



MILITARY CLUB MARKS 146TH ANNIVERSARY

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WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA A teenage boy sneaked into the cargo hold of an Emirates passenger plane in China and made it all the way to Dubai before being apprehended, the airline and Chinese media said yesterday. The Dubai-based airline, the Middle East's biggest, said the stowaway was found in the cargo hold of Flight EK303 from Shanghai on Friday, May 27. "We are cooperating fully with authorities in Dubai and as this is a police matter," the airline said in an emailed statement.



CHINA A 28-year-old transgender man who goes by the name of "Mr. C" has become the public face of the fight for job equality in China, where sexual and gender minorities are only beginning to emerge from virtual invisibility.
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HONG KONG Chinese residents pumped a record amount of money into Hong Kong insurance in the first quarter even as the mainland government tightened restrictions on the purchases, which serve as a popular tool for skirting the nation's capital controls.
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JUNE, MONTH OF PORTUGAL

Sereno: Consulate in Guangzhou 'to open this year'

Paulo Coutinho

PORTUGAL supports all China's "initiatives to boost Macau's interface role," namely as part of the Belt and Road initiative, the CEPA mechanism, and the Forum Macao. Consul General Vítor Sereno believes in the city's calling as an East-West meeting point, particularly in the relations between China and the Lusophone world.

Lisbon is reinforcing its presence in China with the announcement of a new diplomatic post in Guangzhou, "which will most probably open this year." The Canton office will join a network which includes the embassy in Beijing, offices in Shanghai and the consulate general for Macau and Hong Kong, which is based in the renovated historic building of the old Hospital S. Rafael - where Western medicine was first introduced to China.

Vítor Paulo da Costa Sereno, 45, arrived in Macau in 2013 and re-

cently started his second 3-year term as Consul General. With renewed "good spirits and strength" he continues to safeguard and promote the interests of Portugal, and to uphold the presence of the Portuguese community in Macau and Hong Kong, where there are 165 thousand Portuguese passport holders combined. "Until my last day here I will always fight for this," he says in an exclusive interview with the Times, speaking of the importance of keeping the Portuguese people, heritage and culture as "an integral part" of a formula that blends tradition and modernity into this city.

With a degree in law, Vítor Sereno first joined the foreign office in Lisbon in 1997. "My first assignment abroad was Guinea Bissau, a former Portuguese colony. After 2 years I was posted to the Embassy of Portugal in Buenos Aires," and then he served as consul general in Germany.

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Wong & Ouyang proposes salary cut due to slowdown in Macau, Hong Kong, China . P2 MDT REPORT

editorial

Paulo Coutinho



CANIDOOMED

WE live in a world of causes, as opposed to a world of ideologies.

From the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution throughout the 20th century, ideologies have marked, and marred, the better part of our lives. But the world as we knew it changed dramatically after the turn of the millennium, in large part due to extraordinary advances in technology and in the way we communicate.

Distances became smaller, interests became closer, exchange of information and access to information, became more and more democratic. And the world became "flat."

Today, a citizen or a concern group can call the attention of thousands worldwide with meager means and put the good or the bad word out about an issue, an interest, or a cause.

The cause against the alleged cruelty on greyhounds at the Macau Canidrome, launched by Anima through an online petition, prompted protests of thousands throughout Europe, which in turn resulted in the boycotting of dog transportation by major airlines, like Qantas, British Airways and Qatar.

News last week in Macau Daily Times on the possible closure of the Canidrome by the government drew tens of thousands to our website. The comments go from praising the government's leaning toward closing the races to intense calls to have a halt put to the operations at the Macanese racetrack.

This inflammatory chain-reaction comes as no surprise at a time when animal rights protection is on the top of most societies' political agendas, even in conservative Macau or in more or less democratic regimes – because causes, unlike ideologies, traverse society.

But the government should not look at the issue and decide on shutting down the Canidrome because of the "international pressure" or because of "the damages to Macau's international reputation." The government should decide in good conscience: because it is the right thing to do, and the sensible thing to do.

So far, the authorities seem to be taking a pragmatic approach to the problem. Increased "difficulties to import greyhounds," which already led to reducing the number of races each race night, will be a "crucial aspect" in the decision-making process. In the end, the closure of the Canidrome will happen because the operation itself failed.

The alleged animal cruelty, the claimed slaughter of 400 dogs per year combined with the ruinous business operation, which has survived for years on public funds, are reasons enough for the cause.

PS: Today Macau Daily Times enters its 9th year of publication. We take the opportunity to thank our readers, advertisers, partners and friends for your constant support. Without you, this endeavor would not have been possible.

Firm proposes salary cut due to slowdown in Macau, HK, China

ARCHITECTURAL firm Wong & Ouyang (HK) Ltd is proposing a salary cut of 15 percent for all of its staff, with the exception of those earning less than HKD18,000 per month. The Times was granted access to a May 30 letter signed by a senior director of the firm, which stated that "the volume of work in China, Macau and Hong Kong has substantially decreased."

"Since 80% of our expenditure is on salary payment and other staff costs, the only effective measure is to immediately lay off redundant staff and to effect a salary cut for all staff at the same time," reads the letter, which was to all staff and signed by Artur Au-Yeung.

The measure is to be implemented from today and employees have been asked to sign a letter of acceptance of the salary cut.

"Please sign and return a duplicate copy of the attached letter by 5.00 p.m. Friday, 3 June, 2016. If

we do not receive your written confirmation by the deadline, we would have to effect other measure in further staff reduction," the letter states.

According to information disclosed on its website, Wong & Ouyang is an architectural practice "with a staff of 300 professional and supporting personnel in Hong Kong and Shanghai to handle major bui-

lding projects, from feasibility studies to design, documentation and construction."

In the letter, Wong & Ouyang states that the situation "has been further aggravated by the completion of our major projects in China and Macau."

Wong & Ouyang has been involved in many projects in Macau, including Wynn Macau (2006); Encore (2010) and Galaxy Macau's master layout plan and lot 1 phase 2 development, which was completed in May 2015.

Polytex Corporation Ltd, the company responsible for the troubled Pearl Horizon project, is also listed as a Macau client on Wong & Ouyang's website.

The Times contacted the firm yesterday evening to assess whether any Macau-based staff members will eventually be affected by the salary cut proposal. No answer was given before press time. **PB**

The volume of work in China, Macau and Hong Kong has substantially decreased.

LETTER

Military Club marks 146th anniversary with exhibitions

THE Macau Military Club marked its 146th anniversary yesterday with the opening ceremony of an exhibition of paintings by Portuguese artist Graça Morais: "Trás-os-Montes, Terra Mágica."

The anniversary will be celebrated with a series of exhibitions titled "Pontes de Encontro" (Meeting Bridges).

According to Ambrose So, chairman of the Board of Directors of SJM and the president of the Macau Military Club, the club is a "unique institution" as it serves the local community as a "cross-cultural venue." So commented that several institutions and the Portuguese consulate



Manuel Geraldès

hold numerous exhibitions and events at the city's Military Club.

"We have to be a unique cultural icon," he suggested. "We are inventing ourselves in a sense that we will [continue to] bridge more multi-cultural exhibitions."

So affirmed that they

would do so without losing the identity of the Military Club, which serves as a "multi-national" venue.

The club's president also revealed several of the club's upcoming events, such as its yearly "gastro-nomy event" where chefs from Portugal are invited

to visit the institution to attend cultural exhibitions and seminars.

Meanwhile Manuel Geraldès, a member of the club's board of directors, has expressed pride in the club's achievements, claiming that the club is one of the oldest social institutions in the region.

"We want to continue to be a social and cultural meeting point," he told the Times.

Geraldès revealed that they are collaborating with Macau Forum and other organizations to invite artists from Portuguese-speaking countries to visit the city in December, in time for the anniversary of Macau's handover to China.

Staff reporter

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FIVE-YEAR-PLAN

Lao: Culture and education are 'almost a business card of the city'

Renato Marques

THE coordinator of the Policy Research Office, Lao Pun Lap, yesterday stressed the relevance of the culture and education sectors to Macau. "They are almost a business card of the city," said Lao during the third consultation session over the region's five-year development plan, which includes measures that would be developed between 2015 and 2019.

The session, which was held yesterday at the Lotus Room of the Macau World Trade Center, was attended by representatives from the culture and education sector.

Lao reviewed the plan's proposals related to the sector that he classified as "very important" for the ultimate goal of trans-



Lao Pun Lap (center)

forming Macau into "one center and one platform."

The coordinator expressed that Macau will be able to achieve the goals set for it by Beijing due to its diverse culture. "We can't forget the mixed culture that has made Macau able to assume its important role as a platform," he said.

Lao pointed out that Macau is in need of "more qualified professionals" to help to establish an

extensive range of "large-scale events, which will happen more and more in the future."

Talking specifically about the education sector, Lao said that the government would "launch self-assessment mechanisms for schools" as well as projects for "innovation within technical education" and an "upgrade to special needs and back-to-school education programs."

The government is also aiming to reach 2020 with 80 percent of schools within the free education system and a secondary school completion rate of about 90 percent, the coordinator mentioned.

Ho Siu Kam, a member of the non-tertiary education council, expressed a few concerns, namely a lack of legislation related to special and professional education. "It seems like the government doesn't implement rules, just slogans," she said.

Another of the Ho's concerns was related to the so-called "Blue-sky Project," a project presented by the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture in November last year that aims to move schools from residential building complexes to "more appropriate locations." The member of the non-tertiary education council expressed surprise over the fact that the project, which had previously

been considered a priority by the secretary, "seems not to be discussed in the [five-year] plan."

Mr Ko, another member of the council, said that "there is a need to improve the training and education of teachers, especially those occupying school management positions."

Ko also added that due to the lack of available space for sports and cultural activities outside schools, the government should "incentivize schools to remain open until late in order to provide support to their students through extra-curricular activities."

Dr Hsu Hsiu-Chu, the director of the School of Arts at the Macao Polytechnic Institute, commented that "Macau is always talking about diversification [of the economy] but there are already many projects that are lacking in financial resources," she said, adding, "I think

we need to concentrate on a few areas to support, both in education and in these [creative] industries, since the resources look short for both."

Dr Hsu also recalled that there "are very few schools that teach arts and crafts." However, Fu Lam Kam, another member of the non-tertiary education council, believes that, contrary to what is being claimed, there is a disinvestment from the government in the education sector. "The financial resources have been slowing down. In 2014, growth was at 8 percent and in 2015, only 3 percent," he said, stating that the idea that education is priority for the government "can't be seen in reality."

A member of the Cultural Heritage Council surnamed Cheng said that "with the development of the gaming industry, Macau lost its roots," adding, "Macau is a coastal city and has always faced the sea."

On the topic of "lost roots" Cheng also believes that "Macau needs to remember the historical people that were very important for the development of the territory, both Chinese and Portuguese."

