



**AWARDS FOR 'EUROEXCELLENCE'**  
The Macau European Chamber of Commerce presented its second awards for 'Euroexcellence'

P8



**ROOF OF HK GYM COLLAPSES; THREE HURT**

P10



**SMOKE ALARMS ADD TWIST TO FATAL FLIGHT**  
Leaked flight data shows trouble in the cockpit and smoke in a plane lavatory at the final moments of EgyptAir's Flight 804

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# Times

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**WORLD BRIEFS**



**THAILAND** More than 200 people marched in Bangkok yesterday to protest military rule on the second anniversary of the coup that toppled the country's elected government. The march was one of the biggest anti-junta protests since the takeover and was treated with unusual tolerance by the authorities, who usually take a heavy-handed approach to dissent, both on the streets and online. **More on p13**

**SYRIA** On a secret trip to Syria, the new commander of U.S. forces in the Middle East said Saturday he felt a moral obligation to enter a war zone to check on his troops and make his own assessment of progress in organizing local Arab and Kurd fighters for what has been a slow campaign to push the Islamic State group out of Syria.

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With articles republished from



**HK's brands confronted by changing Chinese tastes**

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# Domestic violence becomes public crime

P5 AL PLENARY



Performers re-enact the 1947 massacre of Taiwanese intellectuals by mainland China's Nationalists troops during the inauguration ceremony of Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen in Taipei. Taiwan inaugurated Tsai as its first female president on Friday, returning the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party to power amid new concerns over increasingly fractious relations with Beijing and a flagging economy.

## New Taiwan president omits 'One-China' principle in speech

P10,20

## USJ pens admission agreement



On Friday, the University of Saint Joseph (USJ) signed an agreement of direct admission with the Macau Portuguese School (EPM) at the campus of EPM. The agreement will mean that EPM's Form 6 graduates are eligible to apply for direct admission to USJ, sparing them the need to sit the university's entrance exams as well as waiving the registration fees for the application. Under the new agreement, prospective students from EPM will only be required to take an English-language benchmark test and undergo an interview. Furthermore, applicants for direct admission will have an acceptance priority for the courses of their choice. USJ's rector, Peter Stilwell, and the principal of EPM, Manuel Peres Machado, signed the agreement.

## Former IC chief acquitted

Former Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) vice president Stephan Chan has been acquitted from charges of abuse of power, after it was alleged in 2011 that he had used his position to aid his brother in securing a service contract. The Court of First Instance dismissed the charges due to a lack of evidence. Separately the court decided that Chan was to pay a fine of MOP420,000 for inaccuracies in his required declaration of assets. He was found to have not declared some assets in 2008 and 2010. "From the very beginning, I have never done any mistakes at work, so this verdict has created a very big impact on me," Chan told journalists. Another civil servant accused of leaking information to Chan's brother during the procurement process, was also acquitted by the court.

## PSP arrest 39 illegal workers

The Public Security Police (PSP) arrested 39 people on Saturday on suspicion of illegally working on construction sites in Cotai. After receiving a tip off last month regarding illegal workers, police authorities began an investigation on the Cotai site, which resulted in the arrest of 17 workers on the site itself as well as a further 22 found at a site's dormitory. "The investigation found that some people arranged for the illicit workers to work at the construction site," PSP spokesperson Lam Keong told TDM. "They arranged accommodation and vehicle escorts for them." According to Lam, it is possible that the illegal workers, aged between 20 and 50, collaborated with security guards of the construction sites so that they could enter them unobtrusively from the rear gate. Authorities are still investigating how the illegal workers entered Macau.

**T**HE number of patients in hospitals in 2015 increased by 4 percent year-on-year to 54,000, according to information released by the Statistics and Census Bureau (DESC). Of this number, those aged 65 and above (12,000) rose by 14.1 percent. On the other hand, the number of hospital patients under 15 years of age dropped by 1 percent to 11,000 last year.

The occupancy rate of hospital patient beds in 2015 rose marginally by 0.8 percentage points year-on-year to 76.6 percent, with patients staying for average 7.4 days. This represents an increase of 0.1 days year-on-year.

Hospital staff conducted a total of 1,627,000 external patient consultations last year, up 7.5 percent compared with 2014. Consultations in Chinese Medicine increased by 16.5 percent to 183,000, while those in Gynecology and Obstetrics (97,000) dropped 3.6 percent, which DSEC attributes to a decline in

## STATISTICS | HEALTH

# Elderly hospital patients up 14 percent last year



RENATO MARQUES

live births.

Meanwhile, dialysis treatments, which numbered 83,000 cases last year, registered continuous upward growth of 8.1 percent. Attendances to emergency services (475,000) were also up last year, rising by 2.7 percent over 2014. Of these, emergency attendances

on the Macau Peninsula rose 7.3 percent to 361,000, while those in Taipa dropped 9.4 percent to 113,000.

Around 310,000 doses of vaccines were administered in hospitals and primary health care establishments in 2015, with vaccinations against Influenza alone

accounting for 93,000 doses.

The number of blood donors reached 10,157 in 2015, up slightly by 1.4 percent year-on-year. Of these, first-time blood donors increased by 8.1 percent to 2,948.

In 2015 there were a total of 1,494 patient beds across Macau's five hospitals, according to DSEC. This represents a growth of 73 beds from the previous year.

There were 1,674 doctors and 2,279 nurses, an increase of 5.2 percent and 14.5 percent respectively, year-on-year. The number of doctors and nurses per 1,000 population was 2.6 and 3.5 respectively, up by 0.1 and 0.4 compared with the ratios in 2014.

## HK taxis to revamp image as Uber gains ground

**H**ONG Kong taxi owners and drivers at the Taxi Council launched "TAXI" last week, in an attempt to reclaim some of the ground they have lost to competitors such as Uber.

Eight hundred drivers registered for the scheme, which claims to offer a superior user experience to costumers through endorsed taxi drivers who are obliged to sign up to a "performance pledge."

TAXI hopes to boost the number of registered drivers to 1,500, along with a further 3,500 independent drivers, stated the South China Morning Post (SCMP) in a recent report.

According to figures compiled by Hong Kong's Transport Complaints Unit, complaints such as quarrels have risen fivefold in the past 11 years. They often included drivers re-

fusing hire, overcharging passengers and not taking them to their destination via the most direct route.

Although there were over 93,000 registered complaints between 2003 and 2015, authorities claimed that the real figure could be significantly higher.

An overcharging incident occurred in October 2015 when a Swiss tourist was made to pay HKD8,000 - about 30 times the usual fare - for a trip from Hong Kong International Airport to a hotel in Hung Hom. Police claimed that it was the worse such incident on record in the city.

Meanwhile the ride-hailing app, Uber, has drawn criticism from taxi operators for disrupting the market, which in turn has caused an-

BLOOMBERG  
Rows of red urban taxis and green taxis serving the New Territories area wait for passengers at the HK airport

ti-Uber protests and government crackdowns, SCMP stated. The legality of its services was also probed, leading to several court cases.

The report recalled that the taxi industry has called for stricter regulation of these app-hailing services and is looking for ways to "innovate and remain competitive."

## FILM

# Macau impresses 'Sea of Mirrors' cast

**L**OCALLY-SHOT film, "Sea of Mirrors," wrapped up shooting at the end of last month, with the footage penned for post-production work in the U.S. and Japan, slated to begin later this month.

The Singaporean-based movie company behind the psychological thriller, Island Man Pictures, revealed in a statement the movie cast members' thoughts and impressions on Macau and the film.

Lead actress Kieko Suzuki - who plays "Riri Kondo" in the film, a mother and former Japanese actress who must track down her missing daughter's kidnappers - said that filmmaking in Macau was a fascinating experience.



Kieko Suzuki (seated) and director Thomas Lim (3rd from left) together with crew members

"The colorful scenery of the city is so photogenic, it took my breath away many times," she expressed.

"I believe that the history of Macau has a nice reflection on its cul-

ture as well as the city itself. And that was one of the key elements of our film - that the scenery of Macau added an extra unique texture to it," added the film's lead.

Macau-Singaporean producer, Tan See Kam, said that the international cast for the film "gives the production a distinct cosmopolitan appeal."

"Macau has a growing film community, and we are glad Macau's film people have been generous with their time, energy, and resources," he added. "Most importantly, the project has permitted training opportunities that give Macau's film people [opportunities] to grow and develop in terms of exposure and experience."

According to the statement, the film was shot entirely on an iPhone 6S as the director and producers believed that this "would first and foremost suit the visual texture of the story."

"It was a great experience shooting on an iPhone," said Macau-Australian actress, Sally Victoria Benson. "It was logistically easier and actually as an actress I had more freedom to move around and wasn't restricted by the constraints of huge setups. It also meant there was a closer working relationship with the cinematographer and director."

The editing of the footage will begin later this month in the U.S., after which the second half of post-production will shift to Tokyo. Filmmakers say that they hope to finish post-production by the end of this year and release the film some time during 2017. **DB**

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AL PLENARY

# Domestic violence becomes public crime

Renato Marques

**T**HE bill that aims to establish a new milestone to prevent and fight domestic violence by, among other aspects, categorizing it a public crime, was finally approved on Friday in the Legislative Assembly (AL).

After a controversial debate that lasted several years, the proposal was approved at AL's plenary session with 28 votes in favor and only 1 absentee. The absentee was lawmaker Fong Chi Keong whose comments and opinions on the bill back in January 2015, caused outrage in the local community, leading to a creation of a petition that was co-signed by more than 6,000 residents, urging the lawmaker to retract and publicly apologize for his remarks.

The law, now approved, will be in force 120 days after its official publication in the government's official gazette.

During the debate, lawmakers called on ways and means in which the government can prevent cases of rape from occurring and discussed how the government was prepared to respond to cases of abuse. Both the Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) president Vong Yim Mui and the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, claimed that the law provides an interdepartmental mechanism to provide support at several levels. They said that IAS departments are "ready" to



Alexis Tam (center)

work as the law enters into force.

Regarding legal support, Alexis Tam also added that IAS has a wide experience in contacting the victims of this act. "When the cases are very technical, the lawyers from IAS can request support from others from other public services, namely DSAJ [Legal Affairs Bureau]," he said

As a final remark after the voting and approval of the bill, Tam said that the law now approved "showing the commitment of the government and the legislative assembly in responding to solve the problems solicited by the population," adding that "the government believes the publication of this law will further curb the occurrence of such cases and

allow, in case of any unfortunate occurrence, an early detection and intervention

**This law will allow an early detection and intervention to protect the victim.**

ALEXIS TAM

to protect the victim from an act on the criminal liability of the offender."

The secretary acknowledged that "the work of the government doesn't end in the approval of the law," promising continuous work in order to disclose the law and update it when necessary.

