ruan Du Toit Bester, Sandra Norte (designer), Viviana Seguí | ASSOCIATE CONTRIBUTORS_JML Property, MacauHR, MdME Lawyers, PokerStars | NEWS AGENCIES_Associated Press, Bloomberg, Lusa News Agency, MacauHub, MacauNews, Xinhua | SECRETARY_Yang Dongxiao amy@macaudailytimes.com

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ADMINISTRATOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kowie Geldenhuys kowie@macaudailytimes.com

SECRETARY Juliana Cheang juliana@macaudailytimes.com

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Legal cooperation with Portugal depends 'mostly' on MSAR's request

Renato Marques

THE Portuguese Public Prosecutions Office is open to maintaining cooperation with Macau in judiciary matters and more specifically to maintaining Portuguese magistrates in the territory, said the Portuguese Attorney General, Joana Marques Vidal, in a press conference held yesterday.

The Attorney General added that this cooperation mostly depends on the MSAR's request to Portugal.

During a meeting held yesterday between the Attorney General and the local Prosecutor General Ip Son Sang, Vidal said that the agreement between Macau and Lisbon includes clarification of the criteria that allow the Portuguese Public Prosecutions Office magistrates to continue working in the MSAR.

The two parties agreed that the Portuguese entity could organize a list of candidates that would be sent to the Macau Public Prosecutions Office, which could then choose the candidate or candidates who best suit the needs of the territory.

Another of the most significant changes relates to the duration of the magistrates' tenures in Macau. From now on, Portuguese magistrates



operating in Macau will have a fixed tenure of four years, which could be renewed for a total combined tenure of eight years. Vidal also said, "Whenever

Portuguese magistrates operating in Macau will have a fixed tenure of four years

one of these commissions expires, the magistrate will be replaced by another, if that is requested by the Macau MP."

Another topic addressed in the meeting related to the

strategies to fight corruption, an issue that will also be targeted for further cooperation. This would be established through training and internships in specific areas, with Macau prosecutors to undergo training with the Portuguese MP's Central Department of Investigation and Penal Action (DCIAP).

Ip Son Sang said that the meeting addressed "matters and judiciary problems of common interest and specially in what concerns the operations of both MP institutions." He noted that there "was not yet any signed formal agreement."

'Judicial independence is important for both Portugal and Macau'

THE Portuguese Attorney General met yesterday with MSAR Chief Executive (CE) Chui Sai On at the government headquarters, Joana Marques Vidal said "the fundamental value of judicial independence is important for both Portugal and Macau," adding that she was pleased to see the high importance given [to the topic] by the SAR government and the Chief Executive."

The declaration from Joana Marques Vidal came in response to the CE's previous statement: "The government attaches great importance to judiciary independence, whose fundamental value was established over time and that is the corner-



Joana Marques Vidal and Chui Sai On

stone for the development of the territory."

The Chief Executive also added, "since the establishment of the MSAR, a close connection with Portugal was maintained

through establishing friendship connections in many fields, [including] the signing of several agreements on legal and judiciary cooperation." He concluded by saying that the magistrates from Portugal currently serving in Macau have obtained recognition and great respect from the population.

Also attending the meeting was the Secretary for Administration and Justice, Sonia Chan, who expressed satisfaction with the fact that Portugal continues to send magistrates to Macau. "I believe that the two territories will strengthen exchanges and cooperation in judiciary matters," she added. **RM**

Q&A JOANA MARQUES VIDAL PORTUGAL'S ATTORNEY GENERAL

'We cannot allow a large number of magistrates to come

- You said earlier that the Portuguese Prosecutions Office is available to continue cooperating with Macau SAR and to send Portuguese magistrates to work in the territory. Will there be any limit to the number?

- That number was not defined clearly. But it is certain that for the time being and with consideration to the short number of staff that the Portuguese Prosecutions Office possesses, we cannot allow a large number of magistrates to come [to the territory].

Another of the reasons that justifies why we didn't establish a fixed ceiling is because the number available tends to be flexible. We hope that in the next 2, 3 or 4 years we would have more staff that will allow us, in case of solicitation by the MSAR Prosecutor, to consider the possibility of sending more. We will consider all the requests from the MSAR Prosecutor and we will attend to those within our own working circumstances.

- Are the magistrates currently operating

in Macau going to be treated according to any transitory rule?

- Regarding those magistrates, their situation will be properly considered by the Superior Council of the Public Prosecutions Office, that is, I can't really answer clearly what is going to happen. But I can guarantee that their cases will be fairly and properly considered.

There are several factors to consider including the fulfillment of the new requirements that have now been established. The Council will consider, according to the ques-

ts received, whether it is possible to decide the permanence and continuation of service of magistrates in this situation.

- One of the areas covered in the agreement is training. How will this cooperation formally take place?

- The training area was addressed in a more generic perspective. There is mutual interest from both Prosecutions Offices and there is an availability on the Portuguese side to allow Portuguese magistrates to come [to Macau] to perform training



sessions within the framework of the Centre for Legal Studies (CEJ). There is also the possibility of the Portuguese MP hosting, for periods of time (not yet set), internships with a more practical nature, namely, allowing magistrates from the MSAR MP to follow the

processes and activity in Portugal.

There are several possible approaches to training, including the establishment of a protocol between the two magistrates' training schools or in a more direct way through cooperation between the MPs.

TOURISM

Sports Bureau promotes Grand Prix in Shanghai

THE Sports Bureau (ID) has begun its publicity and promotional campaign to the 63rd Macau Grand Prix, which will be held from November 17 to 20 this year.

ID was invited by the Formula One Chinese Grand Prix organizers to conduct promotional activities at the Shanghai International Circuit's Fountain Plaza during the F1 race that was held on Sunday and won by German driver Nico Rosberg. The ID says that local organizers are regularly invited to participate in the Chinese F1 activities due to "a positive relationship" between the two circuits.

At the F1 Chinese Grand Prix in Shanghai, the ID set up a booth to promote the Macau Grand Prix using the theme colors of black and yellow – the signature colors of Macau's racing competition.



The booth included a collection of Grand Prix photos, the history and notable legends of the local race, as well as a program for this year's event.

According to the statement, the ID aims to make sure Shanghai citizens and international motorsports fans know more about the Macau Grand Prix, and

thereby aim to generate higher attendance at the event. At the same time, organizers hope this will further strengthen ties with the Shanghai track in the joint promotion of motorsports.

Last year's title race at the Macau Grand Prix was won by Swedish-born Felix Rosenqvist.

HEALTH

Medical forum gathers local and international experts

THE 30th Sino-Luso International Medical Forum finished on Sunday after a three-day international medical symposium at the Landmark ICBC Centre.

The event was organized by the Macau University of Science and Technology (MUST) and the Macau Healthcare Management and Promotion Association, with around 300 medical staff from public and private hospitals and clinics attending presentations conducted by medical experts from Macau, Portugal, Hong Kong, the US and Sweden.

Mário Évora, clinical director and head of the Cardiology division at Conde S. Januário General Hospital, told the Times that the forum paves the way for Macau's medical staff to discover "good ideas that can be good solutions" for specific health problems in the region, especially given that the academic level of participants "usually is very high."

"We have excellent speakers coming from abroad, and it's particularly important for us in Macau because we do not have at this moment [...] an academy of medicine," said Évora.

Billy Chan, vice president of the Sino-Luso International Medical

Forum, emphasized the importance of up-to-date information for the professional development of health care practitioners.

He also pointed out that the symposium is an opportunity to establish cooperation and build bridges on an international level.

"This particular forum is interesting because it is a multi-disciplinary approach [...] this time we bring in a variety of very smart experts in the field from overseas to Macau."

Chan also revealed that the seminar would be expanded into an Asia-Pacific forum but would remain under the umbrella of the Sino-Luso International forum.

"We want to see this to continue. [...] So for the next one [forum] in May we'll be inviting people from Cambodia. People will also be coming from Belgium, the UK, outside the Portuguese-speaking countries," said Dr Chan, who is also the director of the Center of Excellence for Medical Professional Development at MUST.

Moreover, the director said that the forum will be bringing Chinese experts and government officials to Portugal for a meeting with Lusophone countries' medical experts.

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ENVIRONMENT

Macau and Taipa record air improvement in 2015

THE Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) released a statement yesterday detailing the state of the local environment in 2015. The DSEC concluded that there had been marginal change from the previous year except in the area of air quality, where the Macau peninsula and Taipa recorded a marked increase in the number of “good air” quality days, and Taipa and Coloane registered an increase in the number of “poor” air quality days.

All four monitoring stations on the Macau peninsula and Taipa saw an improvement in daily air quality recordings. The station at Rua do Campo showed notable improvement, with the number of “good” air quality days rising by 87 year-on-year to 221, and the number of “poor” air quality days falling by 34.

Data from the monitoring stations also showed a year-on-year decrease in the number of days that exceeded the recom-



mended limit for fine suspended particulates (PM2.5) in the air. Additionally, the occurrence of acid rain was down by 11 days year-on-year to 66 days in 2015.

The annual average air temperature rose by 0.5 degrees Celsius year-on-year to 23.2 degrees – the highest mean temperature since records began in 1952, says the DSEC.

Total precipitation was 1,341 millimeters (mm), down by 242.8

mm year-on-year. Meanwhile, the total duration of sunshine or insolation time was also down, dropping by 174.2 hours year-on-year to 1,696.9 hours.