AD

CANIDROME VENUE COULD SUPPORT SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

"THE CANIDROME venue could be used for more activities by our schools," suggested Ho Siu Kam, a member of the non-tertiary education

council. Ho expanded on the idea expressed by other participants that Macau needs to "give more space" to schools and student activities.

TOURISM

Package tour visitors slightly up

VISITORS travelling on package tours to Macau totaled about 575,000 in April, according to new information from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC), down by 31.7 percent year-on-year, but up 2.2 percent compared to the month of March.

Across the first four months of 2016, visitors on package tours amounted to 2,275,000, down by 34 percent in comparison to the same period in 2015.

In April, package tour visitors from mainland China (451,000) decreased by 34.1 percent year-on-year, while those from South Korea (29,000) and Taiwan (29,000) dropped by 13.2 percent and 39.8 percent respectively. Contrarily, package tour visitors from Thailand (16,000) registered an increase of 34.3 percent.

Meanwhile, residents utilizing the services of travel agencies for their outbound trips totaled 89,000 in April,

down by 21.6 percent year-on-year and 16.9 percent month-to-month, which DSEC attributes to the fact that the Easter holidays fell in April 2015, but March in 2016.

There were 106 hotels and guesthouses operating in Macau at the end of April, an increase of seven year-on-year. The number of guest rooms amounted to 32,000, up by 3,800 (+13.6 percent) year-on-year, with rooms in 5-star hotels (20,000) and 4-star hotels (7,700) accounting for 63.6 percent and 24 percent respectively.

A total of 917,000 guests checked into hotels and guesthouses in April, up by 11.5 percent year-on-year, led by a 16.7 percent increase in guests from mainland China (610,000). The number of guests in the first four months of 2016 rose by 12.9 percent to 3,578,000 when compared with the same period in the previous year.

TOURISM

Mainland children put Macau in top-ten spot

MACAU ranks among the top ten most popular outbound tourist destinations for Chinese children from the mainland, according to a "Children Air Travel Report" released recently by China's major online tourism service platform, Ctrip.

Macau now ranks as the tenth most popular destination for young Chinese visitors, trailing Hong Kong (1), Taipei (2), Bangkok (3), Singapore (4), Phuket Island (5), Seoul (6), Tokyo (7), Osaka (8) and Chiang Mai (9).

According to the report, the number of mainland children taking overseas holidays has grown by 82 percent in the first quarter of 2016. The report further shows that as an increasing number of children travel by air, the average age of child travelers is decreasing. In the first quarter of 2015, children under the age of six accounted for 48 percent of all child travelers, while that age segment represented 51



percent in the last quarter.

Additionally, the report states that Chinese children have traveled to 132 countries and regions thus far in 2016, according to flight ticket data.

A mainland news website, People's Daily Online, accredits this rising figure to a cultural shift among Chinese parents. "Post-70s and post-80s Chinese parents believe that travel is an important form of education and should begin from an early age."

Cultural Affairs Bureau participates in 12th ICIF

THE Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC) participated in the 12th China (Shenzhen) International Cultural Industries Fair (ICIF), which took place recently.

The Macau Creative Pavilion aimed to showcase and commercialize local cultural and creative products, according to a statement by the bureau issued yesterday.

The pavilion was themed around handicrafts and design. Its design featured "multiple hues and irregular color patches," which aim to symbolize "the urban vitality of Macau."

The fair was held at the



Shenzhen Convention and Exhibition Center.

IC has been organizing the participation of the region's cultural and creati-

ve sector in the ICIF since 2006, and this initiative

has been followed by the launch of the Macau Creative Pavilion in 2010.

AD

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ERIC JACKSON • Thursday, May 26, 2016 - 4 Days Ago

I am pleased to hear that the government of Macau is listening to the world in regards to the Canidrome. The people of Macau should not be judged by what goes on at the Canidrome, but as long as they are racing and killing dogs, the world will look with favor upon Macau. Please, stop the racing, close the Canidrome, and work with international groups to place all of the greyhounds in homes.

REPLY



MIKE WILSON • Thursday, May 26, 2016 - 5 Days Ago

The problem is that the government of Macau is not listening to the world in regards to the Canidrome. The people of Macau should not be judged by what goes on at the Canidrome, but as long as they are racing and killing dogs, the world will look with favor upon Macau. Please, stop the racing, close the Canidrome, and work with international groups to place all of the greyhounds in homes.

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

CONTINUED FROM FRONTPAGE

MDT INTERVIEW | VÍTOR SERENO

Before being appointed head of mission of the Consulate General for Macau and HK, he served as chief of cabinet for a former minister in the previous Lisbon government, a center-right coalition.

Fast forward.

Today marks the beginning of what was branded by Mr Sereno as “the month of Portugal,” with the exhibition by renown artist Graça Morais, at the Clube Militar – itself, another hot-spot of Portuguese heritage in Macau. Apart from the Day of Portugal and of the Portuguese communities (June 10), this month there will be an array of events that will showcase some big names in painting, ceramics, music, drama and cinema from the “old country.”

Macau Daily Times (MDT) - We are doing this interview in between two major dates for Portugal and the Portuguese communities: April 25 and June 10. How does Macau celebrate these national holidays and, briefly, what do they really mean for you and for Portugal and Macau?

Vitor Sereno (VS) - To put it briefly, I'd say that when we celebrate the June 10th, we are honoring Portugal as one of the oldest countries in Europe and the pioneering contributions that were given (not only to the country but also to the world), over our more than 900 years of history, by generations of anonymous men and women, workers, rulers, free thinkers, scientists, business men, artists and others.

When commemorating April 25th, we are exalting a particular moment in that history, when we started to build Portugal as a modern country - a democracy - aiming for social, political and economic development whilst actively engaging in the world's most challenging issues and multilateral organizations. So, both dates are actually very much related to each other and to the image of our country we want to share with others: tradition and innovation.

As with other relatively strong Portuguese communities in other latitudes, the Portuguese community in Macau plays a very significant part in achieving this goal.

MDT - In Macau and in the greater China region, Portugal has been immediately perceived as a country with good, affordable wine and food. Is this image changing to something else?

VS - There is nothing wrong with Portugal being seen as a country with affordable goods and services, namely those in the tourism industry. I would like to highlight that Portugal has a long and never-ending love story with food and beverage industries. [Besides,] the Mediterranean Diet, classified as World Heritage by UNESCO, is part of the DNA of the Portuguese gastronomy.

What we are working hard on



FORBES CONRAD

is to make clear that affordability also comes with the best quality and excellence, being in tourism or in other areas of economic activity. Because that is, in fact, one of our competitive advantages, along with our geographical and cultural strategic positions in different commercial and political spheres – resulting from our investment in education, infrastructure and R&D. Portugal is a good place to live but certainly also a good place to invest. Our products and services have, in many others areas aside from wine and food, gained positions in different markets, due to that association between quality, reliability, advanced technology and competitive pricing.

MDT - What about other markets in greater China?

VS – Hong Kong is the 4th destination for Portuguese exports to Asia. In 2015, the main portion of our exports to this market (around 60%) were products with high- and medium-high technological intensity, such as optical and precision instruments, and machines and equipment. Food exports represented around 10% of our exports to Hong Kong. Furthermore, Hong Kong's large companies are discovering the Portuguese market, namely in the area of renewable energies. Recently, a consortium formed between Cheung Kong Infrastructure Holdings Limited (CKI) and Power Assets Holdings Limited (PAH), controlled by Hong Kong billionaire Li Ka-Shing, bought Portugal's wind-farm developer, Iberwind. In the case of PR China, our main local exports (almost 70%) are vehicles and other transport equipment, mineral products, wood pulp, and electrical machines and equipment. Similar to

Hong Kong, those are products of mainly medium-to-high technological intensity. Furthermore, Portugal is one of the main destinations for Chinese investment, prioritizing areas of finance, energy, and real estate.

MDT - Food & beverage is still a major part in the trade and also a way of life of many Portuguese citizens in Macau. Surprisingly enough, since the handover we have witnessed a growth in this sector. Why?

VS - Macau is a service economy. (...) In the last decade the economy of Macau has experienced tremendous growth and major changes to people's way of life. As a result, the average income increased significantly. This growing purchasing power allowed the increase in consumption of goods and services. Food constitutes an important part of a family's budget. Eating out is a very “local habit,” and people take several meals in restaurants, cafes... And more and more people are looking for differentiated, quality experiences.

MDT - Also increasing in number are people and the use of the Portuguese language. How do you explain the popularity of the latter? Is it mainly the Chinese interest in Africa?

VS - The overall picture is that the Portuguese language has, in fact, increasingly reinforced its role as a tool for international communication. The presence of the Portuguese speaking countries in almost all of the most important geostrategic political and economic “fora” in the five continents and their importance in the global and regional economies has meant Portuguese language is seen as an economic, political, scientific and cultural asset.

The cooperation involving states, governments and different stakeholders towards global development is also being conducted in Portuguese in many different contexts. The growth in learning Portuguese in Asian countries,

and clearly more significantly in China, is related to these facts. I also would like to emphasize the significant role that Portuguese speaking communities are increasingly playing in the promotion of the Portuguese language, not only in their host countries but also in international networks.

MDT - People. Portugal has become a country of migrants again. But it is difficult to hire people from Portugal, and for Portuguese applying for BIR. Do you receive complaints regarding this issue?

VS - Since my arrival I have received no more than 3 or 4 complaints about this issue. But I'm very attentive, not only to this problem but also to this new wave of Portuguese emigration. About this specific point, as I've said, more than complaints, I receive regular reports and actual statistics from the local authorities about the approval of BIRs to Portuguese citizens. I regularly meet the Secretary of Security, Dr Wong Sio Chak in the framework of regular meetings I have been having with various members of the executive. At our last meeting, we reviewed aspects related to the attribution/residence renewal of Portuguese citizens, which are based on objective criteria that are public knowledge, such as the life-story links to Macau; family ties with residents; and the exercise of activity in the public interest for the MSAR and to ensure a livelihood and a decent life.

The Secretary for Security has always expressed his commitment to the effect that, in compliance with the legal provisions, Portuguese citizens continue to be welcome to this Special Administrative Region and to collaborate with it. On several occasions he reiterated the idea that he considers the Portuguese community as an integral and important part of the MSAR. Until my last day here I will always fight for this.

MDT - Other very important sectors of the Portuguese community are active in structural areas of this society.

VS - Entirely agree! Because we are helping Macau! Seeing our fellow citizens playing an important role in the development of Macau in several fields such as law, health, construction, education, press and architecture, is an undeniable symbol of their professional quality. It gave me great joy when I heard the Secretary of Social Affairs and Culture saying that the MSAR needs more Portuguese professionals (doctors and nurses) at the public hospital. The same thing happens when he refers to the quality of our teachers at the Portuguese School... I think

“ [Portuguese professionals] are the real ambassadors of our country here.

that in almost every professional field we have a skilled, capable and respected community! These [professionals] are the real ambassadors of our country here.

MDT - The Portuguese community in Macau has a panoply of layers. How would you describe the Macau Portuguese community to your counterparts?