## Private Notaries' new professional bylaws passed

**T**HE amendments proposed in a new bill that aims to change the professional bylaws of the private notaries were approved at the bill's first reading.

The proposal, presented by the Secretary for Administration and Justice Sonia Chan, garnered the consensus of the lawmakers. However, a few issues were raised, necessitating a further discussion in the standing committee that will handle this bill.

Two of the most concerned were lawmakers Song Pek Kei and Lionel Alves. The first expressed doubts regarding the number of new licenses that the government plans to add, as well as the gap

between the training courses, which in her opinion "should be set for a period of every 5 years."

Alves presented a problem regarding the fact that the bill allows registrars to apply to the position of Notary. The lawyer disagreed with the inclusion of this access to profession for registrars since, in his opinion "these professionals have little or no knowledge of commercial and contract laws and are not use to deal with negotiable documents."

Chan replied that these problems would be addressed when the document reaches the discussion in the specific committee.

ON THE LAWMAKERS' AGENDA

**GAMING TAXES** Mak Soi Kun has urged the government to raise the competitiveness of the local gaming industry after facing competition threats of markets such as Singapore, The Philippines and Vietnam. The lawmaker suggested this during the period before the agenda that the government should ease the rate of taxes on gaming concessionaires, proposing a "point system" aiming to provide incentives via tax reduction for concessionaires to successfully implement "social responsibility and non-gaming related projects."

"We can put this clearly in the contracts, establishing tax incentives such as reduction on the tax rate for concessionaires that assume their social responsibilities and promote successfully projects not related to the gaming," Mak said. The lawmaker recalled that in the territory the taxation over gaming concessionaires is about 40 percent while in the other neighboring countries and territories, the same tax rate is only between 5 to 15 percent. In his opinion, Mak suggested that it represents a potential "risk" for this activity sector.

**NON-RESIDENTS** Ella Lei, commenting on the findings of the official report on the mid-term review of the gaming industry, said that there are too many non-resident workers in management positions in the gaming industry.

"In this activity sector, there are still 2247 management positions, or higher working categories, that are being filled by non-residents, which represents year-on-year growing since 2010," the lawmaker said.

**FIVE-YEAR PLAN** Pereira Coutinho accused the government's "5-year Plan for the Development of MSAR," currently under public consultation phase, of failing at the "starting point." The lawmaker said that "in the formulation of any plan it is important to do an exhaustive survey about the main problems that continue to affect citizens," as well as "to think about which of the measures taken for the past 16 years were successful and which weren't."

In his opinion, the plan fails by not addressing these topics as well as for failing to consider that an important matter is the "accountability of the high ranked officials."

GAMING

## Genting given green light for LV project

**T**HE Nevada Gaming Commission has given the green light to Malaysian conglomerate Genting Berhad for the development of a massive USD4 billion Las Vegas casino project. An opening is expected for the property in 2019.

The new development

will be constructed on the Las Vegas Strip on the site of the former Stardust Resort and Casino which was demolished in 2007 after operating for nearly 50 years.

The new resort, titled the "Resorts World Las Vegas," will include over 3,000 rooms and a

150,000-square foot casino. In a Genting Berhad seminar held last week with the Nevada Gaming Commission, Gerald Gardner, senior vice president of government affairs for the planned Vegas casino, said that the Chinese-themed resort will feature a "celestial

Sphere."

The sphere will flash images of guests momentarily and is expected to draw crowds of millennial customers to the property, according to Gardner. The resort will also feature a Chinese garden, the plans of which indicate it will be larger than the

Bellagio Conservatory.

Furthermore, Gardner says that he hopes a proposed 50-foot replica of a Chinese lantern will become a quickly-recognized icon of the resort.

According to market insight website Seeking Alpha, some analysts think that the Chinese-

themed Resorts World Las Vegas could positively impact tourism for other properties on the strip. However, other analysts have expressed surprise that the project is going ahead in the face of declining visits to the city by high-end Chinese gamblers.

Genting Berhad's gaming and hospitality arm currently operates resorts in Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, the U.S. and the U.K. **DB**

## Heavy rainfall leads to leaking corridor at Border Gate

Last Friday night, a leaking corridor outside the Border Gate resulted from a heavy rainfall, according to a report by Macao Daily News. The report informs that the situation was announced online, where it was claimed that more than 20 spots along the corridor ceiling have a similar leakage problem. Pedestrians realized the problem still continued a day after the initial reports, calling it the result of a "Tofu-dreg project," (Chinese term for poorly-constructed building). Moreover, passengers have expressed their dissatisfaction with the relevant departments, since the leaking was left unattended overnight.

## SMEs expand to Hengqin

The Federal General Commercial Association of Macau Small and Medium Enterprises (GAMSME) applied for one square kilometer of land in Hengqin, according to a report by Macao Daily News. David Chow, President of GAMSME, announced that the project will include facilities for shopping, education, medical care, as well as price-limited residences, which will give purchasing priority to Macau residents. Chow further noted that the project is still in its initial stage because the application has only just been delivered to related governmental departments for approval.

## IFT to launch art admin course

The Institute for Tourism Studies (IFT) will launch a new series of Certificates in Art Administration in July in a joint effort with the Cultural Affairs Bureau. The course is intended to train professionals for entry into the cultural and arts industry. According to a statement from the IFT, the new course has been strengthened by a team of teachers with experience and professional knowledge in the scope of arts management. Launched in 2011, the course has been provided to local residents for six consecutive years, seeing the participation of over a hundred people. IFT says that interested parties are invited to register until Friday, May 27.

## OBOR workshop held in Macau

Over 50 delegates attended a 'One Belt, One Road' (OBOR) workshop on Friday, co-organized by City University of Macau, the Maritime Silk Road Association (Macao) and the Institute of European Studies of Macau. The forum was the first of its kind in Macau and provided a forum to discuss the implications of the policy in terms of trade and investment opportunities in Portuguese-speaking countries. The president of the association, Thomas Chan, said that OBOR is open to all countries including the Portuguese-speaking countries, and that he believes Macau can play a role not only in the Maritime Silk Road, but also in the inland component, linking businesses.

# Chinese Millennials the perfect target for non-gaming activities

**A**S Chinese Millennials are crucial in China, representing some 30 percent of its population, local casino operators should take an active role in providing facilities to address the growing importance of non-gaming activities in the region. These include retail, hotel, restaurant and entertainment offerings, says Margaret Huang, global gaming and lodging analyst at Bloomberg Intelligence.

Huang emphasized the need for casino operators to get to grips with the trends that excite this market segment. She revealed that Millennials have a sense of "adventure and individuality," as 60 percent of them prefer to travel independently.

"Because they want to show off to their friends and family. It's got to be that activity where it's kind of exclusive, unique and different, and show their authentic side, culturally speaking," said Huang on the sidelines of the G2E Asia 2016 conference that concluded last week.

Meanwhile Catherine Lim, Asia senior consumer analyst of Bloomberg Intelligence admitted that gaming will still be the primary activity for most of the visitors in Macau, however, she stressed that the city should create a more "wholesome experience" for visitors whereby casino-resorts are able to complement their gaming revenues.

Lim suggested that the region needs to have extensive shopping offerings as Chinese Millennials as a group spend the most in this area. As many as two-thirds of this group are considered to be in the high-income bracket.

According to studies Lim presented, retail sales in 2014, particularly watch and jewelry, grew faster than visitor growth, desig-



Margaret Huang (right) and Catherine Lim

nating Macau a "retail paradise" up until that point. However, due to the anti-corruption crackdown, the analyst said the city needs to embrace the fact that it is "shifting away from 'retail paradise' into creating a new 'shoppers paradise' for visitors," implying that businesses should

invest on trends that appeal to the millennial group.

"So this requires operators [...] to look into that [skill] mix, the brand mix and more importantly; how they actually want to position themselves to their visitors," said Lim.

She also revealed that 51 per-

cent of Chinese Millennials buy luxury goods when traveling overseas, more than double of Asia Pacific's 20 percent average. She hinted that 27 percent buy luxury tech gadgets.

Meanwhile as of 2015, only 7 percent of Macau's total revenue was generated from non-gaming activities, which presents to businesses an opportunity for growth in this sector.

Thus the analyst suggested that casino operators and businesses should tap into the millennial group as they are likely to be the perfect market segment for non-gaming activities.

"We have to have more unique shopping offerings to boost spending," said Lim. **Staff reporter**

## Macau needs to find its own niche

**T**HE recent G2E Asia 2016 conference has reportedly reached record-breaking attendance in its 10th year, attracting nearly 11,000 visitors from 83 countries and regions, up by 11 percent over last year.

According to the executive vice president of Reeds Exhibition Greater China, Josephine Lee, there were about 950 buyers and decision makers with purchasing power.

Lee revealed that over 713 conference delegates attended the exposition's seminars, which represents an 8.5 percent increase from last year.

"Yes, [we] very much look forward to the next one, we already had a number of new ideas in mind that will bring another exciting G2E Asia back to Macau next year," concluded Lee.

Speaking on the sidelines of the event, Paul Beh, President of Reed Exhibitions, Asia-Pacific Region, told the Times that Macau needs to find its own niche, as different cities have already developed their MICE industry in their own ways.

Beh claimed that cities such as Hong Kong and Singapore do not have a large base of industry, yet big events can be found in those cities.

He stressed that the two regions have harnessed their infrastructure, communications, inter-

national airport links and accessibility.

"Not necessarily because they have a big industry there, but over the years they have proven to be very efficient," Beh emphasized.

The president also believes that the under-construction Macau Light Rail Transit and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge would further create "great accessibility" in terms of bringing exhibitions, conferences and non-gaming activities to the city.

Moreover, Beh stressed that Macau and Las Vegas are distinct cities that are incomparable. Though he said that Vegas has been a successful model for Macau, he believes that the MSAR could also be effective in both the gaming and non-gaming industries.

"There are a lot of non-gaming activities [in Macau]. MICE supports gaming and gaming supports MICE. They go hand in hand," he said.

Speaking about the recent gaming downturn in Asia's Las Vegas, Beh said, "Gone are the days when gaming revenues in Macau are going up by 25 to 30 percent."

He advocated that a more realistic increase would be in the single-digit range, adding that the industry will still grow but not at the same pace as before. **Staff reporter**

### G2E

## New integrated resorts diversify the entertainment experience

**S**TEVE Rittvo, Chairman of the Innovation Group, and Tom Wucherer, CEO of the YWS design, both invited speakers to last week's G2E Asia Conference, consider multi-dimensional integrated resorts should be a common goal of the local gaming industry operators and the government. Both agree that this would foster a less gaming-driven economy.

In the opinion of Steve Rittvo, the world's gaming industry is now shifting from "integrated resorts 3.0 to integrated resorts 3.1." According to Rittvo, the gaming industry's three previous transformations occurred after 1990, back when some of the first integrated resorts were built clo-

se to large-scale convention centers.