Total water consumed was 84,939,000 cubic meters in 2015, up by 1.7 percent year-on-year. Water consumption by households (36,324,000 cubic meters) and the business sector (43,145,000 cubic meters) increased by 3 percent and 1

■ The occurrence of acid rain was down by 11 days year-on-year to 66 days in 2015

percent respectively, while consumption by the government sector (5,470,000 cubic meters) decreased by 1 percent.

The Waste Water Treatment Plants treated an average of 192,965 cubic meters of wastewater per day, down by 11 percent year-on-year.

A total of 229,004 tonnes of domestic waste and 124,537 tonnes of waste from the business sector were collected in 2015, up by 4.6 percent and 1.3 percent respectively. **DB**

Regional youth sports activity ends today



The Sichuan-Macao Youth Sports Exchange Activity is ending today. The southwest Chinese province sent a group of 36 people to Macau to participate in the five-day event, which started on April 15. The teenage athletes exhibited their talent in four sports – synchronized swimming, martial arts, table tennis and badminton – while coaches arranged for a selection of physical training programs for the participants. The event was originally established in 2009 after an agreement was reached by both regions’ sports departments.

Hole in Taipa road barricaded by police

A hole was found on Sunday on Estr. Alm. Marques Esparteiro, in Taipa, close to Rotunda Dr. Carlos Augusto Correa Pães d’Assumpção, Macao Daily News reported. The hole, which is about one square meter in size, opened up at one of the sewer manholes. The situation was reported by a driver. The Public Security Police Force had already arranged a set of barricades surrounding the hole to prevent vehicles from getting too close to it. The causes of this occurrence are now under investigation. Meanwhile the PSP has posited that it might have been due to one of the sewer manhole covers having fallen.

Secretary Chan: ‘Transparency to fight corruption’

The Secretary for Administration and Justice, Sonia Chan, said in an interview with TDM that the government can create more transparent mechanisms to fight corruption in the MSAR. She told the public broadcaster that they are trying to rationalize public services and increase the efficiency of government workers through the merging of several public departments. Chan added that it was inevitable that some positions of public servants would need to be adjusted. “Some interests might be stirred up in the midst of an administrative reform, but we have to review the current public services system as we have to ensure a smooth implementation of government policies, while at the same time booting public servants’ momentum at work,” Chan clarified in the interview.

UM students awarded in 2016 ‘Model European Union’



THE 2016 Asia Pacific Regional Model European Union was held last weekend at the Hong Kong Baptist University. The event, which was co-organized by the European Union Academic Programme in Macao (EUAP-M) and its counterpart organization in Hong Kong (EUAP-HK), brought together 22 students to discuss the current migrant and refugee wave affecting Europe and to try to reach a set of conclusions.

As part of the event, students were required to discuss proposals and negotiate with each other, all the while staying as close to their designated country’s foreign policy as possible and seeking to secure the greatest benefit to their nation in the event of an agreement. The event was a simulation of the European Council and, as in the case of the real council, agreements are usually adopted unanimously.

The EUAP-M participated in the two-day event with three teams of

two students, involving five students from the University of Macau (UM) and one from the Macau University of Science and Technology. The six students competed against other students from mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, New Zealand, Singapore and Thailand.

UM students Nick Wauben and Han Xiangzhi, who jointly represented Italy in the simulation, won the best team award. Meanwhile, José Miguel Nuño de la Rosa Ortiz, also from UM, won the best individual award for his representation of Denmark.

Also present at the simulation in a chairing capacity was Dr Stern Verhoeven of UM’s Faculty of Law.

Established in 2012, the EUAP-M is the product of a partnership between UM and the Institute of European Studies of Macau, and is co-financed by the European Union (EU). It aims to raise awareness of the EU among Macau’s general public and students at all levels. **DB**

TRADE

Booming Portuguese cherry exports target Macau

CHERRY production in the Portuguese region of Fundão is “blooming”, mostly due to a new strategy that aims to attract tourists to the up-country region.

According to the Fundão Mayor, Paulo Fernandes, “the business is now worth over EUR20 million (MOP180 million) per year” and production fields keep multiplying.

That means good news for a region traditionally sustained by subsistence agriculture but which is now evolving due to local and foreign investment.

Around 15 percent of the region’s annual produce is being exported. Angola, Brazil, England and the northern European countries are the major export markets. Macau and the Middle East are other regions where the number of contacts is growing and exports are looking to increase in the near future.

The mayor told online journal “Dinheiro Vivo” that in the past six years the growth rate has been about 10 percent year-on-year, a trend that he expects to continue with the addition of “several new products and by-products of the business.”

The secret seems to be in the “branding” or, as Mr Fernandes says, “in connecting a good product to a good brand,” as this provides stability and creates a safety barrier to allow the business to grow. **RM**



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Air Macau changes program requirements to include all residents

Air Macau. The region's flagship carrier changed those requirements to "holder of Macau permanent ID with valid passport."

The program will train between eight and ten young local cadets to be Air Macau pilots. It will reportedly cost the airline around MOP20 million to train the pilots over two and a half years. Applications can be submitted until May 15, and the selection of the candidates will be made between April and June.

Asked last week to comment on the program's requirements, lawyer Carlos Lobo said that both the Basic Law and the Labor Law prohibit discrimination of residents on grounds of nationality in relation to access to employment. However, there may be exceptions, as long as they are properly justified.

"If the company is able to justify why the candidates need to be Chinese nationals in addition to being Macau residents, perhaps those general principles do not apply," he said. "Prima facie, and without any information about the reasons for such a requirement, I would say that this is of dubious legality," the lawyer added. **PB**

Siza Vieira rejoins Hotel Estoril project



Siza Vieira pictured in Macau

Alvaro Siza Vieira, one of Portugal's most recognized architects, will visit Macau in June or July, a source from the Secretariat for Social Affairs and Culture told Radio Macau. In August 2015 it was announced that Siza Vieira

had accepted an invitation to revamp the Hotel Estoril. The architect was supposed to visit Macau in October 2015, but that visit never happened. Now it is being announced that Siza Vieira will rejoin the project and will collaborate with the government to design the building that could replace the Hotel Estoril. The project had been halted pending the eventual classification of the former Hotel Estoril, which is located in Tap Seac Square.

Wong Sio Chak member of gambling commission

The Secretary for Security, Wong Sio Chak, will become a member of a commission specializing in gambling issues. According to a notice published yesterday in the Official Gazette, the secretary will join the commission presided over by the Chief Executive, Chui Sai On.



Screenshots of the announcement posted by Air Macau last week and the one captured yesterday (right)

AIR Macau has changed the application criteria for the 'Macau Local Cadet Program' after the Times reported on Friday that it required candidates to be "Macau permanent ID card holders with Macau SAR passports." The require-

ment effectively excluded all residents not of Chinese nationality and was raising questions among residents.

During a press conference on Saturday, Air Macau's Chief Executive Officer, Chen Hong, said that the candidates must be 'locals,'

meaning permanent residents. "As long as you are a local permanent resident and meet other requirements, you should be eligible to apply," he said.

However, the CEO's explanation contradicts the requirements previously listed by



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GAMING

Report says tourists spending more money in Las Vegas



Sally Ho, Las Vegas

TOURISTS are spending more money on their trips to Sin City, according to a new report by the Las Vegas tourism board.

The Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority issued its visitor profile study this month, which showed average spending in most expense categories increased in 2015, including lodging, food and drinks, local transportation, shows and sightseeing. The length of the stays inched up, to an average of 4.4 days for the record

42.3 million visitors last year. In 2014, Las Vegas trips lasted 4.2 days.

The data is based on information volunteered by a total of 3,600 random tourists polled at various casino-hotel properties throughout the year. The agency that commissioned the yearly survey is funded by county room taxes generated by the hotels it considers partners.

Kevin Bagger, executive director of the tourism board's research center, said he interprets the latest numbers as a sign that visitors are choosing to spend more for a quality exper-

ience, as opposed to the costs of such expenses going up overall. Nearly all survey participants reported being either "very" or "somewhat" satisfied with their trip.

"Our visitors are comfortable spending more," Bagger said.

The largest jump in spending was for shows. On an average trip, tourists spent USD61.95 to see some type of performance, including lounge acts, headliners or comedians. It amounted to a 30 percent increase from the \$47.56 they spent in 2014, although the overall percentage of visitors who attended

such a show went down to 61 percent. In 2014, 65 percent of visitors took in a show.

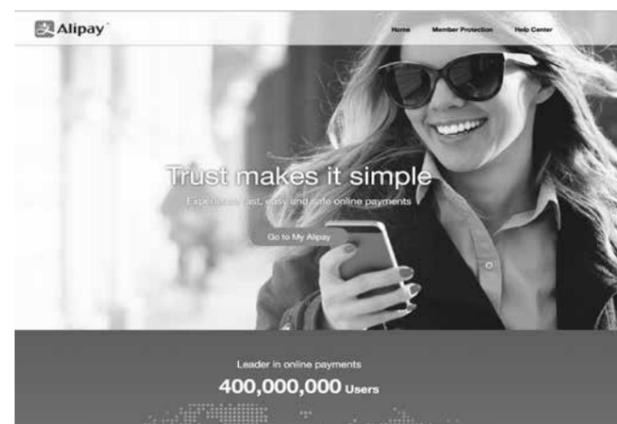
The average cost of lodging also saw a significant increase, with visitors reporting spending \$102.64 per night, up nearly 19 percent from the year before. The figure did not include rooms that were bought through a vacation package or was a complimentary offering from the hotels. The price of vacation packages did go up, too, by about 5 percent to \$857.43.