VS - The MSAR always had, has and will have a very strong and committed presence from the Portuguese community. The friendship between our peoples spans over five centuries. Do not forget that Macau is one of 24 sites of Portuguese origin outside the national territory classified as a World Heritage Site. This is a region that is always connected to Portugal in a very special way, honoring the feeling of Portuguese and Macanese. In my opinion the Portuguese community knew how to read the history, understood the change and positioned itself strategically within the new social and economic dynamics, and Macau policies.

As the Chief Executive, Dr Fernando Chui Sai On, said once at the official residency, Macau is home to many Portuguese who live here, work here. They settled their families and will always be welcomed.

MDT - How is your relationship with the other diplomats based in HK/Macau?

VS - My relationship with my colleagues is tremendous. I know practically all the international diplomatic community in HKSAR. Of course I have a closer relationship with my colleagues from the European Union and some others of the Iberian-American countries. Here in Macau I give great importance and attention of the Portuguese Speaking Countries, counting with the presence of my colleagues from Mozambique and Angola. Let me tell you a secret, I think the only moment that my colleagues based in Hong Kong were really annoyed is during the annual football event between Hong Kong Consular Corps and Macau guests. Since 2013, I have chosen to play for Macau and I always score... (Laughs)

“ My relationship with my colleagues is tremendous.

certainly a good place to invest'



MDT- How do you coordinate activities with our ambassador in Beijing and the representatives in Shanghai, Hong Kong? What are the most common areas of activity?

VS - First of all, our personal relations are excellent. The fact that we arrived practically at the same time in 2013 brought us together in a good way. For the first time ever, in 2013 the Portuguese economic annual activity plan for the People's Republic of China was prepared together with the help of Shanghai and Macau. Despite the fact that we are considered an Embassy, I took the decision to unite forces with our diplomatic representatives in Beijing and Shanghai. Together we are stronger, that's our motto. Maybe that is the reason why we won the AICEP economic diplomacy annual prize, for two consecutive years. Since 2013 we have had very important and effective annual meetings with our commercial counsellors in Beijing, Shanghai and Macau.

MDT- And soon, also, the Guangzhou consulate...

VS - We are looking forward to opening our Consulate-General in Guangzhou in 2016! Our new colleague, Duarte Bué Alves already attended our last meeting in Macau as my special guest!

MDT- I know that some consulates are or were looking at moving from HK to Macau, like we did. What are the benefits and disadvantages of being in Macau vs HK?

VS - We are in Macau for obvious reasons. And we want to be in Macau forever. We have the obligation to help the Central Government and the MSAR Exe-

cutive in transforming this land into a platform for the Portuguese Speaking Countries, to help the diversification of the territory and to help promote local talent. Due to our historical ties, we are indeed the only country that is 100% qualified to undertake this task. About HKSAR, these days it does not make much sense to reopen our diplomatic representation there.

MDT- What can be improved to help relations between PRC and the Lusophone world?

VS - I believe that the work that the Macau Forum had been developing over the last 13 years has been very positive, namely in regards to training human resources, allowing the participants from the Portuguese Speaking Countries to learn and understand the Chinese perspective on subjects of general interest as well as to share their own experiences and knowledge. As you may know, in 2011, the Macau Forum created a training center in order to better organize these training seminars and since its creation, the Centre has organized, in collaboration with selected Macau universities, 28 workshops and attracted over 700 participants from the Lusophone world. These workshops cover a wide range of subjects that are of common interest to the Portuguese Speaking countries and to China and Macau. In addition to acquiring knowledge, the participants cement relationships, share experiences and build bridges between them which contribute to the establishment of potential partnerships.

MDT- Portugal-China, via Macau. How are the bilateral relations in this trian-

gulation?

VS - Portugal, Macau and China are long-lasting partners and, more recently, we have been strengthening our relations in many areas. In evidence of this, between 2010 and 2015, Portuguese exports to Macau grew at an average of 16% per year; in the same period, trade between Portugal and China grew at a yearly average of 36%. Simultaneously, and as sign of this "new era," the State-level visits between the three markets have increased at a vertiginous rate. Today, despite huge differences in our "geographies" (physical dimensions and location), we have similar priorities and challenges, and we are focused on the areas of innovation and entrepreneurship, science, education, environment and energy, and tourism. We all seek economic diversification and increased internationalization. We recognize that we share goals and that is essential to share resources, in a win-win-win strategy. In this ambitious triangulation, the role of Macau has been critical. Since the handover and the establishment of the Macau SAR, Portugal and Macau have agreed to maintain solid bilateral relations. (...) Nowadays, the interface role of Macau has been significantly reinforced and the triangulation offers new perspectives.

MDT- Golden Visas. The program is still on and the Chinese are on top of the buyers' list. What are you doing to contribute to this?

VS - The Golden Visa Scheme, which by the way is not a visa but rather a residence permit, has had several improvements over the years in order to respond better to the needs of potential appli-

cants. In fact, among the growing number of European governments offering residence permits to non-Europeans who invest in their countries, Portugal has been the most successful. The program is straightforward and flexible, with simple and clear legal requirements, and clearly one of the most attractive residency programs for investors in the world. As you know, the program has recently been enriched by diversifying the options of investment even further (see box).

MDT- You are perceived as a man of the community, dynamic, always available. You know your nickname (I shouldn't say this) is... "Clark Kent/Superman" in the sense that you seem to attend to every problem. And you play football for the consulate team too...

VS - (Laughs) I think this attitude towards my community should be the normal one. I am here, paid by the Portuguese taxpayers. I need to be next to the people to listen not only to their problems but also to their advice. Accepting that a diplomat could live in a distant palace far away from reality and from the community that he represents is inconceivable to me...

MDT - One last question... You are an advocate of partnerships with private entities to improve the consulate facilities and services. But some in the community see it as "alienating the nation." Can you comment?

VS - I fail to see how the nation is being alienated, and apparently so does the Portuguese government, since all those interventions are subject to prior approval. But I can see the improvements that

we have been able to introduce with the help of some partnerships, from which all - both the ones who agree and the ones who don't - have clearly benefited and which wouldn't be executable in any other way or, at least, not in this time frame. As I have stressed on different occasions, some of those changes have allowed us to deal with massive bottlenecks that have lasted for years and would only worsen with time. We work better and more efficiently, we offer a better service to Portugal, to the Portuguese and also to Macau SAR.

MDT- And a provocation: The city misses the old, grand Hotel Bela Vista. I know I do... Was it a good decision? What was the "trade off"?

VS - I don't quite understand what you are trying to imply in your question. What I can stress is that, over the last three years, and thanks also to the renovation of the residence's basement (now an exhibition area) and of the building itself, we have held more than 40 events (all open to the public). These have included several kinds of visual arts exhibitions, music performances, different product showcases, from fashion, design and wine tasting to books, and organized in partnership with both Portuguese and local promoters. On top of this, during the same period, more than 15 public ceremonies have taken place at the Bela Vista and not to mention the more institutional framework, regarding the hosting of more 50 official Portuguese delegations, who met with a number of local representatives - Portuguese and Chinese - in many different areas at the Bela Vista. And, of course, the big gathering of the Portuguese community which I welcome annually at the national day [June 10]. The old Bela Vista - which now looks new - has thus been performing an important role, serving the city and mostly strengthening the relations between Portugal and MSAR, between Portuguese and Chinese.

GOLDEN VISA 2.0: MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO INVEST IN SUNNY PORTUGAL

IN ADDITION to the previous conditions - capital transfer with a value equal to or above 1 million Euros; the creation of, at least, 10 job positions and the purchase of real estate property with a value equal to or above 500 thousand Euros - potential candidates of the Golden Visa Scheme can also make the following investments:

- 350 thousand Euros in the purchase of real estate property, with construction dating back more than 30 years, or located in 'urban recovery areas' for refurbishing;
- Capital transfer with a value equal to or above 350 thousand Euros for investing in research activities conducted by public or private scientific research institutions involved in the national scientific or technological systems;

- Capital transfer with a value equal to or above 250 thousand Euros for investing in artistic output or supporting the arts, for reconstruction or refurbishment of national heritage, through the local and central authorities, public institutions, public corporate sector, public foundations, private foundations of public interest, networked local authorities, local corporate sector organizations, local associations and public cultural associations, pursuing activities of artistic output, and reconstruction or maintenance of national heritage;
- Capital transfer with a value equal to or above 500 thousand Euros, for purchasing shares in investment funds or in venture capital geared to capitalize small and medium companies that, in turn, must present a feasible capitalization plan.

AL PLENARY

New food licensing rules raise doubts

Renato Marques

THE Legislative Assembly (AL) debated several issues raised by lawmakers for the second consecutive day. One of the topics that resulted in a lot of discussion related to a spoken enquiry presented by Ho Ion Sang.

The lawmaker questioned the government regarding the recent changes made to the licensing of retail sales of meat, fish, poultry and vegetables, which revoked the previous regulation banning the sale of these products within 500 meters of the markets.

At stake, according to the lawmaker, are issues regarding food safety as well as a lack of competition, which could lead to high retail prices.

Lei Wai Nong, vice chairman of the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM) replied to these comments by pointing out that all establishments need licensing. "When licensing, the IACM takes note all relevant aspects, such as hygiene, safety, the environment,



Ho Ion Sang

and others," he stressed, stating that there is no reason for outrage.

Regarding prices, the IACM official stated that Macau is "a free commerce territory."

"There are no quotas for importing fresh goods. Prices are a result of supply and demand as well as conditions and operating costs," he concluded.

The reply of Mr Lei did not seem to reassure the lawmakers, with Lau Veng Seng expressing concerns over the fact that most of Macau's seafood products come from an area in Guangdong that has

reportedly been contaminated by heavy metals and bacteria. The lawmaker questioned IACM on how they propose to prevent these bad products from reaching consumers, and how long it will take for inspections to produce results.

Pereira Coutinho urged the government to strengthen its inspection processes for imported foods due to reports of bad quality products that he found on social media platforms.

The vice president of the AL, Lam Heong Sang, also found incongruences in the regula-

tions in this area, namely regarding the sale of poultry. "The regulation is contradictory. The liberalization [of the market] is not compatible with previous measures, for example rules specifying that poultry cannot remain in the marketplace overnight, and that the produce must be killed with regard to bird flu safety regulations," he mentioned.

Lawmaker Au Kam San also intervened, stating, "I support this measure but I do have some doubts regarding the capacity of the IACM to inspect all these new retail shops."

'Disenchantment among civil servants'

MACAU Civil Servants Association (ATFPM) President Pereira Coutinho raised controversy, stating that "there are civil servants having their rights exploited, and their complaints are not being met with an answer."

The lawmaker added that currently "there is a disenchantment among civil servants. Their complaints seem to have reached a dead end." Coutinho further

urged the government to put in place an "independent structure" to handle these complaints.