Rittvo regards the latest properties set up by the local gaming operators as part of a continued movement that distances itself from casino-centric developments, thus indicating that these properties should be thought of as "resorts with casinos" rather than "casinos with resorts."

He believes that these resorts are positioned to serve the emerging Chinese middle class who represent the mass market; those who are seeking recreational and gaming entertainment as well as VIP Gamers. "We need to do extra to attract the mass market, they are looking for the ultimate total entertainment expe-

rience," said Steve Rittvo, who noted that such resorts will offer tourist-attracting amenities such as water parks, duty free and discount shopping.

In response, Tom Wucherer, noted that "it would be a mistake to ignore consumer trends," pointing out that the Asian gaming industry should diversify the entertainment experience it offers its customers, despite the fact that gambling continues to lead business revenues in the Asian market. Furthermore, Wucherer cited a senior executive at MGM international regarding the company's business, in 2014, saying that across MGM's Las Vegas properties, "guests between the ages of 21-34 spent [averagely] USD500 million and 99 percent of that was non-gaming spending."

Wucherer concluded that the new resorts will consist of targeted micro-environments in which gambling is their anchor. **Staff reporter**

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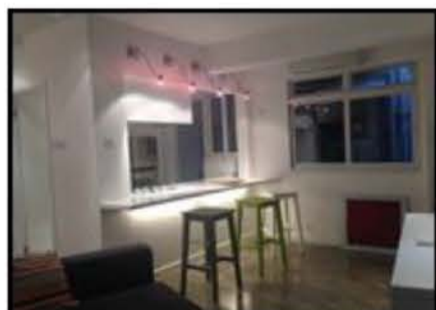
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### Nova Taipa E Low Mid Floor - Central Taipa

(Ref: 16055475)  
2,218sq. ft. HKD 10.8M  
Rate: HKD 4,869sq ft  
Fantastic apartment with views across Central Park. The property has four double size bedrooms and two large bathrooms; one en suite, each room has plenty of built in storage and air conditioners. The huge open plan living/dining with windows across one whole wall makes the room wonderfully bright and airy. Modern kitchen; built in appliances, lots of cabinets and a small open drying area for laundry. The whole apartment was recently decorated and could be occupied immediately. One car park space is also available for sale with the property for HKD 1.8 million. Vacant property.



### Jou Fai Kuok, St Pauls Ruin's Macau

(Ref: 15075447)  
627sq. ft. HKD 3.8M  
Rate: HKD 6,188sq ft  
One bedroom apartment in Heritage Area of Macau. A five minute from the Ruins of St Pauls. Renovated 3 years ago. Good size master bedroom with built in wardrobes. Modern shower room with built in under counter cabinet. Well equipped kitchen. S shaped living / dining area with small nook for desk. Available from 3rd Quarter 2016

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# Chamber of Commerce distributes awards for 'Euroexcellence'

Renato Marques

**T**HE Macau European Chamber of Commerce (MECC) presented its second awards for Euroexcellence during the Annual Gala Dinner event on Friday at Grand Lisboa Ballroom.

In its three different categories (luxury, food and beverage and innovation), the "MECC Awards for Euro Excellence" went respectively to Zung Fu Motors (Macau) Limited in recognition of its efforts and enduring partnership with European luxury motor brand Mercedes-Benz; Lord Stow's Bakery for its contributions to Macau's tourism industry; and Moon Chun Memorial College, University of Macau for its European-style approach to education that was said to encourage engagement across different nationalities and cultures.

This year's event themed "iViva MECC!" was celebrated in a Spanish style and themed performances that, as mentioned in the opening speech by its



Honorary Chairman, Ambrose So, follow the purpose of the Chamber of "thriving positive relations between Europe and the Macau SAR in both commerce and culture."

So took the opportunity to review the highlights of the MECC's activities over the past year that as he mentioned, also contributed to the main goal of the Chamber, which is strengthening the ties between Europe and Macau.

The head of the Office of the European Union (EU) to HK

and Macau, Vincent Picket conveyed a message from the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker.

In the letter to the members and supporters of the MECC, the highest official of EU said he was pleased with the results of the total trade between EU and Macau that "surged by almost 40 percent to EUR852million [approximately MOP7.65 billion]." These figures mean that Europe is the second largest trading partner of the territory just after mainland China.

# So: Non-gaming offerings to dominate Lisboa Palace

**A** minimum of between 400 and 500 gambling tables will equip Lisboa Palace, informed Ambrose So, CEO of SJM Holdings Ltd, on the sidelines of the European Chamber of Commerce gala dinner last Friday, as reported by Jornal Cheng Pou.

The report says that So did not disclose an exact number instead argued that in light of the current number of players, it is necessary to provide many tables. So also declared that Lisboa Palace will offer 95 percent non-gaming offerings. Moreover, according to the report, the project reserved an approximate five percent of the total area, representing 27,000 square meter, exclusively for gaming offerings.

Lisboa Palace was intended to be completed by the end of next year, but So admitted that it remains difficult to predict whether there will be delays or not. He said that the development may be ready within the current schedule.

The city's gaming industry has been suffering losses. Since 2014, there has been a decline in profits for 23 consecutive



Ambrose So

months. So expressed: "I guess there will not be a miracle," noting that even if the income from slot machines slightly increases, it will not be enough to cover losses from VIP rooms. Additionally, he believes that, under the influence of China's slowing economy, it will be good if the industry can maintain what it has now.

On the sidelines of Friday's gala dinner, So also mentioned that the "the junkets and also the operation in the casino need to be regulated step-by-step given the reality of the casino operations in Macau."

"What we have been always saying in agreement with the government is that we want a healthy and sustainable development of the casino industry. Further regulations in that direction of junket operations is moving in the right direction," he concluded.

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# G-7 warns on weak global growth as Japan bristles over yen

Enda Curran, Toru Fujioka and Andrew Mayeda

**F**INANCE chiefs from the world's biggest developed economies meeting in Japan underscored concerns that global growth is flagging and reaffirmed a pledge not to deliberately weaken their currencies, even as Japan again warned on the yen's surge.

At the end of two days of talks, Group of Seven central bank governors and finance ministers highlighted risks from terrorism, refugee flows, political conflicts and the potential for a U.K. exit from the European Union.

While officials agreed not to target currencies to stoke growth and warned of the negative consequences from disorderly moves in exchanges rates, host Japan repeated a stance that recent trading in the yen has been one sided and speculative.

Comments on the yen's moves by Finance Minister Taro Aso hint at a growing frustration inside Japan's government about the impact on exporters after the currency surged 9 percent this year, spurring speculation that the government may intervene. Aso raised the issue in a meeting with U.S. Treasury Secretary Jacob J. Lew on Saturday.

"I told him that one-sided, abrupt, and speculative moves were seen in the FX market recently, and abrupt moves in the currency market are undesirable and the stability of currencies is important," Aso said to reporters.

Tensions over the yen were



Japanese Finance Minister Taro Aso (center) speaks during a meeting of finance ministers and heads of central banks of the Group of Seven

evident over the course of the meetings, which were held at a hot springs resort in the country's north. As Japan warned about the impact of disorderly trading, Lew repeated his view that the yen's movement hasn't been overly volatile.

"It's a pretty high bar to have disorderly conditions," Lew told reporters.

To be sure, Japan remains a long way from its first intervention since 2011, when the G-7 sanctioned selling the yen to aid the country's recovery after a devastating earthquake, tsunami and nuclear meltdown. A strengthening dollar amid rising bets that the U.S. Federal Reserve may lift interest rates over coming months is helping ease pressure on Japan's exporters.

Aso also made it clear that the difference of opinion with the U.S. is manageable. "They have an election and we have an election and we both have TPP talks," Aso said. "There are various things on our plates and we of course have to say various things as that's our jobs."

Still, by choosing to be so vocal on the yen, Aso is both attempting to jawbone the currency lower and put a marker down in the event the currency again starts to appreciate rapidly.

"There's no sign that Japan and the U.S. will move closer together," said Hiroaki Muto, chief economist at Tokai Tokyo Research Center.

Beyond currencies, the G-7 didn't agree on details of how best to revive the world's economy. The group said central banks,

governments and structural reforms should be involved but stopped short of any coordinated push or an agreed-to-do list.

"There was agreement that at the end of the day it's the mix between monetary policy, fiscal policy and structural reforms that matters," said Bundesbank President Jens Weidmann.

The position emerged that country-specific conditions need to be taken into account. This may reflect the divergent views among the G-7 on whether to unleash extra government spending, as advocated by Japan and Canada, but opposed by Germany. A summary of the meeting released by Japan said it's important to implement fiscal strategy flexibly while putting debt as a share of gross domestic product on a sustainable

path.

"It is both disappointing and unexpected that there is a lack of ideas and will to secure new sources of global growth," said Douglas Paal, a vice president at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

As planned, no communique was issued after the event. Japan said its summary didn't purport to be an official consensus.

The G-7 agreed that if U.K. voters decide in a June referendum to leave the European Union, it would be the wrong decision and hurt the country's economic growth. Officials also signaled confidence that the European Union will reach a deal with Greece at the meeting of his counterparts next week.

Other discussions included tackling cross border tax evasion and an agreement on new ways to combat terrorist financing.

The talks took place against the background of slowing global growth and continuing concerns about the health of Japan's economy, the world's third largest. It dodged recession in the first quarter on the back of government spending.

Falling prices and low growth across much of the developed world has stoked concerns that governments aren't doing enough to stimulate demand as the influence of monetary policy wanes.

The meeting brought together finance ministers and central bank governors from Britain, Canada, Italy, France, Germany, Japan and the U.S., plus leaders from the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and European Union. **Bloomberg**

## corporate bits

### TRAVEL WEEKLY CHINA AWARDS SHERATON



Sheraton Grand Macao Hotel, Cotai Central received the Best Leisure Hotel of the Year in Hong Kong and Macau award, for the second consecutive year, at the 2016 China Travel & Meetings Industry Awards event hosted by Travel Weekly China.

According to Sheraton, China has always been one of its most important markets. It promises to continually de-

velop its varied service and product offerings in 2016 through the introduction of "new experiences for children and families."

Sheraton Grand Macao Hotel recently unveiled 80 new suites on the uppermost levels of the hotel, adding to its selection of room categories. There are now more than 350 suites in the 4,001-room property, according to the hotel.

### BAYER SEEN PAYING UPWARD OF USD63B TO ACQUIRE MONSANTO

Now that Bayer AG's bid for seed giant Monsanto Co. is out of the bag, attention has turned to how much the German company will need to pay. The value of the transaction could top USD63 billion, according to some analysts tracking the situation.

So far, neither side has disclosed the terms or structure of the deal. That's triggered speculation over how Bayer will finance what would be the largest ever takeover by a German company.