Among the reported categories, only the amount of shopping dollars for an average trip went down. The average tourist spent \$122.66 per trip shopping, an 18 percent decline from the year before. This marks a five-year low for the shopping category, while hotels, food and drinks, transportation, shows and sightseeing all hit a five-year high in 2015.

Citing the recent strength of the U.S. dollar, Bagger said he attributes the shopping dip to a 3 percent decline in international tourists, who tend to shop more on their trips to Las Vegas than domestic visitors. **AP**

INTERNET

Alipay owner said to start IPO Process as soon as this year



ALIBABA Group Holding Ltd.'s finance affiliate is planning an initial public offering on Shanghai's main board in what could be China's highest IPO valuation since 2010, according to two people familiar with the matter.

Zhejiang Ant Small & Micro Financial Services Group Co. has been profitable for three years, enabling it to meet the listing requirements, and may begin the process as soon as this year, the people said, requesting not to be named because the matter is private. The owner of Alipay, China's most popular payments system, prefers a dual listing with Hong Kong if it gets regulatory approval, the people said.

Ant Financial, which is controlled by Alibaba founder Jack Ma, dominates payments on China's biggest e-commerce platforms through Alipay and also manages Yu'E Bao, the nation's largest money-market fund. The company is currently targeting a private round of fundraising for at least USD3.5 billion at a valuation of about \$60 billion, people familiar with the matter said in April.

Alipay, one of the more recognizable names in online finance and consumer payments, would be the largest Web player by far on mainland bourses.

"China doesn't have an Internet company of this scale and influence, so it could enjoy a significant premium in value if it lists in the country," said Li Muzhi, a Hong Kong-based analyst at Arete Research Services LLP. "A lot of the potential retail investors are also Ant Financial's users."

Ant Financial declined to comment in an e-mailed statement.

China's stock listing rules requires companies to be profitable for at least three years and accumulate a profit of more than 30 million yuan (\$4.6 million). The entities also need to generate accumulated cash flow of at least 50 million yuan, or post a total of 300 million yuan for revenue in the latest three years, according to the regulations. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

SANDS CHINA PROCURES MORE FROM LOCAL SMES



Sands China Ltd is expanding its support of local Macau businesses in 2016 through its Local Supplier Support Programme. The company is expanding its list of products and services to be procured from local suppliers to 353 items for the second phase of the program.

The long-term initiative focuses on three types of local businesses as identified in collabo-

ration with the Macao Chamber of Commerce: small and micro companies, "Made in Macau" companies, and Macau young entrepreneurs.

Since the launch of its Local Supplier Support Programme last year, Sands has purchased products from 49 new local suppliers of the three aforementioned types, totalling nearly MOP20 million, states a press release from the company. From more than 160 connections made with potential new suppliers through the program, nearly one third have resulted in successful purchases.

Sands China and the Macao Chamber of Commerce jointly announced the launch of the program in July 2015.

PEPSI REDUCING RELIANCE ON COLAS FOR SALES

PepsiCo CEO Indra Nooyi said yesterday the company is reshaping its product lineup to better reflect the growing interest in healthy eating and noted it has reduced its reliance on colas for sales.

The maker of Frito-Lay snacks, Mountain Dew, Naked juices and Quaker Oats now gets less than 25 percent of its global sales from soda, Nooyi said. And she said just 12 percent of global sales come from its namesake soda.

The remarks underscore PepsiCo's recent shift in tone as the world's biggest soda brands have been pressured by intensifying competition and a bad image for fueling weight gain in markets such as the U.S.

With soda consumption continuing to decline domestically, PepsiCo and Coca-Cola have been trying to push up sales by weaning people off cheaper options like 2-liter bottles and toward single-serve options or snazzier mini cans and aluminum bottles that fetch more per ounce.



CEM OPENS REGISTRATION FOR MACAU ENERGY SAVING CONTEST

Organized by CEM and the Energy Sector Development Office, the annual Macau Energy Saving Contest aims to promote energy conservation in the hotel and property management industry.

This year, CEM will continue to hold the contest to increase awareness of energy conservation among citizens, hotels and property management companies.

Since its launch in 2009, the Macau Energy Saving Contest has encouraged savings of over 116.4 million kWh of electricity in seven years, according to a press release.

Co-organized by the General Residents Association of Macau, the Macau Property



Management Business Association and the Macau Hoteliers & Innkeepers Association, the six-month contest is now open for registration and includes two categories: "Public Building Facilities Group" and "Hotel Group." Comparisons will be based on the six consecutive billing months of electricity consumption from May to October 2016, which is the same period of time used in 2015.

BRAZIL

Embraer delivers 44 jets in first quarter



BRAZILIAN aeronautical company Embraer delivered 44 jets in the first quarter of 2016, 21 for commercial aviation companies and 23 executive aircraft, the company said in a statement issued last week.

The statement said the delivery of these 44 aircraft represented an increase of 37.5 percent over the number in the first quarter of 2015, when it delivered 32 aircraft, 20 for commercial aviation companies and 12 executive jets.

On March 31 Embraer's firm orders were worth USD21.9 billion.

The company also reported that the main highlight of the quarter was the public presentation of the E190-E2, the first model of the second generation of the E-Jets family of commercial aircraft. **MDT/Macauhub**

Angola overtakes Nigeria to become Africa's largest oil producer

ANGOLA overtook Nigeria as the leading producer of African oil in March, according to the latest monthly report on the oil market released by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

Angolan oil production in March, according to secondary sources, totaled 1.778 million barrels per day (bpd), a real increase of 18,300 bpd, while Nigeria dropped by 39,400 bpd to 1.722 million bpd.

Based on direct communication from producing states, OPEC announced that in March Angola produced 1.782 million bpd, a real increase of 15,000 bpd, and Nigeria reported a drop in production of 67,500 bpd to 1.677 million bpd.

March was the second time in five months that An-



gola overtook Nigeria in oil production after in November 2015 it produced 1.722 million bpd, a monthly increase of 115,000 barrels per day, against a Ni-

gerian production of 1.607 million bpd with a real fall of 250,000 barrels per day.

OPEC also said that production of member countries in March stood at an

average of 32.25 million bpd, a marginal increase of 15,000 pbd, and significant

decreases in the United Arab Emirates, Libya and Nigeria. **MDT/Macauhub**

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In crackdown on celebrity, China bans stars' kids from shows



A woman plays bubbles with her child at a residential compound in Beijing

Christopher Bodeen, Beijing

CHINA is banning the children of famous entertainers from appearing on hugely popular reality shows, as the country continues efforts to try to prevent the manufacture of child stars.

The ban by the government's media regulator also covers appearances by the stars' children on chat shows and reports about them on entertainment programs, the official Xinhua News Agency reported

yesterday.

Reality shows featuring attractive stars and their well-dressed, fashionably coifed and often somewhat precocious children traveling or performing tasks together have grown extremely popular with Chinese viewers in recent years.

However, apparently concerned with the growth of celebrity culture, the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television ordered in July that producers

of the dozens of reality shows on satellite channels cut back on appearances by minors and tamp down parts of the shows seen as attempting to make them stars on their own.

Xinhua cited the administration's latest order as saying, "Reality shows should pay attention to strengthening protection over minors and endeavor to reduce the participation of minors."

It said reality show producers have been ordered to drop the "mistaken notion" that they

should use well known entertainers to attract viewers. "Do not permit shows to become venues for displaying fame and wealth," Xinhua cited the order as saying.

A staffer at Hunan Satellite, whose "Dad Where Are We Going?" is one of the biggest hits in the "celebrities and their children" genre, said the station was aware of the administration's order. Speaking on condition of anonymity because she wasn't authorized to speak to reporters, she said

a decision had not yet been made on whether to order another season of the program.

Chinese media regulators say they see their task as reining in programs seen as overly materialistic or encouraging the worship of celebrities who might compete with role models promoted by the ruling Communist Party.

Reality shows featuring attractive stars and their well-dressed, fashionably coifed and precocious children traveling or performing tasks together have grown extremely popular

Viewers have increasingly turned to programming on more independent satellite television stations and the Internet, where regulators have sought to impose stronger control over live streaming programs usually featuring young women chatting, playing video games or simply going about their everyday tasks. AP

Twitter users concerned over executive appointment

CHINESE Twitter users have expressed concerns over the company's appointment of a China regional executive who has a background working with the country's military and state security apparatus.

Since last week, when Kathy Chen was appointed Twitter's first managing director for China, Chinese users of the U.S. microblogging site have raised concerns over Chen's past links to the Chinese government and wondered if their freedom of speech on the platform would be compromised.

Although blocked in China, Twitter is a popular platform for Chinese — especially those living overseas — to freely express themselves in their native language. While China has produced homegrown equivalents such as Weibo, the government exerts strict controls over what can be said on them and by whom.

"Twitter has vast amounts of users' data. Given that U.S. tech firms have in the past kowtowed to China, and given the military background of Kathy Chen,

it's only reasonable for the Chinese users of Twitter to be worried about the future," He Qinglian, a prominent overseas-based Chinese political activist, wrote on her blog. She urged the U.S. Congress to conduct a hearing on Chen's appointment.