Kou Peng Kuan, Public Administration and Civil Service Bureau (SAFP) Director, replied on behalf of the government, saying: "To ease on the contradictions and conflicts involving complaints, the government is preparing the creation of a mechanism for handling complaints

from civil servants." The director added that complaints would be handled by a "specialized committee that will be responsible for monitoring the results of the response to the complaint."

Lawmaker Ella Lei also addressed the issue, stating that, "to ask the civil servants to complain to their own colleagues makes no sense," and could be a possible cause of reprisal.

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As China sneezes, those closest are catching the worst colds

Malcolm Scott

THOSE nearest to China are among the hardest hit as growth in the world's second-largest economy grinds to the slowest pace in a quarter century. Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan all saw their economies shrink in the first quarter, while Mongolia's commodities-fueled boom has faltered. And the bad news doesn't stop there.

"The ripples are likely to spread further out," said Frederic Neumann, co-head of Asian economic research at HSBC Holdings Plc in Hong Kong. "As China's economy continues to cool, it will provide an ongoing drag on global output, curtailing inflation pressures in the process and anchoring interest rates in the process. The economic malaise currently experienced by China's immediate neighbors, therefore, is only a portend of a milder version to afflict economies elsewhere as China comes off the boil."

That's already the reality facing Hong Kong, which has seen its



Keelung Port, Taiwan

status as the financial gateway to the mainland fade as cities like Shenzhen and Shanghai blossomed. Meantime, big-spending mainland tourists aren't coming in the numbers they used to as they venture farther afield to places like Japan or Thailand.

A crackdown on corruption in China has dented revenue on the baccarat tables of Macau. Gaming revenue in the special administrative region has fallen for 23 straight months through April and GDP shrank 13.3 percent in the first quarter from a year earlier.

Taiwan's tech manufacturers

face increased competition from rivals on the mainland. It's a double whammy for the island, which is also getting hit by slowing demand from China -- its biggest market. Exports dropped for 15 straight months through April, while GDP shrank 0.68 percent from a year earlier.

For Mongolia, the slowdown in its southern neighbor that sucks in about four fifths of its shipments has taken its toll as falling commodity prices undercut its biggest exports like coal, oil and copper. While its economy managed to expand 3.1 percent in the first quarter from a year earlier, that's a far cry from the 17.5 percent pace clocked in the fourth quarter of 2011.

"Borrowing from Tolstoy, all happy countries are the same, all unhappy countries are unhappy for their own special reason," said Bloomberg economist Tom Orlik. "They're small enough that even a slower-growing China should remain a significant growth driver, if they can position effectively. The difficulty is doing so." **Bloomberg**

ECONOMY

Imports down 21 percent in 2016

ACCORDING to information from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC), the total amount of imported merchandise declined in April by 18.6 percent year-on-year to MOP5.57 billion, of which imports of mobile phones and motorcars decreased by 63.9 percent and 61.2 percent respectively.

The total value of imported merchandise over the first four months of 2016 fell by 21.6 percent to MOP22.78 billion. In comparison, exports were down 5.6 percent to MOP3.45 billion. Over this four month period, the trade deficit widened to MOP19.33 billion.

Analyzed by place of origin, merchandise imported from mainland China (MOP8.23 billion) and the European Union (MOP5.42 billion) during the first four months of 2016 decreased by 24.6 percent and 19.9 percent respectively year-on-year.

Analysis by place of consignment reveals that merchan-

dise imported from mainland China declined by 10.6 percent to MOP3.53 billion during this period, of which imports from the Pan-Pearl River Delta region fell by 10.4 percent to MOP3.34 billion.

Imports of consumer goods (MOP14.32 billion), watches (MOP1.41 billion) and motor vehicles (MOP434 million) dropped by 15.7 percent, 37.1 percent and 52.1 percent respectively. In addition, imports of fuels and lubricants (MOP1.8 billion), mobile phones (MOP1.61 billion) and construction materials (MOP674 million) declined by 16.1 percent, 54.7 percent and 37.1 percent respectively.

The DSEC also indicated that the total merchandise exports for April 2016 amounted to MOP755 million, down by 20.9 percent year-on-year.

External merchandise trade totaled MOP26.24 billion in the first four months of 2016, down by 19.8 percent compared with MOP32.72 billion a year earlier.

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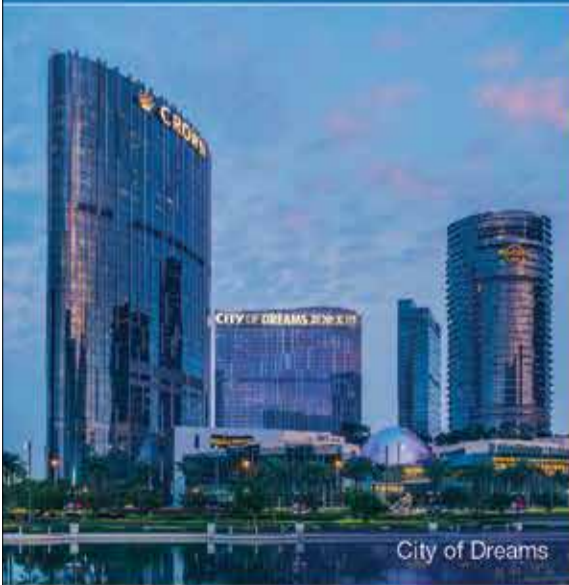
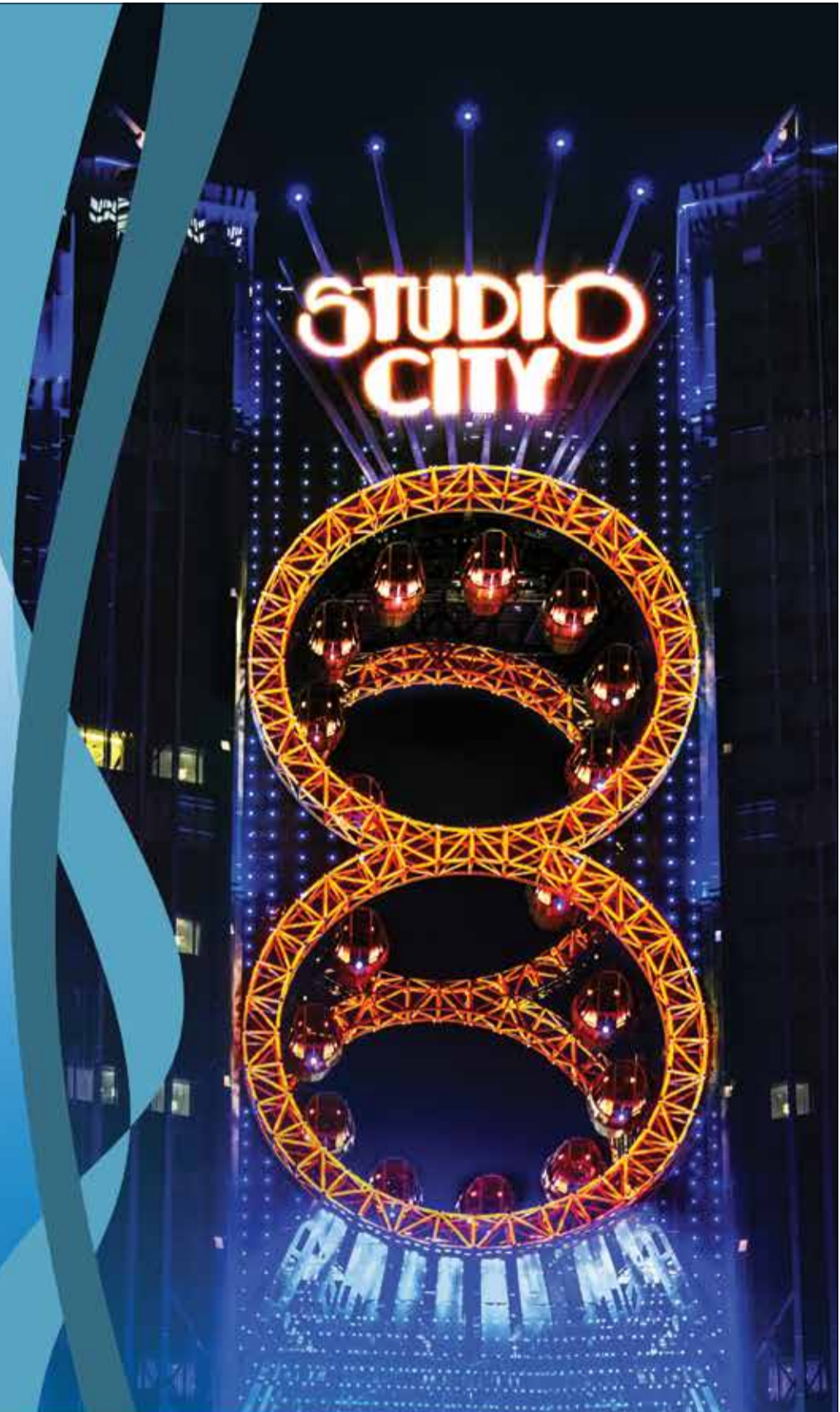
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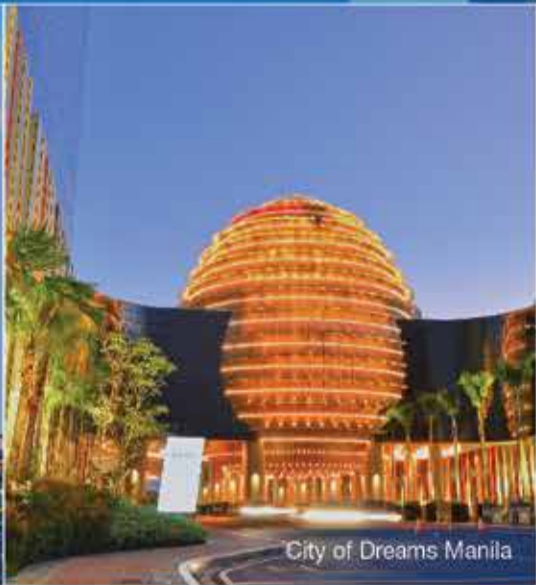


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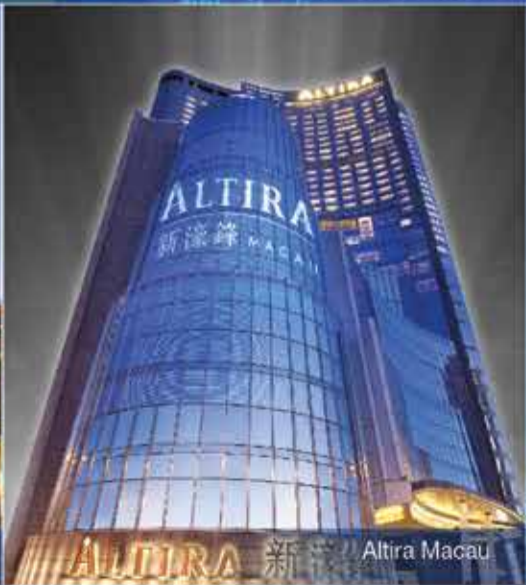
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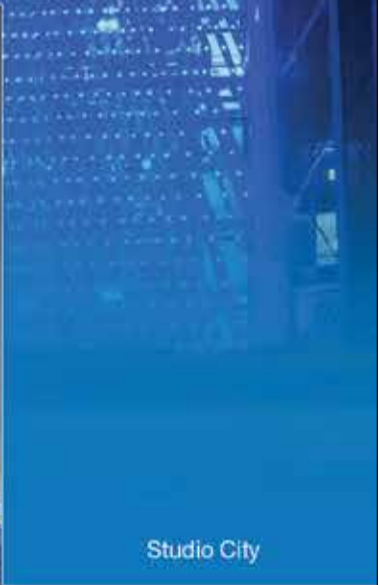
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Scandal-hit Volkswagen makes profit despite scandal

David McHugh, Frankfurt

GERMAN automaker Volkswagen saw its net profit fall 19 percent in the first three months of the year — but showed it can still make money even as it grapples with a costly scandal over cars rigged to cheat on diesel emissions tests.