Concern about how Bayer might finance a deal sent its stock plunging the most in seven years on Thursday after the Leverkusen-based drugmaker confirmed its interest in Monsanto. Bayer risks losing its invest-



ment-grade rating because of the potential merger, according to Carol Levenson, director of research at Gimme Credit. The deal could put Bayer's ability to grow its other, non-agricultural businesses in jeopardy.

"Bayer's pharma business is in excellent health today, but the clock is ticking regarding rebuilding its pipeline," Berenberg's Campbell said. "Will a stretched deal to acquire Monsanto impair its ability to supplement the pharma pipeline from external sources? We think that's a real risk."

### EAST CITY PROPERTY LIMITED OPENS

East City Property Limited, a new joint venture project put together by Macau and British investors, held its opening ceremony on Saturday, which was attended by the company's managing director Ada Lam Man Tong and director Juliet Risdon.

According to Lam, the rapid economic development of Macau in recent years has made

her optimistic about the company's prospects, and has propelled her commitment to the project in providing sales, rentals and other property-related services.

In order to meet market demands, East City also has a design team to offer personalized interior services for clients, states a press release from the firm.



TAIWAN

# New president resists China 'one-country' pressure

**TAIWAN** President Tsai Ing-wen said during her inauguration speech on Friday that she will seek peaceful ties with China while resisting pressure from Beijing to acknowledge the idea that they are part of a single nation.

Tsai said she would seek common ground with China and pledged to keep the peace as she was sworn in as the island's first female leader at the head of an independence-leaning party.

In 1992, the two sides "through communication and negotiations, arrived at various joint acknowledgments and understandings. It was done in a spirit of mutual understanding and a political attitude of seeking common ground while setting aside differences," she said. I respect this historical fact."



Ma Ying-jeou, outgoing Taiwan's president (left), waves as Tsai Ing-wen, incoming Taiwan's president (second left), looks on during Tsai's inauguration ceremony

Tsai, whose Democratic Progressive Party also won control of the legislature, said that Taiwan and China need to cast off the burdens of history and seek a relationship based on peace and stability. Taiwan's ben-

chmark Taiex index rose 0.5 percent as of 1.15pm in Taipei trading.

Beijing had been stepping up pressure on Tsai to openly endorse the "one-China" principle, the understanding that both sides

belong to one China, even if they have different ideas about what that means. Tsai acknowledged the historic 1992 talks between the two sides, which she said should form the foundation for future ties with China.

"The inauguration speech's call for peaceful cross-strait relations points to some stability in the immediate future," Marie Diron, senior vice president at Moody's Investors Service said in an e-mailed statement "However, Taiwan will remain vulnerable to negative shocks to confidence related to changes, perceived or real, to Taiwan's relationships with China. Such confidence shocks from periodic increases in tensions could hamper foreign direct investment."

MDT/Bloomberg

## Roof of Hong Kong university gym collapses; 3 hurt

**T**HE roof of a Hong Kong university gym collapsed Friday, leaving three people hurt and triggering temporary panic among students who thought it was an explosion.

The City University of Hong Kong said the roof of one of the halls at its sports center fell at around 2:30 p.m., and two members of staff were hurt and a third was in shock.

It said in a statement that there were no reports of any people being trapped inside.

Local TV news showed firefighters arriving and being lowered to the accident site.

Local broadcaster RTHK quoted a student surnamed Tsui as saying people ran away from the area shouting, "Something is exploding." The cause of the collapse is being investigated.



An aerial view shows firefighters walking on the debris of the collapsed section of a building at the City University's campus

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### Strong storm kills eight, leaves four missing in Xinyi

At least eight people were killed and another four went missing in a strong storm that hammered a southern Chinese city, the official Xinhua News Agency said Saturday.

All deaths and the missing people were reported in the city of Xinyi, which was hit the hardest by Friday's storm, which drenched houses, broke levees, flooded farmland and destroyed roads.

The Xinyi government said the storm brought the heaviest rainfall since 1954, when authorities started to collect weather data.

The accumulative precipitation was 46.3 centimeters (18.2 inches) from Thursday evening to Friday afternoon, and authorities recorded 13.3 centimeters in rainfall in one hour, the Xinyi government said.

More 540,000 people from 131 villages were affected by the storm, it said.

All 2,250 local cadres were called in to help with the rescue work this weekend, and school will be suspended, the Xinyi government said.

Xinhua said a nearby town was also affected, but to a much lesser degree.



An excavator works to clear silts in Xinyi, Guangdong Province

# 135 arrested for illegally buying, selling vaccines

CHINA has arrested 135 people in 22 provinces for illegally buying and selling vaccines, in the latest scandal shaking the Chinese public's confidence in vaccine safety.

In an online statement Friday, the national prosecuting office said arrest warrants were issued for 125 people for running vaccine businesses without license.

It said 15 of them have been formally indicted, and two were found guilty. Ten health officials were arrested for on-duty negligence.

The accused health officials had worked at local public health centers and knowingly bought the illegal vaccines and used them on people, the prosecuting office said.

The massive investigation followed a case in March when a doctor in the eastern province of Shandong were found to have sold 2 million doses of improperly stored or expired



A health worker prepares a dose of H1N1 vaccine at the start of a free vaccination program intended for all Beijing residents

vaccines. Media reports said she stored the vaccines at room temperature, instead of keeping them refrigerated as required.

Vaccines not stored and managed properly can lose their effectiveness and may not protect people being inoculated. The vaccines in the March case

included those for hepatitis B, rabies, mumps and Japanese encephalitis.

The scandal drew criticism from people upset with persistent food and drug safety issues in the country. Beijing quickly ordered an investigation to crack down on illegal businesses of vaccines. AP



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# Vietnam votes for rubber-stamp assembly ahead of Obama visit

**A**HEAD of President Barack Obama's first visit to Vietnam, the country voted yesterday in once-every-five-year-elections for a rubber-stamp parliament whose membership has already been largely determined by the Communist Party.

Amid worries about soaring public debt, a serious budget deficit and China's aggressive claims in nearby seas, there's also high hope for Obama's visit, both in the government, which wants him to lift an arms export embargo so it can better deal with Beijing, and among rights activists who want him to hold to account a repressive one-party state seen as treating its critics abysmally.

Voting closed hours before Obama's arrival, and the results for elections to the 500-seat National Assembly are expected to be announced within 20 days. But they are mostly a formality: The Communist Party controls elections and has already chosen who runs and how many non-Party members have seats, according to Human Rights Watch.

Expectations may be too high for any major announcements during Obama's trip. But just the fact that he's making time to visit Vietnam during his last year in



A man walks pass a billboard of Vietnam's Parliamentary Election in Hanoi

office, when a president's every waking moment is meticulously choreographed, signals its importance to his administration as it boosts focus on Asia, generally, and stands up to China's rising assertiveness in the region, more specifically.

Obama must balance a desire to support Southeast Asian nations like Vietnam as they con-

front China over disputed maritime territory with worries about the tension with Beijing this will cause and about Vietnam's reluctance to improve its terrible human rights record.

Eventually lifting the arms sale embargo would remove a final vestige of wartime animosity and signal a strategic commitment between the former enemies.

U.S. lawmakers, however, have urged the president to first make sure Vietnam's rights record has improved, and more political activists are released, before lifting the ban.

When he lands in Hanoi, and then moves south to Ho Chi Minh City, formerly Saigon, he will see a vibrant, bustling land where many have been lifted from poverty in recent years. But Vietnam also struggles with public debt, the legacy of the war — unexploded ordinances, for instance — and environmental problems, like drought and salt intrusion in the country's main rice-growing region.

Some 69 million people are eligible to vote for the 14th National Assembly. A total of 500 deputies will be elected out of 870 candidates. Of them, 458 must belong to the Vietnam Communist Party, which is the only party allowed to govern under the constitution. Among those contesting, 339 candidates are women, accounting for 38.97 per-

cent, while 204 candidates are from ethnic minorities, making up 23.45 percent, according to the list of candidates released by the National Election Council in late April.

China is a major issue here, and especially its reclamation of land in disputed seas and its large-scale construction of military outposts on the reclaimed land. The United States worries that conflict could break out, but also about the ability of shipping and navies to move freely in the region.

Ahead of Obama's visit, in what was seen as a goodwill gesture, Vietnam granted early release from prison to a prominent dissident Catholic priest. The Rev. Nguyen Van Ly has served several long terms in prison or been under house arrest for promoting political and religious freedoms.

Both Washington and international rights groups criticize Vietnam for jailing people who peacefully express their views by using vaguely worded security laws. Hanoi says that only lawbreakers are punished. In March, seven bloggers and activists were sentenced for "abusing democratic freedoms" and "spreading anti-state propaganda." AP

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## ANALYSIS

# Why junta rules Thailand, with no end in sight

THAILAND'S military seized power from an elected government on May 22, 2014, with the justification that it wanted to end chaotic and violent political confrontations that had wracked the country for years. But more than an attempt to restore stability was at play.

Here's a look at the reasons for, and consequences of, the coup led two years ago Sunday by Gen. Prayuth Chan-ocha, who continues to rule as prime minister:

**WHY?**

The coup really was traditional ruling elite's latest and most decisive intervention in what is now a decade-long war for political power with billionaire telecommunications tycoon-turned-politician Thaksin Shinawatra.

Thaksin was a popular prime minister from 2001 until he was booted by an earlier coup in 2006. After years of political turmoil and musical chairs, his sister Yingluck Shinawatra came to power in a landslide election victory in 2011. Her government was ousted in the 2014 coup following about six months of protests and political street-fighting that paralyzed Bangkok, the capital.

Arrogant and flexible in his ethics, Thaksin alienated the educated, urban middle class and alarmed traditional ruling circles — royalists and the military — who also feared his lock on the electorate challenged the power structure. The military also worried he would interfere in the succession when the revered and ailing King Bhumibol Adulyadej — on the throne since 1946 — ended his reign.

Thaksin has lived abroad since 2008 to avoid serving prison time for a corruption conviction he says was politically motivated. The anti-Yingluck protests were sparked by an amnesty bill that could have allowed Thaksin to return to Thailand a free man.

**LIFE TODAY**

The junta has since restored order, but at the cost of suspending many civil liberties, most notably freedom of expression.

The military holds near-absolute power through Article 44 of the junta-imposed interim constitution. It allows Prayuth to take any measures deemed necessary to promote public order and unity.

Most of the repression so far has been applied with a touch more paternalistic than brutal. When threats fail to keep critics and dissidents in line, they are detained at military bases, usually for no more than a week, for interrogation sessions called "attitude ad-

AP PHOTO



Thai Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha (right), arrives at Government House before a cabinet meeting in Bangkok

justment." One major exception: Those convicted of insulting the monarchy face up to 15 years in prison.