Wen Yunchao, a U.S.-based political dissident, noted on his Twitter account that Chen had worked for the People's Liberation Army for seven years and later headed an anti-virus software company in a joint venture with connections to the Ministry of Public Security.

"It's only reasonable to question the direction of a company by its personnel decisions," Wen wrote.

Chen began working as a technical engineer for a military research institute in 1987 after graduating with a computer science degree from North Jiaotong University, according to Chinese media reports.

She went on to work for DEC, Compaq and 123COM before leading the anti-virus software company Jinchen, a joint

venture whose local partner was owned indirectly by the Ministry of Public Security.

In an emailed statement, Twitter said it was usual for the Chinese government to assign graduates to jobs in the 1980s. Chen's computer science degree made her a prime candidate for a job as a junior engineer in the People's Liberation Army, the company said.

"When the Chinese economy further opened up with reform in the early 1990s, Kathy chose to pursue her passion for a technology career by switching to the private sector in 1994," the statement said.

It also said that her role with Jinchen was to represent the interests of majority shareholder Computer Associates, a U.S. tech firm, and that she "never worked for the Ministry of Public Security."

Chen, who will be based in Hong Kong, was most recently an executive with Microsoft Asia-Pacific Research and Development Group before being hired by Twitter.

"I am really excited to find more ways to create value for our advertisers, enterprises, creators, influencers and our developers, and partners as well," Chen said in a video posted on Twitter.

She has not publicly responded to Twitter user concerns. AP

500 kids sick at school built on toxic soil

CHINESE authorities are investigating a report that close to 500 students became sick with illnesses including cancer at a school built near former chemical plants in eastern China.

State broadcaster CCTV said that high concentrations of some toxic chemicals may have caused cases of lymphoma and leukemia among the students.

The Education Ministry said yesterday that it has sent a team to investigate, while local officials in Jiangsu province said they will re-examine the issue after initially denying any soil quality issues in interviews with CCTV.

China has been wracked by public health scares. Last week, hundreds of officials across the country were punished over the sale of faulty children's vaccines. AP

CHINA'S navy dispatched a military plane to one of the country's manmade islands in the disputed South China Sea, the Defense Ministry said, in what is believed to be the first openly acknowledged mission of its kind.

A brief statement on the ministry's website said the plane was on patrol when it was diverted to Fiery Cross Reef on Sunday morning to pick up three injured construction workers.

The plane then flew to Sanya on China's southernmost island province of Hainan where it landed at Fenghuang International Airport, the ministry said.

Details about the plane and where it was based were not given, although a photo accompanying the report showed a four propeller Y-8 transport being met by an ambulance.

The Global Times newspaper said Sunday's flight marked "the first time a Chinese military plane has openly landed on Yongshujiao," using the Chinese name for Fiery Cross Reef. The speed with which the mission was accomplished was a testament to China's long-term policy of patrolling over the South China Sea, said the paper, a nationalist tabloid published by the ruling Communist Party mouthpiece People's Daily.

China completed the runway on Fiery Cross Reef last year and in January flew three commercial jets to the island as a test.

That move drew complaints from Vietnam, which along with four other governments is enmeshed a heated dispute with Beijing over large parts of the South China Sea. Hanoi accused China of threatening the safety of



An aerial view of Taiwan's Taiping island

SOUTH CHINA SEA

Chinese navy dispatches military plane to disputed man-made island

civilian flights by failing to properly inform its aviation authorities of the flights beforehand.

The U.S. also complained that the flights raised tensions and reiterated its calls for a halt to land reclamation and militarization of outposts in the area. The Philippines, which also claims islands and reefs controlled by China, criticized the move.

The new islands in the South China Sea have become a source of tension between Beijing and

Washington, which refuses to view them legally as islands entitled to territorial seas and special economic zones. While the United States is not a claimant state, it says it has a national interest in the peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea and in freedom of navigation in waters that are critical for world trade.

The United States and China are making some high-profile military moves in the South Chi-

na Sea — each sending a message to the other that it won't back down.

Last week, U.S. Defense Secretary Ash Carter, after announcing stepped-up cooperation with the Philippines, flew to the John C. Stennis aircraft carrier as it headed back on patrol in the sea.

Carter stood alongside his Philippine counterpart, Voltaire Gazmin, as they watched U.S. Navy fighter jets launch into vi-

vid blue skies about 70 nautical miles west of the island of Luzon.

The Pentagon also said it was aware of the reports that China has deployed Sheyang J-11 fighter jets to Woody Island in the Paracel islands. Although such deployments are nothing new, Pentagon spokesman Cmdr. Bill Urban said they are "less the issue than the signal it sends of how far out of step China's actions are with the aspirations of the region." AP

HONG KONG | ANALYSIS

BT will prosper if Li Ka-shing has to hang up on UK deal

Leila Abboud

EUROPE'S antitrust cop Margarethe Vestager has moved the goalposts. Telecoms, cable and pay-TV bosses in Britain will have to revisit M&A strategies. Expect new attempted pairings to emerge and for BT to be the short-term winner.

After nearly a year of debate, the 10.25 billion pound (USD14.5 billion) effort by Li Ka-Shing's Hutchison to buy Telefonica's O2 has failed to win over Vestager and is expected to be rejected within weeks, Bloomberg News reports.

That's despite Hutchison concessions that arguably went further than those approved by the EU in ear-

lier deals in Germany, Austria, and Ireland. It agreed to rent out 40 percent of the combined operator's network capacity to Rupert Murdoch's Sky and John Malone's Virgin Media, and to host grocer Tesco's mobile venture.

It wasn't enough for Vestager, who appears to have broken from her predecessor in deciding mobile virtual network operators (MVNOs) - the ones renting the capacity - don't guarantee healthy competition. The argument runs that they'll always be constrained on prices they can offer consumers by the terms of the rental agreement.

From the point of view of Hutchison's Three, though, offering too much more

would sap the interest in doing the consolidation at all. The point of these so-called "market repair" deals is to lessen pricing pressure by taking a competitor out of the mix (Hutchison also lacked scale). Agreeing a remedy that goes beyond renting capacity and which creates a new rival defeats the object.

Plus Hutchison says no company in Britain wants to be a new mobile network operator because of the cost. They have a point. For example, Sky's strength is pay-TV while mobile is an add-on, so it would prefer not to spend billions on a network. It would rather rent, explaining why it backed Hutchison's deal.

Sky will now - reluctantly

- have to study whether it should indeed buy a mobile network, since that would side-step Vestager's painful scrutiny. It could always bid for O2 itself, though probably not at the same price as Hutchison because of a relative lack of synergies. Analysts estimate Sky could offer 9 billion pounds by loading up on debt and issuing 10 percent of the price in new equity.

Such a move would be a big strategic change for Sky, though. The Murdochs have long been wary of the investment needed in telecoms.

Looking at Hutchison, it could switch attention to broadband provider TalkTalk, with a 3 billion pounds enterpri-



Li Ka-Shing

se value, or even sell to TalkTalk if it decides to give up on Britain. But buying TalkTalk wouldn't get round the problem that Hutchison is simply too small in U.K. mobile to compete effectively with leaders BT and Vodafone.

You'd expect Vodafone to be a winner from a failed Three-O2 deal, given that boss Vittorio Colao was such a vocal opponent. While it's true that it won't face a bigger, tougher competitor in Three - and has more options in any future

round of deals - it still has to address its short-comings in broadband and pay-TV at a time of convergence.

So the person with most reason to crow today is BT boss Gavin Patterson. He's already squeezed through his deal to buy EE (bringing together Britain's biggest fixed-line and mobile operators by sales). He'll be able to start the convergence trend in Britain on his own terms, while his competitors cope with the disarray left by Vestager. Bloomberg

Elaine Kurtenbach, Phnom Penh

OUCH LENG

Defender of Cambodia's dwindling forests wins Goldman Prize

THE latest crackdown on illegal logging in Cambodia is "just a game" and big timber traders are winning, says Ouch Leng, a former government official who has spent two decades helping poor villagers fight poaching of precious tropical forests.

Leng's tenacious and perilous crusade to stop illegal logging and stop land concessions from forcing Cambodians out of their homes has won him a Goldman Environmental Prize, which honors grassroots environmental activism.

The award follows recent announcements that Cambodian authorities plan to expand protected areas of the Southeast Asian country's forests by about a third. Long-ruling Prime Minister Hun Sen, whom many consider a backer of the biggest logging group, Try Pheap, recently said he had authorized rocket attacks on illegal loggers.

But Ouch Leng and other critics say reports of raids and other high-profile shows of force against illegal loggers belie the lack of arrests or prosecutions of those cutting and trading in illegal timber.

Asked if the crackdown is for real, he said, "It's just a game."

"Nobody was arrested. The media was set up," Leng said during an interview. "The Ministry of the Environment doesn't care. They never go inside the jungle to patrol or arrest illegal loggers."

Much of the timber trade is protected by military units that profit from deals with the loggers, and the stakes of fighting it can be deadly. At least five deaths in Cambodia have been linked to illegal logging since 2007, including that of Leng's fellow environmentalist Chut Wutthy, who was fatally shot in 2012 while showing journalists a logging camp in the southwest's Koh Kong province.

It's a risk shared with other environmental crusaders defying powerful companies and government backers around the world. Honduran indigenous leader and environmentalist Berta Caceres, a winner of a 2015 Goldman Prize, was killed by assailants who broke into her home last month. She had received death threats from police, soldiers and local landowners for her efforts to block construction of a dam.