The company called it a “respectable” result considering the tough conditions and said it had the financial resources to weather the scandal.

The flagship Volkswagen brand, the one most associated with the scandal and with the most rigged cars, barely broke even. The company made most of its profits at its luxury brands Audi and Porsche and the financial services branch.

Profits in the January-March period fell to 2.37 billion euros (\$2.63 billion) from 2.93 billion euros a year earlier, the company said Tuesday. The figure fell short of the 2.44 billion eu-



A Golf Volkswagen car is presented to media inside a delivery tower

ros expected by analysts surveyed by financial information provider FactSet. Revenue fell 3.4 percent to 50.96 billion euros due in part to shifts in currency exchange rates.

Still, the company reported it had bulked up on its cash reserves and said it was well-funded to deal with the effects of the scandal, which include costs for recalls, fines and lawsuits. The automotive division was sitting on 26 billion euros in net liquidity, up 5 billion from a year ago. Tuesday's earnings release con-

tained no new estimate of the overall cost of the scandal; the company set aside 16.2 billion euros from earnings last year, when it lost 1.4 billion euros.

CEO Matthias Mueller said in a statement that the company “managed to limit the economic effects of the diesel issue and achieve respectable results under difficult conditions.”

The effects of the scandal were seen most strongly at the Volkswagen brand, which made only 73 million euros in the quarter, down from 514 million

euros a year earlier. That left a bare operating margin of only 0.3 percent.

Earnings and profit margins were supported by luxury brand Audi, typically a pillar of the company's profits. Operating profit there fell slightly to 1.3 billion euros from 1.4 billion euros a year earlier. Audi was the biggest single contributor to company operating profit. But it saw its profit margin, a key indicator for investors, fall to 9.0 percent from 9.7 percent in the first quarter of 2015.

Things went better at the Porsche brand. Operating profits, which exclude financial items such as interest and taxes, rose 14 percent to 895 million euros. The sportscar and luxury SUV division turned in a fat profit margin of 16.6 percent, up from 15.1 percent.

The company also faced plummeting sales in Russia and Brazil due to those countries' troubled economies. Sales fell 35 percent in Russia, which has seen its cur-

rency dive along with the price of oil, and 17 percent in Brazil, which is in a deep recession.

Volkswagen, based in Wolfsburg, Germany, faces heavy costs recalling and fixing cars that are equipped with engine-control software that could detect when a car was on a test stand and turned off the emissions controls during everyday driving.

The company has reached a tentative agreement in federal court in San Francisco with U.S. authorities, who first uncovered the cheating, to buy back or repair some 500,000 vehicles.

The longer-term threat to the company's business would be tougher emissions regulation that could make diesels more costly compared to gasoline-powered cars in Europe. Even without rigged software, diesels — by Volkswagen or other carmakers — often emit more pollutants in daily driving than indicated in tests, an issue that has come into focus thanks to the Volkswagen scandal. The emissions cheating dismayed environmentally customers but did not present a safety hazard for drivers and in fact enhanced the car's performance.

The company reaffirmed its forecast for the full year, saying that it expects sales revenue to fall 5 percent for all of this year compared to 2015. **AP**

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corporate bits

SANDS CHINA PARTICIPATES IN WORLD HUNGER DAY 2016

Last week Sands China Ltd held its three-day Clean Plate Challenge for the second straight year, in support of World Hunger Day.

Nearly 58,000 team members completed the challenge, which forms part of the Sands ECO360° global sustainability strategy. The activity challenged team members at the company's staff dining rooms to take only what they could eat and return a clean plate, according to a statement by Sands China.

Following the conclusion of this activity, 100 team members will participate in a Hunger Meal Experience in August, which will be organized by the Oxfam Hong Kong-Macau office. The experience is aimed at increasing their



understanding of hunger issues around the world. In addition, team members had the chance to purchase rice packs and become donors to support Oxfam's work, in a recruitment drive during the three-day event.

Held annually on May 28, World Hunger Day aims to raise public awareness about the problem of hunger and starvation worldwide.

HOTEL ROYAL LAUNCHES LIGHT LUNCH SET

Hotel Royal is launching its "light meal" featuring ten scrumptious sandwiches at the lobby lounge, with a menu tailored by chef Luís Américo.

According to Hotel Royal's press release, the set will of-

fer treats such as daily freshly baked croissants, Portuguese soft bread, baguettes and more, with tasty ingredients including suckling pig, Parma ham and smoked salmon. A vegetarian option with roasted zucchini is also available. The light lunch set comes with a fresh salad, the soup of the day and a light dessert.

Diners can also enjoy free flowing tea and coffee, including cappuccinos and lattes, at a price of just MOP80/set with three hours of complimentary free parking.



Direct air link between China and Portugal on the horizon

THE China Civil Aviation Authority has notified its counterpart in Portugal of the intention of Capital Airlines, of the Hainan Airlines Group, to start operating direct flights between Portugal and China, Portuguese financial daily *Jornal de Negócios* reported in Lisbon.

"The National Civil Aviation Authority has received communication from its Chinese counterpart, giving an account of the intention of a Chinese air carrier at the end of the year, to start operating scheduled air services on the Hangzhou - Beijing - Lisbon route on a twice weekly basis," a spokesman from the Portuguese regulator, which must approve the link, told the newspaper.

Capital Airlines wants to ex-



pand its operations in Europe and has requested authorization from the China Civil Aviation Authority to launch the first direct flight between China and Portugal, according to a report published Monday by *Travel Daily*, based on information published by the Civil Aviation Authority on its

page, confirming the receipt of the offer.

If approved, the new route will be launched in December, becoming the first direct link between China and Portugal, and the flight is expected to use an Airbus A330 with 33 seats in business class and 178 in economy. **MDT/Macauhub**

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HONG KONG

Chinese curbs fail to slow insurance buying frenzy

Alfred Liu

CHINESE residents pumped a record amount of money into Hong Kong insurance in the first quarter even as the mainland government tightened restrictions on the purchases, which serve as a popular tool for skirting the nation's capital controls.

Mainlanders' purchases of insurance and related investment policies almost doubled from a year earlier to HKD13.2 billion (USD1.7 billion), the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance said in Hong Kong on yesterday. The total exceeded a record fourth quarter and represented 34 percent of new individual premiums, up from 24 percent for all of 2015.

The Chinese government is seeking to control capital outflows as a corruption crackdown, a cooling economy



Hong Kong's skyline. Mainland residents invested a record amount in the city's insurance sector in the first quarter

and an uncertain outlook for the strength of the nation's currency encourage residents to move money offshore. Buyers can also get better coverage from Hong Kong policies.

In one tightening move in February, mainland regula-

tors limited the amounts of money that residents could transfer to buy certain policies using China UnionPay Co. credit or debit cards. The response: some buyers swiped cards hundreds of times to make a single purchase.

"More Chinese people are rushing down to buy insurance in Hong Kong on fears that more tightening measures may come," said Steven Lam, a Hong Kong-based insurance analyst with Bloomberg Intelligence, predicting that the second quarter total could be higher still. Regulators may do more to tighten oversight, Lam said.

Hong Kong's insurance regulator said last week it's in talks with industry participants on measures to protect the growing numbers of buyers from the mainland. Separately, the China Insurance Regulatory Commission earlier told its branches

to investigate illegal sales of overseas insurance policies in China, the business magazine Caixin reported.

"More mainlanders are aware of this grey area now," Lam said. "Some of them may use insurance policies to transfer large sums of savings out of the country and that may pose concerns for China."

Purchases by mainland visitors grew 30 percent last year to HKD31.6 billion, according to the insurance commissioner's office.

"It is necessary to enhance protection of the mainland buyers," the commissioner's office said last week. Chinese purchasers will be required to sign an acknowledgment that they understand key elements of policies they're buying, the regulator said, adding that it expects to implement the measures in the second half of the year. **Bloomberg**

TAIWAN

Wanted fugitive dies in California car accident

A former tycoon wanted on allegations of embezzlement and fraud in Taiwan has died in a car accident in California, the island's foreign ministry confirmed yesterday. He had been hiding for years in the United States.

The official Central News Agency said Wang You-theng, former chairman of the China Rebar Group, was killed in a Friday morning crash on a highway in West Covina, California. His wife was injured but was in stable condition, the report said.

Foreign ministry spokeswoman Eleanor Wang confirmed the report when reached by telephone, but did not provide further details.

Wang founded Rebar in 1959 to build steel beams and made a fortune from the business, but when Rebar sank into financial difficulties in 2006, Wang fled Taiwan and eventually arrived in the United States, where he had lived as one of the most wanted fugitives by Taiwanese authorities.

Wang had been indicted on a long list of charges, including fraud, money laundering and insider trading, the news agency said. Wang and his family were accused of siphoning off more than USD9 billion in Rebar assets. **AP**

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BEIJING has Shijingshan, known as "Fake Disney," Shenzhen has a park with replica landmarks and Yunnan province has Dwarf Empire, an attraction based on little people.

With already 300 theme parks in China, including some ranked among the world's worst, competition to amuse the nation's growing middle class is set to intensify. Dalian Wanda Group Co. opened a USD3.2 billion project in southeastern Jiangxi province on Saturday, two weeks before the planned unveiling of Shanghai Disney Resort, Walt Disney Co.'s \$5.5 billion mainland foray. Five dozen more entertainment venues are slated to start by 2020.

The new wave of attractions promises to transform China's outdoor entertainment landscape, where even unprofitable and badly-run fun parks helped draw about 120 million visitors last year. Industry consultancy Aecom predicts China's theme-park market will rival that of the U.S. after the new venues open, with 220 million visitors annually.

"Mainland Chinese consumers have upgraded a lot in their behavior in the last 10 years," said Jennifer So, a tourism analyst at China Securities International in Hong Kong. "They want experiences, not just shopping. That's why so many theme-park opera-

Disney poised to spur theme park rush in land of Dwarf Empire



AP PHOTO

tors see opportunities there."