Lately, however, junta officials frustrated by repeat offenders have suggested they be sent to "re-education camps," which implies at least longer detentions. Another ominous development is the prosecution of human rights lawyers.

Military courts are empowered to try certain types of civilian cases. In March, the military were given police-like powers to seize assets, search premises and arrest and detain criminal suspects.

Junta critics have expressed particular outrage over the recent arrest of the mother of a pro-democracy activist. Her alleged crime: failing to rebuke a Facebook friend who sent an alleged anti-monarchist message.

**ECONOMY**

The junta inherited a lagging economy, with policymakers hindered by years of political instability. Macroeconomic indicators showed Thailand underperforming much of the region, though this year's estimated first-quarter growth of 3.2 percent was stronger than expected.

Thailand's export-led economy was especially vulne-

rable to China's downturn. Two of the strongest export sectors face other problems as well. Agriculture has been weakened by severe drought, while scandals in the fishing and seafood industry — involving labor abuses and illegal fishing practices — risked sanctions in the markets of the EU and the United States. Tourism, however, has remained strong, even after a bomb blast last year in central Bangkok killed 20 people.

Boosting investment has been difficult, with some ambitious infrastructure projects stalled in part due to political uncertainties. Instead, the government has focused mainly on increasing consumption to stimulate the economy, particularly in rural areas. These measures, such as farming subsidies, were similar to Thaksin government policies that his critics derided as populist giveaways to buy voters' loyalty.

What concerns economists is that the junta's generally narrow focus on political stability constrains it from tackling the country's acknowledged structural problems — competitiveness, industrial production capacity, productivity, education and training, state-owned-enterprise reform — that the pre-coup turmoil allowed to fester.

**FOREIGN RELATIONS**

Traditionally close relations between the United States and Thailand, its oldest ally in Asia, have seemingly been shaken. Moves by Bangkok to cozy up to Beijing have been widely interpreted as a response to Washington's scolding of the military for uprooting democracy and violating human rights.

The U.S. suspended USD4.7 million in security assistance funds and stopped top-level diplomatic exchanges. Washington has made clear that those restrictions will remain until civilian rule is restored. Prayuth, however, has been able to visit the U.S. for multilateral events. The U.S. has also continued to stage in Thailand its largest multilateral military exercise in the Asia-Pacific, albeit it on a smaller scale than before the coup.

Thaksin's most virulent critics regard U.S. cheerleading for liberal democracy as tantamount to backing for the former prime minister. Junta officials have expressed their annoyance at Washington, but how deep their anger actually runs is hard to gauge — anti-American statements play well with their supporters, but military-to-military relations run deep.

Bangkok's flirtations with Beijing involve relatively mo-

dest investments, closer military relations, and an increasing willingness to extradite Beijing's political opponents, despite international criticism. At the same time, however, Thailand has stood fast against unfavorable financing terms offered by the Chinese for a much-desired major rail project, and has expressed interest in joining the U.S.-led Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement.

**THE FUTURE**

Thailand's ruling generals have made clear they are not planning to yield control anytime soon. Initial plans to hold an election in 2015 were deferred until 2016, and are now deferred again until 2017.

Their proposed draft constitution is fashioned to keep power in the hands of their allies in the traditional elite — using the courts and bureaucracy as their tools — at the expense of the voters' political representatives. One provision could allow for an unelected prime minister — a concept many Thais believed dead and buried a generation ago along with military dictatorship. Another would see the junta remain in existence for five years after the polls for what is described as a "transitional period."

The draft charter will be voted on in an Aug. 7 referendum that amounts to the first measurement of public sentiment toward the military government. The exercise will be far from free and fair — campaigning for or against the draft is subject to nebulous rules that could land activists up to 10 years in prison. Even the sale of a "Vote No" T-shirt is considered against the law.

Prayuth has said the junta will press ahead with its plans regardless of the outcome, suggesting that if the draft charter is rejected, a replacement will be enacted without a popular vote. In any case, a rejection would deeply undercut the legitimacy the junta has claimed for itself.

**FINAL WORD**

The streets of Bangkok may be calm, and the country's resorts thronging with tourists. But the problem the junta faces is that it has not moved the country one inch away from the polarized politics it claimed to be seeking an end to, since it has been a party to the conflict all along. AP

# Taliban official: Group leader killed in drone strike

Mirwais Khan, Lynne O'Donnell, Kabul

A senior commander of the Afghan Taliban confirmed yesterday that the extremist group's leader, Mullah Mohammed Akhtar Mansour, has been killed in a U.S. drone strike.

Mullah Abdul Rauf, who recently reconciled with Mansour after initially rebelling against his ascension to the leadership, told The Associated Press that Mansour died in the strike late Friday "in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border area."

Afghanistan's intelligence agency confirmed Sunday that Mansour had been killed.

Earlier in the day Afghan Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah said that Mansour is "more than likely" dead. Speaking live on television as he chaired a Cabinet meeting, Abdullah said Mansour's death would have a positive impact on attempts to bring peace to Afghanistan, where the Taliban have been waging an insurgency for 15 years.

Mansour was "the main figure preventing the Taliban joining the peace process," Abdullah said. "From the day he took over the Taliban following the death of Mullah Omar, he intensified violence against ordinary citizens, especially in Afghanistan."

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, speaking in Myanmar yesterday, repeatedly referred to Mansour in the past tense. Mansour, he said "posed a continuing imminent threat to U.S. personnel in Afghanistan, Afghan civilians, Afghan security forces" and members of the U.S./NATO coalition.

He said the air strike on Mansour "sends a clear message to the world that we will continue

AP PHOTO



This photo taken by freelance photographer Abdul Salam Khan using his smart phone on Sunday, purports to show the destroyed vehicle in which Mullah Mohammad Akhtar Mansour was traveling

## Mansour controlled a substantial financial empire, largely built on smuggling drugs

to stand with our Afghan partners."

"Peace is what we want, Mansour was a threat to that effort," Kerry said. "He also was directly opposed to peace negotiations and to the reconciliation pro-

cess. It is time for Afghans to stop fighting and to start building a real future together."

Mansour formally led the Taliban after the death was announced last summer of Mullah Mohammad Omar, the movement's founder.

Mansour, Mullah Omar's deputy, concealed Mullah Omar's death for more than two years, and ran the Taliban in his name until the death was revealed by the Afghan government.

The revelation caused wide fissures in the movement that Mansour worked hard to mend. Mullah Rauf was an early detractor of Mansour's but decided earlier this year to declare loyalty to him in the interest of unifying the movement.

Earlier, the U.S. Department of Defense said a drone strike had targeted Mansour "in a remote area of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region."

Afghan officials, who spoke on the condition that they not be named as they were not authorized to speak to media on the subject, said the drone strike took place in Pakistan's Baluchistan province, near the village of Ahmad Wal.

The Afghan government has long accused the Pakistani authorities of harboring and supporting the Afghan Taliban.

The drone strike targeted Mansour's vehicle which was carrying Mansour and one other person at the time, a U.S. military source said.

Another Taliban source identified the driver as Muhammad Azam Hasanai, and said the vehicle the two men were traveling in was completely destroyed.

After taking office in 2014, Ghani prioritized appeasing the Pakistani authorities in the hope that they would encourage the Taliban to participate in a dialogue aimed at ending the war.

Overtures to Islamabad failed, however, and earlier this year Mansour's Talibansaid that they rejected peace talks and would not participate.

A four-country process with Afghanistan, Pakistan, China and the United States appears to have floundered, with Kabul refusing to send a delegation to the most recent round of talks, sending only the ambassador to Islamabad.

A senior Afghan official, who also spoke only on condition of anonymity, said Mansour controlled a substantial financial empire, largely built on smuggling drugs produced in southern Afghanistan's Helmand province. Different Taliban factions have recently fought over control of smuggling routes, the official said, an indication that the group's ideological discipline and unity was slipping.

"When they started fighting for power, that was the erosion of the legitimacy of their own rank and file," he said.

The official said there had been a recent shift in the balance of power from Mansour to his deputy, Surajuddin Haqqani, a leader of the notoriously brutal Haqqani network. It is not clear, however, which commander or faction will now take over the leadership of the group.

Mullah Mohammad Yaqub, the son of Taliban founder Mullah Omar, is popular, charismatic and believed to favor participation in a peace talks. He controls the Taliban's military commissions in 15 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces and, like Rauf, recently reconciled with Mansour. **AP**

## Greece braces for more austerity

**G**REEK Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras braces for yet another vote on additional austerity measures, as European creditors remain at loggerheads with the International Monetary Fund about how much debt relief the country will get for its pain.

Lawmakers in Athens are scheduled to vote today [Macau time] on an omnibus bill that includes measures ranging from the taxation of diamond dust and coffee to the transfer

of thousands of real estate assets from the state to a new privatization fund. The debate will test the resilience of Tsipras's three-seat parliamentary majority, as euro-area states resist calls from the IMF to set less ambitious fiscal targets and hand Greece more generous debt relief.

Approval of the measures is one of the prior actions Greece has to fulfill to unlock the next tranche of emergency loans from the European Stability

Mechanism, the currency bloc's crisis-fighting fund. The Eurogroup of 19 finance ministers will convene tomorrow to assess the country's compliance with its latest bailout agreement struck in the summer of 2015. A positive assessment is also a condition for the Eurogroup to ease the servicing terms for over 200 billion euros (USD225 billion) of bailout loans handed to the country since 2010.

**Bloomberg**

BLOOMBERG



The Greek parliament

Andrea Rothman, Alan Levin  
and Tarek El-Tablawy

# EgyptAir smoke alarms add puzzling twist to fatal flight

**E**GYPTAIR Flight 804's automatic radio messages about smoke in the front portion of the cabin were generated minutes before controllers lost contact with the aircraft over the Mediterranean Sea, French accident investigator BEA said Saturday.

The electronic signals offer a puzzling twist to what may have happened to the flight, which went down on Thursday with 66 people aboard. Two error messages, the first at 2:26 a.m. local time, suggested there was a fire on board, while later alerts indicated some type of failure in the plane's electrical equipment.

While similar signals have preceded air accidents in the past, the warnings aren't associated with a sudden disappearance from radar as occurred with the Airbus A320 over the Mediterranean. A Malaysian Airlines flight shot down over Ukrainian airspace in July 2014 broke apart so quickly that on-board systems didn't have time to send distress messages.

## Officials aren't ruling out any possible cause, including a deliberate act or malfunction

"It's too long for an explosion and too short for a traditional fire," said John Cox, a former A320 pilot who is president of the Washington-based consultancy Safety Operating Systems. "It says we have more question than we have answers."

Spanning three minutes, the warnings were followed by alerts that fumes were detected by smoke detectors, one in a lavatory and the other in



This pictures posted on Saturday, on the official Facebook page of the Egyptian Armed Forces spokesman show part of the wreckage from EgyptAir flight 804



the compartment below the cockpit where the plane's computers and avionics systems are stored, according to the Aviation Herald. CNN reported that the time stamps of the alerts match the approximate time the aircraft went missing.