Leng said he accepts the risks as part of his mission.

"I don't expect the government to allow me to live long," he said.

Leng wins USD175,000 for this year's Goldman Prize, as do five other winners:

— Zuzana Caputova, a lawyer who led a campaign to shut down a toxic waste dump in Slovakia.

— Maxima Acuna, a Peruvian



Cambodian environmentalist Ouch Leng

farmer fighting major mining companies' efforts to take her land for a gold and copper mine.

— Destiny Watford, a Baltimore, Maryland, student who helped prevent construction of a trash incinerator in her area.

— Edward Loure, a Tanzanian communal land rights leader.

— Luis Jorge Rivera Herrera, who campaigned to create a nature reserve in Puerto Rico to protect endangered leatherback sea turtles.

Leng travels into the forest armed only with a camera and a GPS locator, tracking illegal loggers. At times he works undercover by cooking for loggers, hauling cargo on docks or posing as a tourist.

Showing determination early

Ouch Leng is one of a handful of people fighting to stop forest destruction in Cambodia.

MARCUS HARDTKE
GERMAN ENVIRONMENTALIST

on, Leng excelled in his studies in mostly rural Takeo province. When his village chief denied him a permit to travel to Phnom Penh to take university exams, he says he hid on a sugar cane train to get to the city. After studying law, he was assigned to the Foreign Ministry, and later to the Ministry of Planning. Drawn into politics, he moved to a nongovernmental organization and began investigating illegal logging.

Marcus Hardtke, a German environmentalist who lives in Cambodia, says the prize is well-deserved.

"Ouch Leng is one of a handful of people fighting to stop forest destruction in Cambodia," Hardtke said. "It is up to activists like Leng and affected local communities to make a stand against the short-sighted, greed-driven policies of the Phnom Penh elite. They are doing just that, often at great personal risk."

Lately, Leng's attention has focused on a conflict between local villagers and a Chinese company that is developing a massive resort on a choice swath of coastland near the Thai border in Koh Kong province.

Residents complain they were forced off their land and lost their main livelihood of fishing when they were relocated inland after the government granted a 99-year land lease to

China's Tianjin Union Development Group Co., which has built a golf resort and plans a yacht club, casino, villas and other luxury facilities.

"Before, those people could earn \$2,500 a year, or about \$100 a night fishing. Now they cannot fish because the Chinese company grabbed everything. They have nothing to eat," Leng said.

The United Nations says land rights conflicts have become Cambodia's No. 1 human rights issue. Land concessions have forced villagers to make way for plantations and other projects. Meant to promote development, such arrangements often have left communities worse off, critics say.

They've also accelerated the loss of precious, diverse forests of increasingly rare tropical timber, as loggers push ever deeper into protected areas and also clear-cut land of less valuable wood that is sometimes sold as fuel for factories.

Cambodia remained heavily forested until relatively recently, thanks in part to lingering battles with Khmer Rouge guerrillas and massive use of land mines during the Vietnam War.

As the economy opened in the early 1990s, investment from China poured in. Forest cover dropped to 48 percent in 2014 from 57 percent in 2010

Residents complain they were forced off their land and lost their main livelihood of fishing when they were relocated inland after the government granted a 99-year land lease to China's Tianjin Union Development Group Co.

and 73 percent in 1990, a loss of nearly 3 million hectares of tropical forest. Rosewood, known as "hongmu" in Chinese, is especially prized, and loggers can get \$5,000 for a cubic meter of the brightly-hued timber.

Leng, who chairs the Cambodia Human Rights Task Forces organization, says the Goldman Prize money will help support forest patrols and community-level efforts to combat illegal logging.

Like many in Cambodia, he views the government's record with skepticism.

"The poverty-reduction policy of the government seems to be just to kill the poor people," Leng said.

"Their 'master plan' to improve living standards is set up very well and looks very beautiful. To provide jobs with fair competition and construction of schools, roads, bridges. ... To provide land for the people and conserve their houses," he said. But he added that such talk is generally not put into practice by private companies or the government.

Still, Leng believes he is making headway in convincing the public to resist the loss of their livelihoods and homes.

"Many political parties, government officials, students and monks are involved in forest issues," Leng said. "The revolution will come from the land and from the forest." AP

Yuri Kageyama, Tokyo

JAPAN

Disruptions from twin quakes hit economy

THE twin earthquakes that struck southern Japan were having ripple effects far beyond the disaster zone, forcing Toyota to suspend production at most of its factories across the country, and affecting other manufacturers as well.

The quake damaged Honda's motorcycle plant in Kumamoto, the largest city affected by the two quakes that hit late Thursday and early Saturday, killing at least 42 people. Japan's Nikkei 225 stock index tumbled more than 3 percent yesterday in part on worries over quake repercussions as well as a spike in the yen and a drop in oil prices.

But the economic impact is nowhere near as large as the havoc wreaked by the 2011 quake and tsunami disasters, which slammed supply chains so badly that Japanese automakers' production was halted even in the U.S. They learned the hard way about their vulnerability to such interruptions, especially from second- and third-tier suppliers, and have worked to create contingency plans.

Disasters tend to hobble Japan's mighty manufacturers because they are supported by small machine shops that provide components to bigger suppliers, which in turn supply bigger players.

"That kind of lesson has been learned," said Nissan Motor Co. spokesman Dion Corbett. "We now have maps that show where exactly the suppliers are."

Nissan's two plants in Kyushu were temporarily shut down after the quakes for checkups. The checks found damage was



A resident walks past collapsed houses in Mashiki, Kumamoto prefecture

minor, allowing the plants to be resume operations yesterday, Corbett said.

Some of the worst-affected areas are deep in the mountains surrounding Mount Aso, Japan's largest active volcano, an area renowned for dairy farming. But one of the hardest-hit cities was Mashiki, a center for semiconductor fabrication and other manufacturing.

Sony Corp. said its sensor and device plant in Kumamoto was closed. Although the building's structure was intact and no employees were injured, the precise nature of the production processes requires that delicately calibrated equipment must be checked carefully.

"The impact to near-term economic activity looks inevitable, while the comprehensive pic-

ture is difficult to gauge now, particularly due to the continued aftershocks," Masamichi Adachi of J.P. Morgan said in a commentary.

Overall, the risk to the outlook for growth is "to the downside," he said.

In trading yesterday, Toyota's shares lost 4.8 percent, Nissan lost 2.8 percent and Sony shed 6.8 percent.

Renesas Electronics Corp.'s computer chip plant in Kumamoto city was also shuttered, spokeswoman Makie Uehara said. It was unclear when production would resume. Gases that can be dangerous are used to maintain antiseptic conditions for chip production, and so safety had to be confirmed before other damage could be checked.

Toyota Motor Corp., the most heavily affected of the big car makers, has stopped production not only at a factory in Kyushu but at 15 others in Japan through Friday. Output will resume depending on the availability of parts.

Toyota's Japan output will drop by 50,000 vehicles in April, or about 7 percent of Japan production, according to a report on the quake's effects on automakers by SMBC Nikko. Toyota declined to comment on that estimate.

Critically affected parts include door frames, door hinges and cast-aluminum engine parts, said Toyota spokesman Itsuki Kurosu. The maker of the Camry sedan, Prius hybrid and Lexus luxury models was working hard to get substitute parts, he said.

Honda Motor Corp.'s motorcycle plant was severely damaged. Due to repeated aftershocks, it was unsafe even to go inside to carefully inspect the damage, said company spokesman Teruhiko Tatebe. Production has been stopped until at least Friday.

So far, production at Honda's auto plants has not been affected, Tatebe said. The company did not rule out future supply problems. **AP**

AUSTRALIA

Amber Heard avoids jail in dog smuggling spat

ACTOR Johnny Depp's wife Amber Heard pleaded guilty yesterday to providing a false immigration document amid allegations she smuggled the couple's dogs to Australia, but managed to avoid jail time over what was dubbed the "war on terrier" debacle.

Prosecutors dropped two more serious charges that Heard illegally imported the Yorkshire terriers, Pistol and Boo, into the country last year, when Depp was filming the fifth movie in the "Pirates of the Caribbean" series. A conviction on the illegal importation counts could have sent the actress to prison for up to 10 years.

The false documents



Actor Johnny Depp and his wife, Amber Heard

charge carries a maximum penalty of a year in jail and a fine of more than 10,000 Australian dollars (USD7,650), but Magistrate Bernadette Callaghan sentenced Heard instead to a one-month good behavior bond. The

condition means she will have to pay a AUD1,000 fine if she commits any offenses in Australia over the next month.

Depp and Heard said little to the waiting throng of reporters and fans outside the Southport Magis-

trates Court on Queensland state's Gold Coast, but did submit a videotaped apology to the court that was played during yesterday's hearing.

"When you disrespect Australian law," a grim-looking Depp says in the video, "they will tell you firmly."

The drama over the dogs began last May, when Agriculture Minister Barnaby Joyce accused Depp of smuggling the tiny terriers aboard his private jet when he returned to Australia to resume filming the "Pirates" movie.

Australia has strict quarantine regulations to prevent diseases such as rabies from spreading to its shores. Bringing pets into the country involves applying for a permit and

quarantine on arrival of at least 10 days.