The government has predicted China's \$610 billion tourism industry will double by 2020, spurred by a growing middle class. DreamWorks Animation SKG Inc. plans to open its \$2.4 billion DreamCenter and Haichang Ocean Park Holdings will unveil what's slated to be China's biggest marine park next year. Six Flags Entertainment Corp. is due to open its first park outside North America in 2019.

"In the end, the successful ones will be those who know how to

operate theme parks, not just develop them," So said.

Disney, which opened Disneyland in Anaheim, California, in 1955, and Six Flags, which has run themed rides in the U.S. for more than 55 years, have an advantage when it comes to experience. Chinese operators counter that with their superior understanding of local conditions and what they see as better value for money.

Dalian Wanda Chairman and founder Wang Jianlin told a China Central Television show

Theme park rival Wang said that Disney's high admission prices would drive away visitors

on May 22 that he couldn't comprehend how Disney had spent so much on its 390-hectare (963-acre) park in Shanghai, and that it would have to have high admission prices, which would drive away visitors.

Tickets for the outdoor theme park at Wanda's Jiangxi project are priced at 198 yuan (\$30) on most days and 248 yuan on holidays and weekends. That's about half the cost of admission to Shanghai Disneyland, where adults will pay 370 yuan each during the week and 499 yuan on peak days when the park opens on June 16.

Disney shouldn't have built an outdoor park in a city like Shanghai, where summers are rainy and winters cold, billionaire Wang added. A Disney spokeswoman said Wang's comments weren't considered worthy of a response.

Dalian Wanda, whose "Wanda City" in Nanchang features rides, shopping centers and an aquarium, may have a powerful ally. "The Chinese government is cautious about having too much Western content" in attractions, Aecom noted in its 2015 global theme parks report.

China shouldn't allow too many Disney parks, as this would make children indifferent to Chinese culture, Anhui province's representative on the Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee Li Xiusong said earlier this year at the annual political meetings in Beijing. He recommended parks and attractions be based on Chinese literary classics, like "Journey to the West," which was written during the Ming dynasty. **MDT/Bloomberg**

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CIVIL RIGHTS

Transgender man fights for job equality

A 28-year-old transgender man who goes by the name of "Mr. C" has become the public face of the fight for job equality in China, where sexual and gender minorities are only beginning to emerge from virtual invisibility.

The man, who keeps his real name secret to protect his parents' privacy, is fighting his dismissal from a medical testing center in court and is seeking a ruling stating that no one should be discriminated against on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation.

"On my shoulders I am carrying the hopes of many, many people," said Mr. C, who's been both praised and insulted since filing the country's first suit against transgender job discrimination earlier this year.

"Many people are working toward [employment equality]. I cannot let them down. There are many members in our



A transgender equal rights supporter who goes by the name of "Mr. C" pauses during an interview with AP in Beijing

group who are unwilling to or dare not step forward, but they are watching."

While still relatively conservative, Chinese society has grown gradually more accepting of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people in recent

years, particularly among the younger generation. That's encouraged some members of sexual and gender minorities to come forward and demand their legal rights, with mixed results.

In 2014, a Beijing court ruled

"conversion therapy" intended to change gays' sexuality to be illegal. A court in the central province of Hunan shot down an attempt by a gay couple to register their marriage in April.

Although never specifically outlawed, alternative expressions of sexuality were frowned upon following the 1949 establishment of the communist People's Republic, which associated them with the corruption and decadence of the former imperial regime. Those caught up in police raids could be jailed on charges of hooliganism or even executed during particularly severe crackdowns.

In 2001, however, the Chinese Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality from its list of mental disorders. Police raids on LGBT gatherings largely came to a halt, as long as they remained low-profile. Empowered by the internet and social media, LGBT groups in different cities began networking, leading to calls for strong legal protections.

China has no law addressing employment discrimination, and efforts are ongoing to enact laws protecting minorities in the workplace.

Mr. C hopes to nudge the government toward recognizing and protecting LGBT rights. Born female, Mr. C grew up in

the southwestern province of Guizhou, a more conservative environment than the eastern cities of Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou. He didn't even come across the term "transgender" until age 21, when he finally was able to best describe his gender identity.

After graduating from college in 2010, Mr. C continued to appear as a woman when applying for jobs. That all changed in 2013, when he began dressing as a man, wearing a buzz cut and growing a mustache.

In 2015, he applied for a sales job with Ciming Health Exam Center in the provincial capital of Guiyang, but was let go at the end of the eight-day tryout. He believes he was dismissed because of his gender expression, but the company argued his job performance had been substandard.

Mr. C took the dispute to a local labor arbitration panel, which ruled in early May that his dismissal had been legal, while ordering Ciming to pay him \$62 in back wages.

Days later, Mr. C filed his case in a local court, which has yet to put it on the docket.

"Now I place my hope with the law," he said. "I will do whatever I can do to fight to the end." **MDT/AP**

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Elaine Kurtenbach, Tokyo

JAPAN

Economy improved but weak; Abe set to delay tax hike

JAPAN'S economy remains weak but did better than expected in April, the latest data showed yesterday, as Prime Minister Shinzo Abe looked set to delay a 2017 tax hike to minimize shocks to the fitful recovery.

Factory output fell 3.5 percent in April from a year earlier and consumer spending edged lower, though both improved from the month before and were better than most forecasts.

Earlier data showed the consumer price index fell 0.3 percent in April, for the second straight month of deflation. However, excluding both energy and volatile fresh foods, it rose 0.7 percent.

The world's third-largest economy has been stuck in the doldrums despite massive monetary easing aimed at vanquishing deflation, which tends to discourage corporate investment and consumer spending.

Though the latest data present a mixed picture, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has won grudging support for a postponement of the next sales tax hike from a key ally: Finance Minister Taro Aso.

"It is one option to help support consumer spending," Aso said of the likely delay.



A man buys dried fish from a shop in Tokyo on May 18. Japan's economy grew at a better than expected 1.7 percent annual pace in the first quarter of 2016

Aso was obliged to at least try to push back: With Japan's public debt at nearly 240 percent of its GDP, putting the nation's accounts in order is an urgent priority. But those favoring a delay argue the recovery is too weak to endure a fresh hit to consumer spending from a tax hike.

They also contend that the tax hike could backfire if it causes such a downturn that government revenues actually contract.

In April, consumer spending fell 0.4 percent in April from a year earlier, though incomes

rose 0.7 percent. Unemployment was flat at 3.2 percent.

Industrial output rose 0.3 percent from the month before, stronger than expected, in one sign the latest dip in growth may be moderating, said Marcel Thieliant of Capital Economics.

But he noted that private investment remains weak.

At a summit of the Group of Seven rich nations last week in central Japan, other leaders demurred at Abe's insistence the world economy is on the brink of crisis.

Abe still cited the G-7's backing for using all policy tools the countries can as a justification for a tax hike delay.

"The government probably wants to avoid delivering a hammer blow to a fragile economy without seeing solid improvement at the fundamental level," Margaret Yang of CMC Markets, said in a commentary.

The last time Japan raised its

sales tax, to 8 percent from 5 percent in April 2014, the economy fell back into recession. Growth has been uneven since then, and Abe opted to postpone the next increase to 10 percent, set for October 2015, to April 2017.

By pushing back the tax increase, Japan risks having its credit downgraded, though the impact would be limited by the fact that almost all of its debt is owned by domestic investors or the central bank.

"Whichever policy decision we take, there will be a risk," said Sadakazu Tanigaki, secretary-general of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party.

The latest plan calls for the tax hike to take place in October 2019. Abe reportedly rejected the idea of dissolving the Lower House of Parliament and holding a snap election in July, when Japan is due to hold a vote for the less powerful Upper House. **AP**

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AUSTRALIA

USD13m in bitcoins set for Sydney auction

ABOUT USD13 million in bitcoins will be auctioned in Sydney this month after Australian police confiscated the digital currency as proceeds of crime, an official said yesterday.

Ernst & Young was running the process, which is only the second such bitcoin auction in the world after the U.S. Marshals Service sold 144,000 bitcoins over a two-year period that had been confiscated from Ross Ulbricht, who founded the online drug bazaar Silk Road, the accountancy firm's transaction partner Adam Nikitins said.

Bidders can register until June 7 for the 24,518 bitcoins on offer. The 48-hour sealed auction will take place from June 20.

Based on yesterday's bitcoin price of \$533.80, the cryptocurrency is valued at almost \$13.1 million.

Nikitins expects strong interest in the auction since the bitcoin price has become less volatile after the U.S. auctions. Ernst & Young has received expressions of interest from the United States, Europe and Australia, he said.

"Over the last few months, the price of bitcoins has been steadily rising and the volatility has gone out of it," said Nikitins, adding that was expected to lead to greater interest.

Nikitins would not say who the bitcoins were confiscated from, but said registered bidders would be told. **MDT/AP**

NEW ZEALAND

Plan to remove logos from cigarette packs pushes ahead

Nick Perry, Wellington

NEW Zealand yesterday announced it will push ahead with plans to force tobacco companies to remove their logos from cigarette packs and enhance graphic health warnings.

Under draft regulations, cigarettes would be required to be sold in packs with plain background colors and with gruesome-looking images covering at least 75 percent of the front of each pack.

The proposal has widespread support among lawmakers and comes just days after the government announced a tax measure that will hike the price of a pack of cigarettes to about 30 New Zealand dollars (USD20), one of the highest in the world.

The plain packaging law is expected to be passed this year with the changes enfor-



ced by early next year. Dozens of countries and territories around the world have adopted similar measures after Australia became the trailblazer in 2012.

New Zealand first announced plans for plain packaging rules in 2013 but the legislation stalled. Prime Minister John Key said lawmakers held back as they awaited the outcome of lawsuits launched by tobacco companies in Australia.

Those companies argued the law violated intellec-

tual property rights and devalued their trademarks, but Australia's highest court upheld the law.

Tobacco giant Philip Morris suffered its latest legal setback in December when a Singapore court determined it had no jurisdiction to hear a case brought by Philip Morris Asia Ltd.

"The world's moved on, there have been quite a number of countries that have moved towards plain packaging," said Key. "And the advice I've been getting

from my officials is that it's safer for us to proceed unilaterally."

The New Zealand branch of British American Tobacco said Australia's law had been a failure, and that New Zealand should not move forward until decisions are made on legal challenges to plain packaging with the World Trade Organization.

"We remain strongly opposed to the plain packaging proposal in New Zealand," said Saul Derber, head of legal and external affairs, in a statement.

Associate Health Minister Sam Lotu-Iiga said the design and appearance of cigarette packs remains a powerful marketing tool for companies, and that smoking-related illnesses kill a dozen New Zealanders every day.

New Zealand has set an ambitious goal of eliminating smoking by 2025. **AP**

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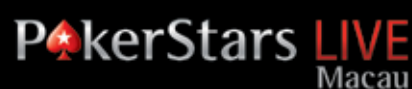
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INDIA

Cows on track said to cost bullet train USD1b

Anurag Kotoky and Sunil Jagtiani

INDIA may spend as much as USD16 billion - over \$1 billion more than initially estimated - on the nation's first bullet train to elevate the entire railroad, a person with direct knowledge of the matter said.