In the case of a mid-flight fire, the pilots would have been expected to radio a distress call and begin attempts to divert, Cox said. No such radio calls came from the EgyptAir plane.

The transmissions, which are automatically sent to ground stations so airlines can monitor whether a plane needs maintenance, will probably provide valuable clues once they're matched up against the plane's crash-proof flight recorders.

Egypt's Ministry of Civil Aviation said in a statement Saturday that transmissions collected from the plane may have different causes and require further analysis before drawing any conclusions.

"We are looking at all the in-

formation that is collected but it is far too early to make a judgment or decision on single source of information," it said.

Egyptian and French investigators said they couldn't comment on reports by CBS News that said the cockpit voice and flight-data recorders had been found. The network suggested on Saturday that search teams had discovered the devices near a site where body parts and aircraft debris had been located.

The so-called black boxes, painted bright orange, store key flight metrics and sounds from the cockpit that could definitively detail what downed the plane. It took salvage crews several years to locate and recover the devices from the doomed Air France AF447 flight that went down in the Atlantic Ocean in 2009. Malaysian Airlines MH370 still hasn't been found more than two years after it disappeared.

Egypt's army has released both images and video footage of Flight 804 debris that

show an intact yellow life jacket lying beside wrecked seat cushioning, tattered clothes and EgyptAir-branded metal plane parts, quashing hopes of finding any survivors.

The condition of those remains and the way debris was found scattered may offer early clues about how the plane was downed, with a wide field of small pieces pointing to a mid-air breakup. Large chunks of wreckage might suggest the aircraft hit the water largely intact.

The flight lost contact in the

## It's too long for an explosion and too short for a traditional fire.

JOHN COX  
FORMER A320 PILOT

middle of the night in the wider area of the Strabo trench in the so-called Hellenic Arc in the seas south of Greece, where waters are as much as 3,000 meters deep. The wreckage was discovered about 290 kilometers north of the Egyptian city of Alexandria, authorities said.

Officials aren't ruling out any possible cause, including a deliberate act or malfunction, though Egyptian Aviation Minister Sherif Fathy said the possibility of a terrorist attack is higher than a technical failure.

The jihadist group Islamic State, often quick to claim responsibility for attacks on planes and cities in the Middle East and Europe, hasn't addressed the latest incident. An Islamic State spokesman released an audio message on Saturday confirming the death of Abu Umar Al-Shishani, a top commander, in a U.S. airstrike in March, but didn't discuss the EgyptAir downing. It was unclear when the message had been recorded. **Bloomberg**

AD

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## what's ON



## RUBBER DUCK MACAU TOUR

UNTIL: May 29, 2016

## • THEME GAMES

TIME: 10am-6pm (Saturdays and Sundays)

VENUE: Outside the Macao Science Centre

## • RUBBER DUCK GARDEN

TIME: 10:30am-8pm (Fridays to Sundays)

VENUE: Macau Fisherman's Wharf

ADMISSION: Free to all activities

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2870 6222

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(Except Wednesdays, open on public holidays)

VENUE: 76, Rua Almirante Costa Cabral

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8399 6699

## MACAU GRAND PRIX MUSEUM &amp; WINE MUSEUM

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

VENUE: Rua Luis Gonzaga Gomes, 431, basement

(Tourism Activities Centre-CAT)

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8798 4108 / 2833 3000

## MACAU SCIENCE CENTRE

TIME: 10am-6pm daily

(Except Thursdays, open on public holidays)

VENUE: Macau Science Centre,

Avenida Dr. Sun Yat-Sen

ADMISSION: Exhibition Centre MOP25;

Planetarium MOP60-80

ENQUIRIES: (853) 2888 0822

## "WEINGART TYPOGRAPHY" – EXHIBITION

BY THE MUSEUM FÜR GESTALTUNG ZÜRICH

TIME: 10am-9pm

UNTIL: June 12, 2016

VENUE: Tap Seac Gallery, located at Avenida do

Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida, No. 95.

ADMISSION: Free

ENQUIRIES: (853) 8988 4000

## Offbeat

## 17 TAIWAN TOURISTS INJURED IN TRAIN-BUS CRASH IN SWITZERLAND



Seventeen tourists from Taiwan were injured when a German high-speed train collided with a tour bus in the Swiss lakeside town of Interlaken, Swiss police and a Taiwanese official said Saturday.

Police in the nearby Swiss capital of Bern said in a statement the accident happened Friday night at a

railway crossing involving a bus registered in neighboring Austria. Police were investigating the cause of the accident.

Bern police spokesman Nicolas Kessler said none of the injured had sustained life-threatening injuries and most had already left a hospital. Taiwan's CNA news agency reported that 12 people sustained minor injuries and another five were in critical condition.

A spokeswoman for the Taiwan mission in Geneva said Taiwanese diplomats were working to get details and reaching out to the tourists to provide translation and other consular services.

Donatella Del Vecchio, a spokeswoman for the Swiss railway operator, said no one inside the train that began in Berlin was injured and train services resumed after a brief interruption.

## TV canal macau

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 13:00 | TDM News (Repeated)                                |
| 13:30 | News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast                      |
| 15:00 | RTPi Live  |
| 18:00 | Documentary (Repeat)                               |
| 18:50 | Contraponto (Repeated)                             |
| 19:50 | Soap Oepra   |
| 20:30 | Main News, Financial & Weather Report              |
| 21:00 | TDM Sports   |
| 22:10 | Helena's Shadow                                    |
| 23:00 | TDM News   |
| 23:30 | UEFA Champions League 2015/2016 Magazine Programme |
| 00:10 | Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)   |
| 00:40 | RTPi Live  |

## cinema



## CINETEATRO

19 MAY - 25 MAY



## X-MEN: APOCALYPSE

ROOM 1

(2D) 2.00, 4.40, 9.50 pm

(3D) 7.15 pm

Director: Bryan Singer

Starring: James McAvoy, Michael Fassbender,

Jennifer Lawrence

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 144min

## MONEY MONSTER

ROOM 2

2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Jodie Foster

Starring: George Clooney, Julia Roberts,

Jack O'Connell

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 98min



## TERRA FORMARS

ROOM 3

2.30, 4.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Takashi Miike

Starring: Hideaki Ito, Tomohisa Yamashita,

Shun Oguri

Language: Japanese (Cantonese/English)

Duration: 109min

## CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR

ROOM 3

6.45 pm

Director: Anthony and Joe Russo

Starring: Chris Evans, Robert Downey Jr.,

Scarlett Johansson, Sebastian Stan

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 147min

## MACAU TOWER

19 MAY - 1 JUN

## X-MEN: APOCALYPSE

1.15, 4.00, 6.45, 9.30 pm

Director: Bryan Singer

Starring: James McAvoy, Michael Fassbender,

Jennifer Lawrence

Language: English (Cantonese)

Duration: 144min

## this day in history



## 1998 LEADERS WELCOME 'YES' VOTE FOR N IRELAND

The Prime Minister, Tony Blair, has welcomed the resounding "yes" vote in the referendum on the Good Friday Agreement on Northern Ireland, calling it "a day for joy".

The referendum, held yesterday on both sides of the border, returned a resounding "yes" vote with 71% of voters from Northern Ireland and 94% of those in the Irish Republic showing their support for the Good Friday peace agreement.

"This is the result we have worked for and wanted," said Mr Blair. "It's another giant stride along the path to peace, hope and the future."

The agreement signed last Easter seeks to resolve relationships within Northern Ireland - between Northern Ireland and the Republic and between both parts of Ireland and England, Scotland and Wales - and pave the way for devolution from Westminster with a new all-inclusive Assembly.

It was signed on 10 April - Good Friday - by all interested parties except Rev Dr Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party and Bob McCartney's United Kingdom Unionist Party. They objected to the presence of the IRA's political wing Sinn Fein in the multi-party talks leading up to the agreement.

The Northern Ireland Secretary, Mo Mowlam, told reporters she was delighted with the two nations' endorsement of the agreement.

Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble said: "It is quite clear that a majority of unionists - not as big a majority of unionists as I would have liked - but a clear majority - have endorsed this agreement. We have taken an important step forward."

John Hume, leader of the nationalist SDLP, said that for the first time the people of both sides of the Irish border were speaking as one.

Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams said he was prepared to sit down with David Trimble in a new Northern Ireland assembly "now".

Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern said the overwhelming result was the true "voice of the people".

The British Government will press ahead next month with elections for a Northern Ireland Assembly.

Courtesy BBC News

## IN CONTEXT

After the euphoria of the positive vote for a peaceful solution to the problems of Northern Ireland came the reality. The first three years of the agreement's implementation saw accusations and counter-accusations from both sides of the divide.

Unionists said the republicans had not complied with the spirit of the agreement's requirement for the decommissioning of arms.

And Sinn Fein accused the British government of failing to demilitarize quickly enough. It added that it could not force anyone to give up arms and that the agreement only stated that the parties should use all their power to influence the process.

Disagreement over decommissioning and policing led to the suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly twice in 18 months - in February-May 2000 and in August 2001.

The issue has remained the major stumbling block in talks between all parties seeking to restore devolution since the Northern Ireland Assembly was suspended in October 2002 over alleged intelligence gathering by republicans.

Direct rule finally ended in May 2007 when the Northern Ireland Assembly met with the return of devolution and DUP leader Ian Paisley as first minister.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 Heed your intuition, no matter how subtle the hints are.

Taurus April 20-May 20 It's important to care, but caring too deeply just clouds your thinking.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 The insights you're having now may be sudden, but they are right on the money.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 You're just not sure what to do and you're out of stalling tactics.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Whether you collect modern art or antiques, your collection is growing.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You acknowledge that everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but when it comes to where your money goes, yours is the only view that really matters.

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 When someone asks for money, they're asking for much more than small change.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Some days you feel dull but today your polish is intense.