"If we start letting movie stars — even though they've been the sexiest man alive twice — to come into our nation [with pets], then why don't we just break the laws for everybody?" Joyce said at the time. "It's time that Pistol and Boo buggered off back to the United States."

Depp and Heard were given 72 hours to send Pistol and Boo back to the U.S., with officials warning that the dogs would otherwise be euthanized. The pooches boarded a flight home just hours before the deadline ran out.

The comments by Joyce, who is now the deputy prime minister of Australia,

elevated what might otherwise have been a local spat into a global delight for comedians and broadcasters. One newspaper ran a doggie death countdown ticker on its website that marked the hours remaining before the dogs had to flee the country, and comedian John Oliver dedicated a more than 6-minute segment to lampooning the ordeal.

Depp himself poked fun at the drama during a press conference in Venice last year where he was asked if he planned to take the dogs for a gondola ride. "No," he replied. "I killed my dogs and ate them, under direct orders from some kind of, I don't know, sweaty, big-gutted man from Australia." **AP**

NEW aftershocks are rattling Ecuador — part of the hundreds following a deadly magnitude-7.8 earthquake that has killed at least 272 people in the Andean nation.

The Geophysics Institute says 230 aftershocks had hit as of yesterday morning [Macau time], ranging in magnitude from 3.5 to 6.1 and striking at shallow depths.

The institute also sent out a steady stream of tweets yesterday morning each time a new aftershock was registered. Most were happening in the Pacific Ocean near the hard-hit coastal cities of Pedernales and Manta.

Ecuador's president, Rafael Correa, has warned the death toll could rise significantly from Sunday's quake, which also injured more than 2,500 people.

Spain has sent a military plane with 47 search-and-rescue experts and their five dogs to Ecuador to help authorities look for survivors from the earthquake that killed at least 272 people.

The jet left a military base airport outside Madrid yesterday and was expected to arrive in the hard-hit city of Guayaquil today.

The 39 soldiers and eight fi-

Ecuador rattled by hundreds of aftershocks, death toll jumps to 272



A man holds a child next to a collapsed building caused by a 7.8 earthquake in Portoviejo

refighters were sent after Ecuadorean President Rafael Correa said the death toll was sure to rise much higher amid evidence some people are still alive underneath rubble.

Correa said earlier that rescue

teams were also coming in from Mexico and Colombia. He says the 7.8-magnitude earthquake is the worst natural disaster to befall the Andean nation since a 1949 earthquake in Ambato that killed thousands.

After visiting areas hard hit by the quake, Correa gave the new count to reporters yesterday and said it would "surely rise, and in a considerable way."

The Ecuadorian president said the country will overcome

the tragedy.

"The Ecuadorean spirit knows how to move forward, and will know how to overcome these very difficult moments."

As Ecuador digs out from its strongest earthquake in decades, tales of devastating loss are everywhere amid the rubble.

The 7.8-magnitude earthquake left a trail of ruin along Ecuador's normally placid Pacific Ocean coast, buckling highways, knocking down an air traffic control tower and flattening homes and buildings.

Portoviejo, a provincial capital of nearly 300,000, was among the hardest hit, with the town's mayor reporting at least 100 deaths. Among them are 17-year-old Sayira Quinde, her mother, father and toddler brother, crushed when a building collapsed on their car.

A grief stricken aunt, Johana Estupinan, is now heading to the town of Esmeraldas, where she will bury her loved ones and break the news to her sister's three now-orphaned children. The Quinde family had driven to her house from their home hours north to drop off Sayira before she was to start classes at a public university on a scholarship to study medicine.

The aunt says "I never thought my life would be destroyed in a minute." AP

AD

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in town with key speakers sharing their views on current business affairs. Our monthly events take place every last Wednesday of the month at Sofitel Macau at Ponte 16. **Open to all!**

Wednesday, 27/04/2016

New Normal = New Fashion?
Will the luxury goods industry thrive again?

Speaker: **Andy Hou**, Luxury Brand General Manager in Hong Kong & Macau

FMBA Breakfast Meeting

Introduction: Hong Kong & Macau's fashion sales is on a steep downwards trend. We are facing smarter and faster consumers with different expectations. Business models can adapt quickly, but what are the risks and opportunities?

Date: **Wednesday, 27th April 2016**

Time: **9:00-10:30 am** (Reception: 8:45am)

Venue: **Sofitel Macau at Ponte 16**
Promenade Meeting Room (6th floor)

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what's ON



NO. 0528 PLANET
- HO CHEN HUNG SOLO EXHIBITION
TIME: 10am to 7pm (Mondays to Sundays)
UNTIL: April 30, 2016
VENUE: Flugent ART Gallery, Rua S. Paulo 54-58B
ADMISSION: free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2872 3428

"POST MODERN STILL LIFE"
DRAWING & PAINTING BY MARCO SZETO
OPENING HOURS: 10am-6:30pm
UNTIL: May 15, 2016
VENUE: CalcadaDaBarra, No. 16 R/C LJ A,
Edif. San Chak, Macau
Admission with free ticket
ORGANIZER: Dare to Dream Gallery
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2896 2820

SOU PUI KUN'S WORK "MUSIC BOX"
IN EXHIBIT OF CONTEMPORARY SCULPTURE
TIME: 10am-7pm
(no admittance after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)
UNTIL: June 19, 2016
VENUE: The Handover Gifts Museum of Macau,
Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

PAINTINGS AND CALLIGRAPHY DONATED
BY JAO TSUNG-I
TIME: 10am-6pm Daily (No admission after 5:30
pm; Except on Mondays, open on public holidays)
VENUE: Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de
Almeida, No. 95 C-D, Macau
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2852 2523

ARTS IN THE MANDARIN'S HOUSE
TIME: 10am-6pm daily (No admission after 5:30 pm,
closed on Wednesdays, opens on public holidays)
ADMISSION: Free
VENUE: Travessa de António da Silva, No. 10
(near Lilau Square)
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2896 8820

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

Offbeat

ANGRY CHINESE CONSTRUCTION
WORKERS DUEL WITH BULLDOZERS

Police in northern China say an argument between construction workers escalated into a demolition derby-style clash of heavy machinery that left at least two bulldozers flipped over in a street.

In online video taken Saturday, several bulldozers are seen ramming each other while passenger cars scurry away from the cloud of dust.

The video shows one driver running unhurt out of his toppled bulldozer, a fast-moving type also known as a wheel loader, while a friendly bulldozer tries to lift it back up.

The construction workers were from two companies competing for business, Xu Feng, a local government spokesman in Hebei province's Xingtang county, said yesterday. He said he couldn't disclose details about arrests or injuries until an investigation concludes.

China's construction sector has fallen on hard times, with growth down by two-thirds from its peak a decade ago. Real estate construction represents close to a quarter of China's economy, a far higher proportion than other major countries, and its slowdown is now sending ripples through industrial sectors such as steel, glass and cement, causing waves of layoffs.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
17:35	Fillers
17:40	Trail of Lies - The End (Repeated)
18:30	TDM Sport (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Non-Daily Portuguese News
21:10	TDM Interview
21:50	Happy Endings S3
22:10	Helena's Shadow - Premier
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Drama
00:15	Fillers
00:20	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:50	RTPi Live

cinema

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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

2005 RATZINGER IS ELECTED
AS NEW POPE

Taking the name Pope Benedict XVI, the 78-year-old German appeared on the balcony of St Peter's Basilica.

His arrival was greeted by loud cheers from the many thousands of pilgrims who had packed St Peter's Square as news of his election spread across Rome.

He was chosen on the third round of votes by the 115 cardinals meeting to select Pope John Paul II's successor.

The name Benedict comes from the Latin for "blessing" and the last Pope bearing the name, Benedict XV, reigned during World War I.

Giving a short address in Italian to the crowds gathered below the new Pope paid homage to his predecessor, and great friend, Pope John Paul II.

"Dear brothers and sisters after the great Pope, John Paul II, the cardinals have elected me, a simple and humble worker in the Lord's vineyard," he said.

"The fact that the Lord can work and act even with insufficient means consoles me, and above all I entrust myself to your prayers.

"In the joy of the resurrected Lord, we go on with His help. He is going to help us and Mary will be on our side. Thank you," he added.

Clad in white papal vestments and a short red cape, he then delivered the traditional "Urbi et Orbi" [to the City and the World] blessing to the city of Rome and the world.

Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls said Pope Benedict XVI would dine with Roman Catholic cardinals later on Tuesday and celebrate a Mass with them in the Sistine Chapel on Wednesday morning at 0900 (0700 GMT).

He will be inaugurated as the 265th pope on Sunday, the Vatican has announced.

The new Pope had been one of the front runners in the papal election, which began on Monday when the 115 voting cardinals were sequestered in the Sistine Chapel for their secret conclave.

Pope Benedict XVI, who is the oldest pope for more than a century, was born in 1927 into a traditional farming family in Bavaria, Germany, although his father was a policeman.

The future pope's studies at seminary were interrupted by World War II and his supporters say that his experiences under the Nazi regime convinced him that the Church had to stand up for truth and freedom.

He is the first German Pope since the 11th Century.

The BBC's Ray Furlong in Berlin says Cardinal Ratzinger's election as Pope will generate amazement and enthusiasm in Germany as well as concern among those who had hoped for a more liberal pontiff.

A close friend and confidante of Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI is also known as a fellow conservative.

For more than 20 years he was head of the congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith in the Vatican - the Vatican's guardian of orthodoxy.