Land acquisition hurdles, as well as people and animals potentially wandering in front of carriages speeding at 350 kilometers an hour, make the option of an elevated link attractive, the person said, asking not to be identified as the plans are private. Construction starts in 2018, the person said.

India is working with Japan to build the 508 kilometer high-speed track from financial capital Mumbai to the economic hub of Ahmedabad in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state of Gujarat. A Japanese-designed Shinkansen train will connect the cities in

a project initially estimated to cost 980 billion rupees (\$14.6 billion), one of India's biggest infrastructure endeavors.

Modi's government is keen to elevate the entire railroad - at an extra cost of about 78 billion rupees - and operate the train from 2023, the person said. A dozen stations are planned and 2,000 jobs may be created in a project officials expect to spur economic growth, the person said.

A bullet train would help drag the world's fourth-largest railroad into the 21st century. The network carries about as many passengers daily as Australia's population, but is both congested and aging, with roots dating back to British colonial rule. Modi is seeking to spend 8.5 trillion rupees through 2020 on new tracks, trains and stations.

For more on Indian Railways' goal of a \$126 billion overhaul, click here.

The challenge is to execute the bullet train project on time, said Gaurang Shah, vice president at Geojit BNP Paribas Financial Services Ltd. Success would help improve the railway's image, which has been battered by years of losses despite government investments, he said.

A \$16 billion outlay would be close to 1 percent of India's \$2 trillion gross domestic product, which is already expanding at the fastest pace among major economies. Japan has offered to fund 81 percent of the initial project cost with a 50-year loan at a 0.1 percent interest rate.

A state company is being set up for implementation, and at least half the spending will probably go to local contractors.

Japan pioneered bullet trains, debuting them in time for the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games. Since then, roughly 5.6 billion



BLOOMBERG

passengers have used the Tokaido Shinkansen, which links Japan's three largest metropolitan areas of Tokyo, Nagoya and Osaka, according to the Central Japan Railway Co.

About 15 billion rupees of the project will go to Japan for elements such as train design and signaling, the person said. India wants local train manufacturing, but one challenge is that companies may be reluctant to set up plants with Japanese partners without a pipeline of similar future projects, the person said.

India has a mixed record on railway infrastructure projects.

A plan to add 3,360 kilometers of track dedicated to car-

go trains, first announced in 2005, still hasn't been completed, with 14 percent of the land needed yet to be acquired. In contrast, the 213-kilometer New Delhi-metro system is seen as defying perceptions that India's infrastructure projects are graft-addled and routinely exceed cost estimates.

While Modi has described the bullet train project as historic, opponents question the plan, arguing fares will be beyond the reach of many in a country where most people live on less than \$3.10 per day. The money could be used on basic needs such as housing for the poor, according to main opposition Congress party. **Bloomberg**

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BRAZIL

Temer loses a second minister to audio leak scandal

Anna Edgerton

THE ministry that Acting President Michel Temer created to demonstrate his commitment to fighting corruption was caught up in the fringes of the sweeping investigation that has rattled Brazil's political establishment for two years.

Fabiano Silveira, the Minister of Transparency and Control, resigned on Monday after local press published a recording of a conversation in which he criticized the graft probe known as Carwash and offered advice to a politician under investigation. He was the second minister in two weeks to resign because of leaked audio, threatening the stability of Temer's administration less than a month after he took over Latin America's largest economy.

Yields paid in local swap rates rose while the Brazilian real weakened 0.5 percent to 3.59 per dollar as investors worried that the political crisis may deprive Temer of the votes he needs to pass crucial austerity measures through Congress. Two senators

who had voted for the beginning of the impeachment trial of President Dilma Rousseff are also reconsidering their votes, according to O Globo newspaper.

Temer, who is serving as Brazil's interim president while Rousseff remains suspended for trial, has announced outlines of the policies he will send to Congress to help address Brazil's budget woes and get the economy growing again. However, the honeymoon period investors hoped would give him some political space has been spent responding to crises of public opinion and the Carwash corruption probe.

"The loss of two ministers within 18 days of taking office underscores the fragility of the Temer administration, which stems from its reliance on exchanging cabinet appointments for the support of congressional allies," Jimena Blanco, head of Latin America at Verisk Maplecroft, wrote in a note to clients. She noted that another six ministers in Temer's cabinet are being investigated by Carwash, which means more recordings may emerge. **Bloomberg**

HEALTH

Puerto Rico's tourist industry feels economic sting of Zika

It was the wedding of one of her best friends, and Natalie Kao was going to be a bridesmaid in a fun, tropical setting on a small island just off the east coast of Puerto Rico. But the prevalence of the Zika virus across the U.S. territory gave her pause.

Kao, pregnant with twins, knew the mosquito-borne Zika virus has been linked to a rare birth defect in a tiny percentage of cases. But even a small risk was too great. "You don't know the impact, which is very scary," the San Francisco woman said.

She sent her regrets, as did several dozen other members of the wedding party.

Puerto Rico has been hit harder by Zika than any other part of the U.S., with more than 1,170 confirmed cases, one death and the first microcephaly case acquired on U.S. soil. Now, worries about the virus are starting to affect the tourism industry, which had been one of the few bright



People walk and play on a beach in San Juan, Puerto Rico

spots in an otherwise dismal economy.

The full number of people who have canceled plans to visit or chose another destination is unknowable. But people have cited Zika in the cancellation of at least 42,000 hotel room reservations through 2018, which translates to about USD28 million in lost revenue for the lodging, restaurant and tour industry, said Ingrid Rivera,

executive director of Puerto Rico's Tourism Company.

Zika is named for a forest in Uganda where the virus was first discovered in 1947 and there have been many outbreaks over the years. Global health officials issued an alert after detecting it in Brazil in May 2015 and it has been spreading rapidly through the Western Hemisphere, carried by the common Aedes aegypti mosquito. **AP**

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Offbeat

DIRECTOR: ZOO SAFE DESPITE SHOOTING OF GORILLA TO SAVE BOY

AP PHOTO



The director of the Cincinnati Zoo says it remains safe for its 1.6 million annual visitors despite a weekend tragedy in which a gorilla was fatally shot to protect a 4-year-old boy who had entered its exhibit.

Thane Maynard, however, said a review is underway to determine any improvements that can make the zoo safer.

The male western lowland gorilla named Harambe was killed Saturday by a special zoo response team that feared for the boy's safety. Video taken by zoo visitors showed the gorilla at times appeared to be protective of the boy but also violently dragged him through the shallow moat.

Maynard said the decision to kill the gorilla was the right one. He said the gorilla was agitated and disoriented by the commotion during the 10 minutes after the boy fell. He said the gorilla could crush a coconut in one hand and there was no doubt that the boy's life was in danger.

Jack Hanna, host of "Jack Hanna's Into the Wild," said the zoo made the right call by shooting the gorilla. Hanna said he saw video of the gorilla jerking the boy through the water and knew what would happen if the animal wasn't killed.

"I'll bet my life on this, that child would not be here today," Hanna told WBNS-TV.

In an interview with Boston television station WFXT, conservationist and television host Jeff Corwin suggested that the boy's family should shoulder some of the blame, saying "zoos aren't your baby sitter."

"I don't think this happened in seconds or minutes. I think this took time for this kid, this little boy, to find himself in that situation. Ultimately it's the gorilla that's paid this price," he said.

A Cincinnati police spokesman said no charges against the parents were being considered. A spokeswoman for the family said Monday they had no plans to comment. AP

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13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
15:00	RTPi Live
18:30	Helena's Shadow (Repeated)
19:20	Montra do Lilau (Repeated)
19:50	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:40	The Toque 12 S.1
22:10	Helena's Shadow
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Europa League Highlights
23:45	Variety
00:10	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:45	RTPi Live

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26 MAY- 01 JUN



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



THE JUNGLE BOOK

ROOM 2

(2D) 2.30, 4.30, 9.30 pm

(3D) 7.30 pm

Director: Jon Favreau

Starring: Neel Sethi, Bill Murray, Ben Kingsley

Language: Chinese (Cantonese)

Duration: 106min



LIKE FOR LIKES

ROOM 3

2.30, 4.30, 9.30 pm

Director: Park Hyun-gene

Starring: Lee Mi-yeon, Yoo Ah-in, Choi Ji-woo

Language: Korean (Cantonese/English)

Duration: 120min

MACAU TOWER

19 MAY - 01 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



1993 SERB ATTACK ON FOOTBALL MATCH KILLS 11

Eleven people have died after Serb forces shelled artillery onto a holiday football match in Bosnia.

Four children were among the dead, and 100 were injured on the makeshift pitch in the Sarajevo suburb of Dobrinja.

Several hundred men, women and children were watching the football match when the first shell landed on the pitch. A second hit a few minutes later, wounding those who had gone to help victims of the first.

Dr Mufid Lazovic, a Sarajevo surgeon, said: "Today we have a very bad day, a lot of injury to patients and a lot of injury to civilians and children."

Although the suburb is used to shelling, the residents believed the high blocks of flats surrounding the pitch would be enough to protect them from Serb artillery. Many now believe the game was deliberately targeted.

The attack came on one of the most important Muslim festivals of the year. The area is supposed to be in one of the UN's "safe areas" - a term scornfully dismissed by Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, whose government says they are nothing more than death traps.

It accuses the international community of appeasing Bosnian Serbs and warns that without a change of policy the slaughter of Muslims will continue.

Cedric Thornberry, of the UN protection force, defended the concept of safe areas, saying: "The difficulty we face is not only question of co-operation of the parties but the fact that we are terribly thin on the ground and governments are not at this point tumbling over themselves to provide us with more troops".

UK Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said he hoped there would be a UN Security Council resolution on secure havens in Bosnia imminently.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The attack on the suburb of Dobrinja was followed by an even worse massacre in 1995, when the 'safe haven' of Srebrenica was overrun by the Bosnian Serb forces of General Ratko Mladic.

Thousands of Bosnian Muslim men and boys were separated from their families and slaughtered, despite the presence of Dutch UN troops.

The Bosnian Croats seized large parts of territory previously occupied by the Bosnian Serbs.

In 1995 the Dayton peace accord was signed in Paris, creating two entities of roughly equal size, one for Bosnian Muslims and Croats, the other for Serbs.

An international peacekeeping force was deployed, signalling the start of a new era for Bosnia.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 You are starting in a new direction today...

Taurus April 20-May 20 Intuition is more powerful than ever today...

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Financial weirdness makes life difficult late in the day...

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Try to assert your rights today - especially at work...

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Your modesty is a sometimes-surprising feature...

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Try your best to get organized today - things are pretty intense...

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Take care to appreciate life's small pleasures today...

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Try to let go of someone you care for - their freedom trumps everything...