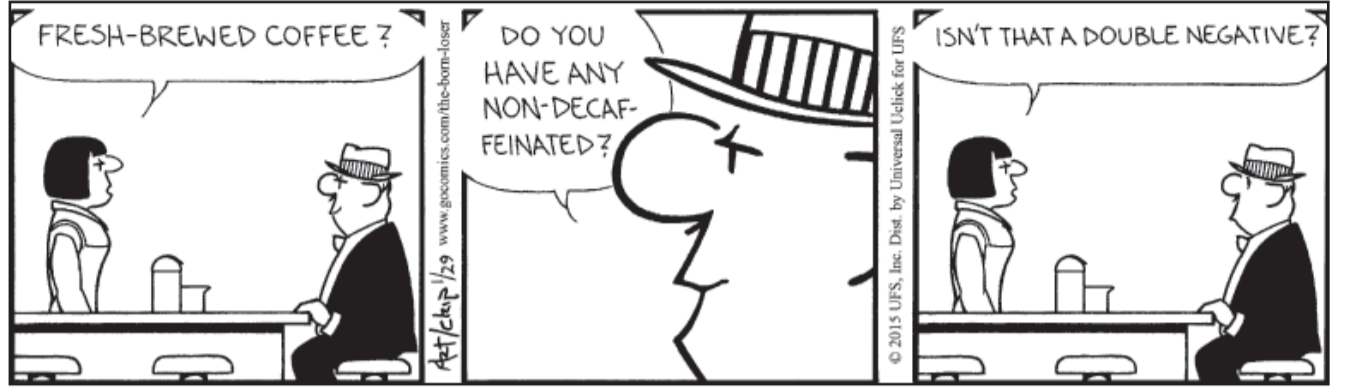
Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 The world economy seems intimately connected to you.

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You don't consider yourself one of the sheep.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Like on a roller coaster, when things feel like they've slowed down, it means you're gaining altitude.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 You're feeling so warm and fuzzy you'd happily throw your coat down over a puddle.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

WEATHER

Table with columns: MIN, MAX, CONDITION. Rows for CHINA (Beijing, Harbin, etc.) and WORLD (Moscow, Frankfurt, etc.).

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Stop on \_\_\_; 6- Monks; 10- Historical periods; 14- Woman's one-piece undergarment; 15- Sicilian spewer; 16- Uh-uh; 17- Corpulent; 18- Distribute cards; 19- Trick; 20- In and of \_\_\_; 22- Located; 24- Long fish; 26- Slants; 27- Supervise; 31- CPR specialist; 32- Hawaiian state birds; 33- 1980 Dom DeLuise film; 36- Precious stone; 39- Ear-related; 40- World book; 41- Adorable; 42- Slender bar; 43- Purchaser; 44- Exposed; 45- Structural engineer's software; 46- Use too often; 48- Scram; 51- Digit of the foot; 52- Of the windpipe; 54- Blanch; 59- Trading center; 60- Final Four org.; 62- "Goodnight" girl; 63- Rights org.; 64- Mrs. Dithers, in "Blondie"; 65- Roman goddess of the hearth; 66- Capone foe; 67- Biblical twin; 68- Bar, legally;

DOWN: 1- Yours, in Tours; 2- It's owed; 3- March time; 4- Gds.; 5- Blind; 6- Gave grub; 7- Hwys.; 8- "Delta of Venus" author Nin; 9- Like some diets; 10- Mesmerized; 11- Way to go; 12- Church areas; 13- Highly ranked competitor in sporting events; 21- Service charge; 23- Man, in Milan; 25- Southpaw; 27- \_\_\_ about; 28- Rejection power; 29- Oklahoma city; 30- VCR button; 34- Bar order; 35- Fortuneteller's deck; 36- Mentor; 37- Hot times abroad; 38- Ancient Persian; 40- Group of spectators; 41- Teen's desire; 43- It's drawn in a lavatory; 44- Dwelling place for bees; 45- Desert plant; 47- Pledge; 48- Clamp; 49- Viscounts' superiors; 50- Folded food; 52- Govt. agent; 53- Yuri's love; 55- Angers; 56- Student's hurdle; 57- Within (prefix); 58- Type of tide; 61- Non-pro sports org.

Friday's solution crossword grid with filled-in words.

Large crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-68.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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



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# Uncertainty faces Van Gaal despite ending Man United drought

Rob Harris, London

**L**OUIS van Gaal had little time to savor delivering Manchester United's first trophy since the Alex Ferguson dynasty ended three years ago.

Within an hour of collecting the FA Cup after Saturday's victory over Crystal Palace, Van Gaal left his jubilant players to be faced with more uncertainty about his United future now the season is over.

For six months United has not challenged the veracity of reports that the American ownership will ditch Van Gaal before his third season in charge and bring in Jose Mourinho. United's leadership still remained silent on Saturday, rather than publicly backing Van Gaal.

Just before Van Gaal entered the Wembley Stadium news conference after the 2-1 victory over Palace in extra time, fresh reports emerged that Mourinho's hiring

was inching closer.

"I don't want to talk about leaving," Van Gaal responded when it was highlighted that United hasn't denied it plans to recruit Mourinho.

Mourinho did not comment when approached by reporters at a boxing event in London on Saturday. Fired by Chelsea in December, Mourinho told The Associated Press last week that he

**You are thinking everything is possible at Manchester United. No. I'm sorry. It is not.**

LOUIS VAN GAAL

would sign a contract with a new team by the end of next month.

Van Gaal had the air of a manager on the way out during a combative exchange with reporters at Wembley. The 64-year-old Dutchman delivered a defense of his United reign and claimed internal restrictions prevented him from achieving more this season. United failed to achieve its ultimate goal of Champions League qualification after finishing fifth in the Premier League.

Asked about targets for next season if he stayed in charge, Van Gaal responded: "That's dependable because also last season I have asked for players but you don't think that the players I have asked [for] have come."

Van Gaal complained that clubs more than double the cost of players when the record 20-time English champions make an approach. "I need the players that I have asked [for]," he said. "I have



United players celebrate at the end of the English FA Cup final

said I want creative, fast wingers [...] and we didn't do that because it was not possible." Clicking his fingers, Van Gaal said: "You are thinking everything is possible at Manchester United. No. I'm sorry. It is not."

Nor does winning the world's oldest football cup competition necessarily guarantee keeping your job. What Van Gaal has done — largely due to injuries — is adhere to the club's traditions of utilizing academy graduates. One produced the winning moment in extra time as Jesse Lingard netted five minutes after United was reduced to 10 men in the 135th FA Cup final.

The Palace defense only half-cleared Antonio Valencia's cross and Lingard volleyed into the top

corner of the net to complete United's comeback.

"We've had a tough end to the season but I thought we worked very hard today — our determination got us through this so I'm delighted," United captain Wayne Rooney said.

United showed the fighting spirit often lacking under Van Gaal to provide a winning end to the campaign.

It is the first time United has won the FA Cup since 2004 — one of 38 major trophies Ferguson won as manager from 1986 to 2013. Ferguson's immediate successor, David Moyes, was fired after less than a year in charge. Van Gaal has managed to end the club's rare trophy drought, and the Dutchman has titles in four countries in management. **AP**

AD

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# Villa owner wants team promoted and to help football in China

Gerry Shih, Beijing

**T**HE little-known businessman who bought Aston Villa is hoping to improve both the English club and Chinese football in general.

Xia Jiantong, who goes by the English name Tony, told The Associated Press he intends to use cutting-edge management theory and sports science to bring Villa to the pinnacle of the European game — and then bring those lessons back to China.

“In China’s going-out strategy, it’s been proven that buying foreign firms with know-how and then bringing that back to the domestic industry has been the most efficient route,” Xia said, adding that he would establish extensive programs for Chinese players to train at Aston Villa.

Improving Chinese football, he said, “is actually our biggest objective.”

Xia bought Aston Villa, which was relegated from the Premier League after a dismal season in which they finished last, for USD87 million. He denied that the deal involved any government or corporate backers aside from his business con-

AP PHOTO



The little known Chinese businessman Recon Group CEO Xia Jiantong speaks during an interview about buying Aston Villa

glomerate, the Recon Group.

Chinese President Xi Jinping recently urged the country to become a global football superpower and several high-profile firms have bought stakes in clubs, including Atletico Madrid and Manchester City. But until now, no one had acquired entire clubs.

To help improve the game in China, Xia said he is already in talks to bring junior high and high school players to train in Birmingham this summer.

A soft-spoken businessman who studied at Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Xia heads the Re-

con Group, which owns Lotus Health Group, the world’s second largest maker of the food additive monosodium glutamate. Lotus lost \$78 million last year, according to Shanghai stock exchange filings. Another subsidiary produces digital hardware for urban infrastructure.

Xia said he considered eight prospective clubs, including teams in Spain and Italy, before settling on Villa, which he said attracted him with its “mature” academy system.

He said he pledged to deploy better technology to monitor players’ on-field performance, track statistics and gauge

physical workloads to minimize injuries — areas in which he said other clubs he visited performed better than Villa. He also intended to use data to award financial bonuses to players.

“This isn’t different from management science,” Xia said in one of several allusions to his business experience.

He compared Aston Villa to an undervalued business suffering from “several years of substandard management” and could achieve its potential with better direction from the top.

Questioned about his lack of football credentials, Xia said

he has looked into the business for 10 years and has diligently studied the second-tier English Championship, the league in which Aston Villa will compete in next season.

“I actually think I have [a] better foundation in football than other business areas we’ve recently entered,” Xia said.

He targeted a swift return to the Premier League but ruled out “burning money” to bring success like Manchester City, whose Qatari owners have pumped in millions. Although he has publicly stated he would spend 50 to 60 million pounds on player transfers, Xia backed away from the figures on Friday, saying he would consult with the new coach he was in the process of hiring.

“We want Villa in its genes to be sustainable and healthy, including in academy development,” Xia said. “If you look at all the money-burning clubs they’re showing problems right now. On the international level, Spain and Germany couldn’t sustain their success with just one superstar.”

Xia said he is now down to three final coaching candidates — one of whom is believed to be former Chelsea manager Robert Di Matteo — but declined to comment, saying he would announce the selection next week.

After hiring someone, Xia said his first order of business will be to fix the atmosphere around the relegated club.

“This year, Spurs were so good until they lost the chance for the title and lost to a relegated team,” he said. “So in sport, it’s crucial to consider spirit, psychology, leaders’ attitudes. Especially for Villa now, the biggest priority for us is to fix everyone’s confidence, from the players to the coaches.” AP

**I actually think I have [a] better foundation in football than other business areas we’ve recently entered.**

XIA JIANTONG

## BADMINTON

### Denmark tops Indonesia to win first Thomas Cup title

**HANS-KRISTEN** Vittinghus beat Ihsan Maulana Mustofa 21-15, 21-7 as Denmark defeated Indonesia 3-2 on Sunday to claim its first Thomas Cup badminton title.

The Danes, eight-time runners-up, had lost four previous finals to Indonesia, which was trying for a record-extending

14th championship.