The BBC's William Horsley in Rome says his papacy is sure to continue John Paul II's strongly traditional interpretation of the Catholic faith, including opposition to abortion, homosexuality, priestly marriage and women priests.

Our correspondent says that the homily he made at the Mass before the start of the Conclave in which he denounced all deviations from traditional church teachings as trickery and error, may have been decisive in winning him the title of Pope.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Pope Benedict XVI is the eighth German pontiff and was the clear favourite to fill the role.

He was one of Pope John Paul II's closest friends and, like his predecessor, firmly opposes to birth control, supports the celibacy of the priesthood, and is against the ordination of women.

He has also spoken out against homosexuality and once denounced rock music as "the vehicle of anti-religion".

Benedict XVI was succeeded by Pope Francis on 13 March 2013, and he moved into the newly renovated monastery Mater Ecclesiae for his retirement on 2 May 2013.

YOUR STARS

Aries
Mar. 21-Apr. 19
You need to do something positive for your health — and you are probably the best judge of what that is. Still, it may be a good idea to solicit advice from your healthier friends and coworkers.

Taurus
April 20-May 20
You need to spend more time with people — and your good energy makes you great to have around! It's easier than ever to meet new friends or to find new activities, so get out there and explore!

Gemini
May 21-Jun. 21
Try to check in with your people today — you need to deal with folks who have been quiet for a while. It's always good to maintain your relationships, but today offers a special kind of social conscience.

Cancer
Jun. 22-Jul. 22
You need to reach out and get your people on board with your latest big plan. Things may get a little out of hand if you don't say something soon, but your social energy is just right for the task.

Leo
Jul. 23-Aug. 22
Today is all about review. Your mind is amazingly powerful as long as it's looking backward, so go over everything that happened recently and figure out what you could have done better.

Virgo
Aug. 23-Sept. 22
You find that things are looking up for sure — and that your success is more public than you had realized! Expect praise from an unusual source, and see if you can build on it.

Libra
Sep.23-Oct. 22
You are dealing with way too many details right now — try to wrap your head around them! It may be best for you to focus on just one subset. Once you've got them down, move on to the next.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 - Nov. 21
You learn a secret this afternoon or evening that makes you smile more than cringe — though it may be a little bit of both! It's up to you whether to keep it to yourself or pass it on.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22-Dec. 21
Someone in charge is causing problems for you — maybe as early as this morning. There's really no way around it, so you may just have to smile and pretend that it's all fine with you — for now.

Capricorn
Dec. 22-Jan. 19
You are in the middle of a great wave of mental energy — so make the most of it by getting some plans together! You should be able to get your friends or coworkers to abide by your decisions easily, too.

Aquarius
Jan. 20-Feb. 18
You have got to be more skeptical today — otherwise, things could easily go sideways. Try to make sure that you're asking the right people the right questions, and don't give up until you get the truth.

Pisces
Feb.19-Mar. 20
You should find that life is extra-confusing today — but also that it doesn't really matter! Relax in the knowledge that you are sure to figure it all out later. Things are just fine, really.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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3	1		8				5	
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Easy+

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Hard

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			2					
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6			4					

WEATHER

	MIN	MAX	CONDITION
CHINA			
Beijing	10	22	overcast/clear
Harbin	0	18	cloudy/clear
Tianjin	10	25	overcast/clear
Urumqi	11	18	clear/cloudy
Xi'an	9	20	clear
Lhasa	2	19	cloudy/shower
Chengdu	9	22	clear
Chongqing	14	21	cloudy/clear
Kunming	9	25	shower
Nanjing	11	16	overcast/cloudy
Shanghai	13	19	drizzle/cloudy
Wuhan	10	16	clear
Hangzhou	2	24	shower/cloudy
Taipei	23	30	cloudy/heavy rain
Guangzhou	20	28	heavy rain
Hong Kong	20	27	heavy rain
WORLD			
Moscow	6	15	overcast
Frankfurt	7	10	drizzle
Paris	6	10	cloudy/drizzle
London	5	10	cloudy/drizzle
New York	-3	18	flurry/clear

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Capital city of Western Samoa; 5- Canyon comeback; 9- Distance runner; 14- Course list; 15- Gradual; 16- Miss by ___; 17- Land map; 18- Monk's hood; 19- Herring type; 20- Ladies of Spain; 22- Kind of triangle; 24- It beats rock; 26- Foofaraw; 27- Timmy's dog; 30- You're on!; 35- Does in; 36- Movie-rating org.; 37- Glamour rival; 38- Fine; 39- Snob; 42- Barracks bed; 43- Not us; 45- Trompe l'___; 46- Acid type; 48- Stately Spanish dance; 50- Whence Ikea; 51- Pot used to contain the ashes of a dead person; 52- Not odds; 54- Corpulence; 58- Long journey; 62- Battery pole; 63- Diana of "The Avengers"; 65- ___ breve; 66- Jeter of the Yankees; 67- Together, in music; 68- Audacity; 69- Pitchers; 70- Meets with; 71- Bacchanalian cry;

DOWN: 1- Concert gear; 2- Soccer legend; 3- ___ instant; 4- Postmortem examination; 5- Get away; 6- Shut; 7- In what way; 8- Birds that may be spotted; 9- Ancient fortress in Israel; 10- Burst inward; 11- Italian bread?; 12- Pizazz; 13- Nerve network; 21- Bluffer's play; 23- Durango dwellings; 25- Dangerous current; 27- Atty.-to-be exams; 28- Island greeting; 29- Brown and white Eurasian falcon; 31- Follow; 32- Spanish hero; 33- Single-handedly; 34- Divulge; 36- Bearing; 40- Bank offerings; 41- Yellowish brown color; 44- Talk ramblingly; 47- Communication; 49- Scottish trousers; 50- Marsh plants; 53- Mode; 54- Become dim; 55- Once again; 56- Got ripped; 57- Ladies of Sp.; 59- Czech, e.g.; 60- London greeting; 61- Ivy League school; 64- Ox tail?

Yesterday's solution

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

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Charles Odum, Duluth (Ga.)

GOLF

Austin shoots 64, beats Short in playoff to win Mitsubishi

WOODY Austin's putter came through again. Austin tied the tournament record with an 8-under 64 and beat Wes Short Jr. with a par on the second hole of a sudden-death playoff in the PGA Tour Champions' Mitsubishi Electric Classic.

The 52-year-old Austin has two victories in the last three events on the 50-and-over tour, also winning in Tucson, Arizona, last month. In each win he switched putters for the final round.

It's an example of why he said "I'm not a normal person when it comes to golf."

"I do everything quite different than most golfers," Austin said. "I'm not a range guy. I don't even go to the range an hour before my round."

Austin also didn't go to the range after his 64, instead sitting in the clubhouse for about an hour as Short and others finished. The televised coverage of the tournament kept showing Austin munching on popcorn.

Austin didn't hear the commentators speculate about why he wasn't warming up, because he wasn't even watching the tournament.

"I went in the clubhouse because I wanted to watch the Cavaliers-Pistons game," he said. "I'm a sports junkie. I was more happy watching that. That keeps my mind off what is going on."

Austin won the 2013 Sanderson Farms Championship at age 49 for the last of his four PGA Tour titles. His win in Tucson last month was his first on the senior tour.

AP PHOTO



Woody Austin

Austin said his Sunday putter — the same style but black instead of silver — has earned a try in the first round of his next tournament.

Short bogeyed the second playoff after pulling his tee shot left into tall grass for the second time.

"You can't hit it left," Short said. "I mean, I'm dead. I knew it as

soon as I hit it both times. [...] I didn't think I'd be tree-locked on the second time, though."

Short finished with a 68. He could have avoided the playoff at TPC Sugarloaf, but missed a 6-foot birdie putt on No. 18, leaving him tied with Austin at 11 under. That missed putt may have been more painful than his errant drives on the playoff

holes.

"It was very makeable," he said. "I pushed it. As soon as I hit it, I knew. That kind of stings."

Paul Goydos had a 67 to finish third at 10 under. Joey Sindelar (67), Tom Lehman (67), Miguel Angel Jimenez (68) and Colin Montgomerie (69) were another stroke back.

Bernhard Langer shot a 67 to

tie for 11th at 6 under, ending his streak of five top-10 finishes on the tour this season. He had one win and two second-place finishes in the tournament's first three years.

Tom Watson, the 66-year-old star who shared the first-round lead a week after playing in his final Masters, closed with a 68 to finish 4 under. **AP**

PISTORIUS

South African to be sentenced in June for murder

SOUTH Africa's former Olympic track star Oscar Pistorius appeared briefly in a Pretoria court where a judge scheduled five days in June to determine his sentence for murdering his girlfriend.

The sentencing hearing for Pistorius will be held from June 13 to 17 at the North Gauteng High Court in Pretoria.

The 29-year-old double amputee sprinter, who was found guilty of murdering Reeva Steenkamp on Valentine's Day 2013, was greeted by a small group of vocal supporters outside the court.

The sentencing hearing will be heard by Judge Thokozile Masipa, who presided over Pistorius's trial and found him guilty of manslaughter, a verdict that was overturned by a higher court that found him guilty of the more serious charge of murder.

AP PHOTO



Oscar Pistorius

Pistorius appealed his murder conviction, arguing that a lower court erred when it overturned his manslaughter conviction. But at South Africa's Constitutional Court dismissed his appeal.