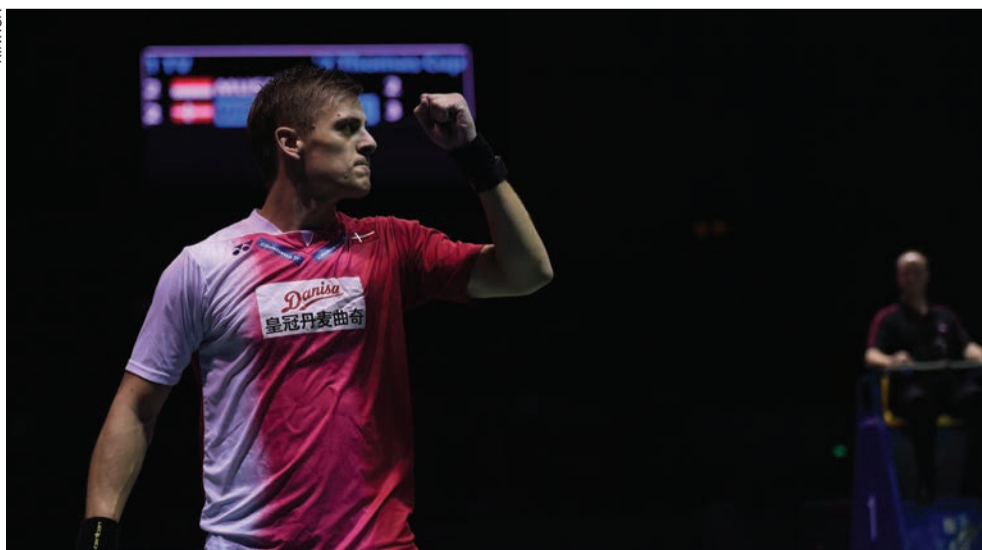
Denmark’s Viktor Axelsen beat Tommy Sugiarto 21-17, 21-18 in the opening singles match but Mohammad Ahsan and Hendra Setiawan pulled Indonesia even by beating Mads Conrad-Petersen and Mads Pieler Kolding 21-18, 21-13 in doubles.

Jan Jorgensen beat An-

thony Sinisuka Ginting 21-17, 21-12 to restore the lead for Denmark before Angga Pratama and Ricky Karanda Suwardi made it 2-2 with a 21-16, 21-14 win over Kim Astrop and Anders Skaarup Rasmussen.

China beat South Korea 3-1 on Saturday to win the women’s Uber Cup. AP

XINHUA



Hans-Kristian Vittinghus of Denmark celebrates during the men’s singles match against Ihsan Maulana Mustofa of Indonesia

opinion

**Rear Window**

Severo Portela



**HIGH DEGREE OF COMPLACENCY**

Zhang Dejiang's recent visit to Hong Kong was, as the saying goes, one of sticks and carrots, but with a twist: the stick sounded loud and clear and ready to serve... the carrot came so vague that we do have to mention it to justify the quote.

Speaking during a banquet in his honor, the chairman of China's National People's Congress, number three in the Beijing political hierarchy and the highest official to climb down to the HKSAR since the 2014 Occupy Movement, Zhang underlined how inappropriate it will be to misinterpret and misguide or be misguided by localism. This is soft speaking to warn that independence (preparatory acts) will not be tolerated.

On the carrot-giving side, Zhang Dejiang stated that when the SAR is over, Hong Kong will not be absorbed by the mainland. That is to say it will not lose its autonomy.

However, we should not interpret an equivalency between the degrees of autonomy and complacency. Zhang Dejiang used his comments on the perversion or corruption of localism as something unacceptable, as an equivocal and somewhat redundant call to the SAR government and the Judiciary to safeguard the rule of law. Some observers believe Zhang was speaking to discredit certain court rulings favoring some pro-democracy activists. Directing the law?

Less paradoxical and more carrot-like was the visiting member of the Politburo Standing Committee openness to incorporate (or allowing room to take advantage of) Hong Kong in the One Belt, One Road development strategy as the means to give a boost to the sluggish local economy. This is the call the Central Government is making to the SARs of Hong Kong and Macau.

China's economy is facing enormous - even by China's standards - challenges, described by the Economist magazine as The Coming Debt Bust. "China requires more and more credit to generate less and less growth". Indeed, China will do better with the integration of HK and Macau in the PRD. The other way is not a matter of autonomy but of complacency.

Perhaps with an alternate formulation the issue becomes easier to grasp: Beijing has too much on its hands to be troubled by any nuisance - political, social, or other - coming from its special regions; on the other hand, it provides tickets to ride the One Belt, One Road.

To be troubled, as mentioned above, is to be prodded by the occurrence of any event that scratches the political statute, the autonomy granted by the Basic law, and good governance, generally speaking. The Jinan University donation episode got good marks in all sections.

Like a perfect storm, the MOP123 million donation raised questions of transparency (somebody failed to recall that the CE rules over the Macau Foundation), probably rising from the inertia, not of being checked as it is not the case in the MSAR but of always moving along no matter what and who may be in the way. Just to give an example, what is the point of trying to protect Coloane from the construction greed?! Or how should we evaluate an Urban Renewal Council that rules in absence of Environmental Bureau representatives?!

From the angle of the nuisance, who came and how did they come up with the idea of a non-humanitarian donation, totally outside the framework of the cooperation within the PRD? It looked like an arbitrary premium gift. Article 104 of the Basic Law reads: "All the financial revenues of the MSAR shall be managed and controlled by the Region itself and shall not be handed over to the Central People's Government."

Anyway, it is too late to control the damage a single donation brought to the Executive: demonstrators once again find a space in the streets to call for the resignation of Chui Sai On.

Finally, if not the worse at least the most compelling, the justification of the donation for reasons of the reasonability of its amount... our reason was disgusted.

**THE GUNMAN FIRES INTO CROWD AT CONCERT IN AUSTRIA, KILLING TWO**

A gunman fired shots yesterday into a small crowd attending an open air concert organized by a local motorcycle club, killing two people and wounding 11 others before shooting himself to death, police said.

Police said the overnight shooting in Austria's westernmost Vorarlberg province was preceded by a loud argument between the gunman and a woman in a nearby parking lot. The man then fetched a gun out of his car, left the parking lot and went to a field that was used as a concert

venue, where he started shooting into the crowd of about 150 people, apparently at random.

They said he killed himself after returning to the parking lot. The woman was not wounded in the shooting near Nenzing, a town about 40 kilometers east of Austria's border to Liechtenstein.

Local media quoted rescue workers as saying some of the surviving victims were in serious condition. Police spokeswoman Susanne Dilp said she could not confirm that but described their wounds as "very diverse."

TAIWAN'S NEW PRESIDENT

**Xinhua praises Macau, HK media for Taipei criticism**

Daniel Beitler

BEIJING'S official media outlet, Xinhua news agency, has praised the response of some of Macau and Hong Kong's media to the Taiwanese President's inauguration speech on Friday.

Claiming to cite Chinese-language newspapers in the two Special Administrative Regions, Xinhua acclaimed local publications for their conclusion that mainland China had "expressed [a] firm stance while revealing flexibility and enough goodwill."

The accuracy of Xinhua's assessment of the reaction from the Macau and Hong Kong press remains questionable however, especially as some alleged quotes from Hong Kong publications appear to be misattributed, while others could not be found at all.

A Xinhua article yesterday accredited Sing Pao Daily News, one of the oldest Chinese newspapers in Hong Kong, as having resolved that, "the Taiwan compatriots share blood ties with us and there is no force that can separate us." However, according to a second, separate Xinhua article, this is a direct quote from the mainland's Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council.

Xinhua also claimed Sing Pao warned that if Tsai refused to publicly accept the 'One China' principle, "her plan to



Dancers perform during the inauguration ceremony of Taiwan's pro-independence President Tsai Ing-wen, in Taipei

participate in regional economic communities will be unrealistic."

There was no article relating to the inauguration of Tsai Ing-wen on Sing Pao's website yesterday when the Times tried to verify the attributed statement, and a search in the "Cross-Strait" section of the paper brought up no results.

Macao Daily News said in its editorial on Saturday that Tsai has been inconsistent over China-Taiwan relations, "changing constantly," and is becoming increasingly ambiguous on the issue.

The author of the editorial identifies herself in the piece "as a scholar who studies the history of Macau." She came to the conclusion that Tsai's desire for less reliance on the Mainland's economy, together with her intention to keep relations stable, represents an inconsistency.

Meanwhile, Hong Kong's Headline Daily said that cross-Straits relations would be adversely affected by Tsai's

opinions and that it would be difficult to have "positive interaction" between Beijing and Taipei if the new president is determined to maintain her position.

In her speech on Friday, Taiwan's newly-inaugurated president Tsai Ing-wen failed to announce her adherence to the 'One China' principle, though she stated that she would seek common ground in cross-Straits relations.

Mainland governmental entities such as the Taiwan Affairs Office responded angrily, describing Tsai's inauguration speech as an "incomplete test answer," defying the "common will of people of both sides of the Straits [... to] strive for the prospect of China's peaceful reunification."

Taiwan's counterpart organization, the Mainland Affairs Council, took a contrary view, saying that Tsai showed maximum flexibility and exemplified "good will" in her address. The council's assessment of Tsai's speech is almost identical to Xinhua's summation of the Mainland's reaction, though in reverse with each emphasizing their side's flexibility, restraint and good will.

The entity added that it would continue to communicate with the Mainland's Taiwan Affairs Office to maintain the bilateral channel [see more on page 10]. MDT

**THE DECISIVE MOMENT**



Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama greets a devotee as he arrives to lead a prayer session to mark the middle of the Tibetan holy month of Sa-Ka-Dawa at the Tsuglakhang temple in Dharmasala, India, on Saturday.

| Station                       | Air quality     |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Roadside                      | 40-60 Moderate  |
| High Density Residential Area | 90-120 Bad      |
| Ambient                       | 70-100 Moderate |

WORLD BRIEFS

**SPAIN'S** conservative Popular Party could boost its share of the vote in fresh elections next month but not by a sufficient margin to break the stalemate that has stopped politicians from forming a government since December, according to a new poll.



**SRI LANKA** The death toll from landslides and floods in Sri Lanka as a result of weeklong heavy storms has risen to 92, with soldiers searching for victims of landslides that buried three villages in the central hills pulling out eight bodies from the rubble.

**ISRAEL'S** defense minister has officially stepped down, capping a tumultuous week of politics that is expected to bring a hard-line novice into the sensitive post. Moshe Yaalon's departure clears the way for Avigdor Lieberman, leader of the hardline Yisrael Beitenu party, to join the government.

**NETHERLANDS** Fans have attacked players of Dutch team Go Ahead Eagles after a promotion-relegation playoff match against top-flight team De Graafschap Doetinchem. The Go Ahead Eagles players were celebrating after Sunday's 1-1 draw in Doetinchem ensured the team will return to the Dutch top flight next season when De Graafschap fans stormed the pitch and some aimed punches and kicks at the celebrating players.

**USA** Casino giants MGM Resorts International and Wynn Resorts Ltd. are moving forward with plans to stop buying electricity from Warren Buffett's utility in Nevada, dealing a blow to the billionaire's power service provider. MGM and Wynn have submitted applications with Nevada regulators seeking permission to leave NV Energy, a utility owned by Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc., according to filings with the Nevada Public Utilities Commission