The minimum sentence for murder in South Africa is 15 years, although it can be reduced in some circumstances.

Pistorius is expected to argue for

a lesser sentence. He has already spent one year in the hospital wing of Kgosi Mampuru II prison in Pretoria. He is currently serving the remainder of his five year manslaughter sentence under house arrest and he stays at his uncle's home in Pretoria.

Pistorius was cheered by his supporters, most of who were dressed in white, when he left the court and navigated his way through a scrum of reporters.

A leader of the supporters, Don Hassett, appealed for a lenient sentence for Pistorius.

"He knows it was wrong and he has admitted that, but the media has generated hatred against Oscar," Hassett told reporters.

Before the proceedings a group of supporters gathered inside the courtroom and prayed for the athlete. **AP**

DOPING

Meldonium's creator: Drug used to improve sexual performance

THE Latvian scientist who developed meldonium says some male athletes who have taken the recently banned drug have used it in order to improve sexual performance.

The drug, which is typically recommended for heart disease patients, was banned for 2016, prompting at least 172 failed tests worldwide, including Maria Sharapova.

Ivars Kalvinsin, who created the drug, says many male athletes take meldonium "not as a sports performance enhancer but in order to improve their sexual performance."

AP PHOTO



Ivars Kalvinsin

Last week, the World Anti-Doping Agency said athletes could be cleared if only minute traces of the drug were found in their system. **AP**

opinion

World Views

Therese Raphael, Bloomberg

SAY HELLO TO THE OFFSHORE INVESTOR NEXT DOOR

The release of the Panama Papers has fed two stereotypes about offshore investing: that it is the exclusive preserve of the rich and that its main purpose is to avoid taxes. Like most stereotypes, it's accurate only in part.

In today's fraught political climate, it's easy to miss the fact that investment funds listed outside the U.K. (and U.S.) help plenty of middle class people too. That isn't the image that immediately springs to mind these days or which has motivated calls for a regulatory crackdown on offshore investments. But ordinary employees of Britain's largest companies, trade unions and councils also participate in offshore investing, through their pension plans.

These investments are part of the second-largest investment industry in the world, after the U.S.'s, with 5.5 trillion pounds (USD7.8 trillion) under management at the end of 2014. Some 895 billion pounds of those assets are managed in funds that are domiciled offshore, a figure that grew by 16 percent between 2013 and 2014.

That isn't all casino money for hedge-fund speculators. Over a third of the U.K.'s local-government pension plans allocate money to hedge funds, which are largely based offshore. According to the Alternative Investment Management Association, they generally allocate around 7 percent of their total investment portfolio to such funds.

The same goes for the private sector, where 64 percent of the top 25 U.K. corporate pension plans invest in hedge funds. Defined-benefit pension funds - which comprise most pension plans and held over 1 trillion in assets in 2013 - invest around 60 billion of their assets in hedge funds.

All offshore funds are supposed to be "tax neutral" in that the fund itself isn't taxed but investors must pay tax in their own jurisdictions on income and capital gains. That's not unique to island domiciles; much of the offshore allocations end up in Ireland, Luxembourg or the U.S. The Cayman Islands represent over a quarter of hedge fund domiciles. A low- or zero-tax rate on some investment funds exists in many jurisdictions (the U.K. exempts various investment companies and trusts from taxes on capital gains, for example). What defines a haven for tax-dodging is its refusal to cooperate with tax authorities to counter tax-evasion attempts.

That's becoming less common. In 2000, the OECD took the Cayman Islands off its "tax haven" blacklist after the Caymans complied with higher standards of transparency. In 2009, it removed holdouts Andorra, Liechtenstein and Monaco from its list of uncooperative jurisdictions. Panama was removed in 2012, perhaps prematurely.

For the non-criminally inclined, the attraction of, say, the Cayman Islands has little to do with taxes and more to do with the benefits of lighter regulation - such as how much leverage a fund can have, or the ability to short-sell. Funds located offshore can offer more flexibility than is available to onshore managers in London, in part because the relevant laws in Britain long predate the hedge fund industry's existence. It's doubtful regulators have the appetite - and certainly they lack the resources - to regulate that industry onshore.

While the tax break for funds may seem generous, it's worth bearing in mind that adding another layer of tax at the fund level would probably mean higher charges passed along to investors, with any tax benefit going to the offshore jurisdiction rather than brought home. It would not only dent the wealth of those who are able to afford more exotic investment options, it might also harm ordinary investors in employer pension plans - a major part of one of Britain's strongest industries. With a whiff of British class war in the air, that common interest has been overlooked.

THE BRAZIL: ROUSSEFF LOSES LOWER HOUSE IMPEACHMENT VOTE

Parliament in Brazil yesterday has voted to start impeachment proceedings against President Dilma Rousseff over charges of manipulating government accounts.

The "yes" camp comfortably won the required two-thirds majority in the vote in the lower house in Brasilia.

The motion will now go to the upper house, the Senate, which is expected to suspend Ms Rousseff next month while it carries out a formal trial.

She denies tampering with the accounts to help secure her re-election in 2014. Her supporters describe the vote as a "coup against democracy."

THE SCIENCE OF LYING

We all lie, scientists say, but politicians even more so



San Francisco state psychologist and company CEO David Matsumoto, right, and colleague looking at the non-verbal behavior of another employee on video as part of their analysis for deception and emotional clues

Seth Borenstein, Washington

This is the season of lies.

We watch with fascination as candidates for the world's most powerful job trade falsehoods and allegations of dishonesty.

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump routinely calls rival Ted Cruz "Lyn' Ted." Cruz retorts: "Falsely accusing someone of lying is itself a lie and something Donald does daily."

News organizations such as The Associated Press and PolitiFact dedicate enormous resources to separating candidates' truthful wheat from their dishonest chaff.

But if we've come to expect office-seekers who seem truth-averse, many of us have given little thought to our own fibs, and how they compare with politicians' deceptions.

For more than two decades, researchers of different stripes have examined humanity's less-than-truthful underbelly, and this is what they have found: We all stretch the truth. We learned to deceive as toddlers. We rationalize our fabrications that benefit us. We tell little white lies daily that make others feel good.

"I feel more worried about lying in public life [specifically by politicians, and in particular, Trump] than

I ever have before," psychology researcher Bella DePaulo at the University of California, Santa Barbara, said in an email. When lies succeed, they make it "more tempting to lie. Lies can stick. They can have a lingering effect, even if they are debunked."

Children learn to lie at an average of about 3 years old, often when they realize that other people don't know what they are thinking, said Kang Lee, a professor at the University of Toronto.

He has done extensive research on children and lying. Lee set up an experiment in a video monitored room to see if he could catch children lying about peaking at a toy when an adult left the room.

At age 2, only 30 percent lie, Lee said. At age 3, half do. By 5 or 6, 90 percent of the kids lie and Lee said he worries about the 10 percent who don't. This is universal, Lee said.

In 1996, DePaulo, author of "The Hows and Whys of Lies," put recorders on students for a week and found they lied, on average, in every third conversation of 10 minutes or more. For adults, it was once every five conversations.

"I would say we're lying constantly. Constantly," said Maurice Schweitzer, who studies deception and decision-making at the

University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business, Trump's alma mater.

Experts split on whether to count white lies, the social lubrication that makes civilized operate. When your spouse tells you that you don't look fat in that outfit when you do, does it really do any harm?

Some lies, said Schweitzer, "fall under politeness norms and are not very harmful. There are other lies that are self-interested and those are the ones that are really harmful. Those are the ones that harm relationships, harm trust."

But DePaulo sees no distinction: "It doesn't matter if the attempt was motivated by good intentions and it doesn't matter if the lie is about something little."

Regardless, society rewards people for white lies, said Robert Feldman at the University of Massachusetts. "We don't like people who tell us the truth all the time."

He added, "The lies that we accept from politicians right now are lies that are seen as acceptable because it's what we want to hear," like a spouse saying that an outfit flatters you.

When people deceive beyond white lies, they spend a lot of effort justifying and rationalizing what they are doing. AP

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

SOURCE: DSI/MG

WORLD BRIEFS

MYANMAR's de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi vowed yesterday to push for constitutional amendments to build a true democracy in the Southeast Asian country as it emerges from decades of military control. Suu Kyi made the comments in a nationally televised address to mark the start of the Buddhist new year.



INDIA New Delhi has banned chewing tobacco in an effort to lower the high incidence of mouth and throat cancers. The Delhi government ordered the prohibition of the sale, purchase and possession of all forms of chewable tobacco, saying violators can be imprisoned for up to six months and fined up to 300,000 rupees (USD4,500).



ECUADOR Rescuers pull survivors from rubble after the strongest earthquake to hit Ecuador in decades flattens buildings and buckles highways along its Pacific coast. Officials say the quake killed more than 230 people and injured hundreds. More on p14

QATAR A meeting of oil-rich countries in Qatar that had been expected to boost crude prices by freezing production falls apart as Iran stays home and vows to increase its output despite threats by Saudi Arabia. The dysfunction likely means oil prices will drop again as markets open yesterday.



SWEDEN's housing minister has stepped down amid mounting questions over his contacts with Islamists and ultra-nationalists from his native Turkey. Mehmet Kaplan, a 44-year-old Green Party member and former spokesman of Sweden's Muslim Council, said he has done nothing wrong but was resigning because the criticism against him was interfering with his ability to perform his job.