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 You have got to be as flexible as possible today...

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You're reaching new extremes today - and you may find that you've broken through...

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Animals of all sorts are more appealing - and deliver more wisdom...

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 Your emotions are almost overwhelmingly positive today - your love life is where it needs to be...

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

9x9 grid for Easy Sudoku puzzle.

Easy+

9x9 grid for Easy+ Sudoku puzzle.

Medium

9x9 grid for Medium Sudoku puzzle.

Hard

9x9 grid for Hard Sudoku puzzle.

WEATHER

Weather forecast table with columns for MIN, MAX, and CONDITION for various cities in China and the World.

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Statesman Abba; 5- Take ___ at (try); 10- Roadside rests; 14- Cub Scout groups; 15- Indira Gandhi's father; 16- Type of tide; 17- Self-centered; 19- ___ girl; 20- Central; 21- Hawaiian outdoor feast; 22- Where you're likely to get smacked; 24- Hemoglobin deficiency; 26- Latin being; 27- Capital of Utah; 33- Male deer; 36- Comic O'Donnell; 37- Bind; 38- Annoyance; 39- Sausalito's county; 40- Explorer Tasman; 41- Legal conclusion?; 42- River that flows through Paris; 43- Let's Make ___; 44- Distinguish; 47- Sounds of relief; 48- Steal livestock; 52- Nissan model; 55- Agitate; 57- Solo of "Star Wars"; 58- Belinda Carlisle's "Should ___ You In?"; 59- Instant; 62- Clock face; 63- "Goodnight" girl; 64- Olive genus; 65- Town near Padua; 66- Salad green; 67- Student's hurdle; DOWN: 1- Accumulation of fluids; 2- Start; 3- Battery terminal; 4- Defense advisory grp.; 5- Yearly; 6- ___ precedent; 7- Drive-___; 8- Greek nickname; 9- Skin of a deer; 10- Momentarily; 11- Takes home; 12- ___ Dogg; 13- Practice boxing; 18- Inventor Howe; 23- Got it; 25- High-ranking NCO; 26- Simpler; 28- Characteristics; 29- TV producer Michaels; 30- Let ___; 31- ___ yellow ribbon...; 32- Shout; 33- Blueprint detail; 34- New Ager John; 35- Sailing; 39- Person who repairs machinery; 40- Citrus coolers; 42- German river; 43- Sky blue; 45- Child's toy; 46- Van Gogh masterpiece; 49- Fulcrum for an oar; 50- Ways to the pins; 51- Conclude by; 52- Pro or con; 53- Some Ivy Leaguers; 54- Cool; 55- Dagger; 56- Heaps; 60- Sheet music abbr.; 61- Camp bed



Crossword puzzles provided by BestCrosswords.com

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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Graham Dunbar, Geneva

UEFA looks to December decisions to shape Champions League

UEFA is set to decide in December on changing the Champions League as Europe's top clubs chase a new format and bigger share of the competition's billion-dollar annual income.

Closed-door meetings of European football leaders in Milan around Saturday's Champions League final made slow progress shaping the competition for the three seasons from 2018, The Associated Press was told.

Talk of a breakaway Super League was fueled in January by some wealthy members of the European Club Association (ECA) who saw uncertainty over UEFA's leadership during the FIFA presidential election.

Though an American-style closed league is thought unrealistic, one aim is making the current 32-team group stage more attractive to the biggest clubs and global TV viewers.

Many fans, however, sense a grab for power and money by clubs like Real Madrid and Juventus that are already rich and influential.

UEFA's election on Sept. 14, to finally replace its banned president Michel Platini, is a key step for Europe's governing body to focus fully on its biggest asset.

The new president will lead a



Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo kisses the trophy after the Champions League final

meeting of the policy-making executive committee on Sept. 15, but Champions League decisions are foreseen for a December session in Nyon, Switzerland.

"We need a format by the end of the year," UEFA's director of competitions, Giorgio Marchetti, told The AP in Milan. "We are consulting and we are listening."

The July 20 entry deadline for UEFA election contenders will also speed the debate, with

the Champions League format offering a campaign test for the next president.

Options include more guaranteed entries for the strongest leagues, protected places for the biggest clubs, and playing matches on Saturdays rather than midweek to appeal to Asian and American audiences.

Change is possible only every three years. It must be agreed before UEFA's retained agency, TEAM Marketing, can start selling Champions League and Europa League rights to broadcasters and sponsors for the next commercial cycle.

In the last round of talks, for the 2015-18 cycle, the Europa League was boosted by rewarding the title-winner with entry to the Champions League.

There are concerns that a too-predictable group stage turns off viewers, and that income — UEFA sales and top clubs' share of it — is not keeping pace with expectations.

The 32 group-stage clubs will share almost 1.3 billion euros

(USD1.4 billion) in prize money from UEFA each season through 2018.

Still, Juventus president Andrea Agnelli has noted that the 32-franchise NFL gets much more TV revenue, despite a smaller core fan base and little broad appeal outside the United States. The Champions League final typically draws a global average TV audience of around 170 million, compared to 110 million in the U.S. for a Super Bowl.

Some clubs also look enviously at England's Premier League which is watched avidly worldwide. Last-placed Aston Villa's share of TV rights — almost \$100 million — will outstrip Champions League winner Real Madrid's income from UEFA.

The UEFA club panel, including presidential contender Michael van Praag of the Netherlands, will advise the UEFA executive committee. Agnelli and influential ECA chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge of Bayern Munich also have seats at UEFA's top ta-

ble and should take part in the December decision.

The potentially divisive Champions League debate played out in Milan after the two city clubs, AC and Inter, plus Manchester United — all winners in the past 10 years — again missed out on qualifying.

However, English clubs seem happier with the present format and cash distribution by UEFA. Man United's executive vice chairman Ed Woodward also declined to speak with reporters after attending Saturday's ECA board meeting.

The last match of the current Champions League commercial contracts — the final in May 2018 — still does not have a venue.

Kiev was the preferred option under Platini but the politics of Ukraine and Russia, plus UEFA's own, have delayed a decision. UEFA should decide in December on the 2018 venue, at the same executive meeting that will shape the future Champions League. AP

AD



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MACAU'S FUTURE ECONOMY

I do not normally consider Macau's economy directly in these pages, but I now think it is clear that Macau has built a strong economy based on "rest & relaxation" tourism, but that the age of the high roller is over and mass market tourism is the wave of the future that we must begin to ride more seriously.

This fundamental transition will continue some existing trends - greater tourist numbers and more hotels, restaurants and shopping malls - but will also require some fundamental shifts - more variety and more "family friendly" options.

We need more visitors (staying for longer) to get the same revenues from the mass market compared to high rollers, which must put more pressure on making it easier to get into and out of Macau and get around while people are here. Along these lines Zhuhai should also be encouraged to grow its tourism offering to add further variety and options. We also need the border between Macau and Zhuhai to "dissolve" as much as possible - more border crossings, open for longer and better cross-border transport links.

More mass market tourism with more "rest & relaxation" options means more people to serve them, which means really biting the bullet and opening up much more to foreign labour. It is ridiculous that a small, but vocal, segment of the community holds back the growth of Macau with complaints about protection for local jobs. Instead of restricting the entry of foreign labour these kinds of problem are much better resolved by greatly expanding social support services and support for retraining and other initiatives to help disadvantaged locals climb out of poverty.

We also cannot continue to put up with poor government planning and management of the development of Macau's transport and other infrastructure. The extended delays in the Taipa ferry terminal, the light rail system and numerous other examples clearly demonstrate incompetence that is being rooted out, but far too slowly. We pay world class salaries to our civil servants and we must demand competence from them, and demand it sooner rather than later.

Personally, I am really looking forward to much more entertainment variety in the future in Macau - more shows and exhibitions and theatre and more music and more varied restaurants. However, this will rely on bringing in performers and other experts on relatively short stay work permits. We cannot develop unless these work permits are easy to obtain. We also need many more performance spaces, most of which should be relatively small and flexible - 10 by 1,000 seat, flexible venues will be much more valuable and useful than one 10,000 seat space.

In the longer term, we need to capitalize on and localize this entertainment expertise. I really cannot understand why none of the Macau universities have opened an academy for performing arts to train performers and technical support staff. (I have seen that the University of Macau has a black box theatre, but it does not seem to do much.) I tried to do this some years ago and even had some initial talks with about possible collaborations with curious potential partners but there was not enough interest in Macau. Maybe local schools could also consider broadening their performing arts emphasis beyond school choirs and orchestras to start stimulating demand.

Macau is a great place with a strong and clear future, but we really do need to proactively work to make this potential future a reality. Personally, I have no interest in seeing Macau slide back to being the backwater it was 20 years ago. Working together we can ensure that this does not happen.

THE UK POUND SLIDES AS POLLS INDICATE SUPPORT FOR EU EXIT

The British pound has fallen sharply after two opinion polls for The Guardian newspaper indicated support for a British exit from the 28-country European Union in next month's referendum.

In both polls, one conducted by phone and the other online, the "leave" campaign was up 52 points to 48.

The polls, released yesterday, jolted markets

which have downplayed the possibility of a vote for so-called Brexit in the June 23 vote. British bookmakers still think a "remain" vote is still the more likely outcome but there's been a modest narrowing over the past few days. The bookies think a vote to remain is around 75 percent likely.

Within minutes of the release of the latest poll results, the pound was down a cent at USD1.4550.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	10-30 Good
High Density Residential Area	25-45 Good
Ambient	30-50 Good

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS



CHINA-RUSSIA Russian foreign minister says President Vladimir Putin's planned trip to China will give powerful new impulse to ties between the two nations. Speaking yesterday at a Moscow conference, Sergey Lavrov (pictured) described expanding ties with China as Russia's top foreign policy priority.

KOREA A North Korean missile launch likely failed yesterday, South Korea's military said, the fourth in a series of high-profile failures that somewhat temper recent worries that the North is pushing quickly toward its goal of a nuclear-tipped missile that can reach America's mainland.

AFGHANISTAN Amnesty International says more than 1.2 million Afghans have been forced to flee their homes due to violence in the past three years and urges the Kabul government and the international community to tackle the country's growing crisis of refugees internally displaced by war.



THAILAND Wildlife officials remove 40 of the 137 tigers held at a Buddhist temple in western Kanchanaburi province following accusations that the monks were involved in illegal breeding and trafficking of the animals.

UNITED NATIONS The UN health agency says "plain packaging" on tobacco products has shown to be an effective complement to health warnings, advertising restrictions, and curbs on misleading packaging to help save lives. The World Health Organization released yesterday an 86-page report on "plain packaging," hoping to decrease the lure of smoking on "World No Tobacco Day."

CAPTAIN COOK If the ship legendary explorer Capt. James Cook used to sail around the world is found at the bottom of Newport Harbor, Rhode Island will own it outright because of a legal maneuver it took nearly two decades ago based on an obscure, centuries-old maritime practice.

After decades, 32 Australians' remains return from Malaysia



21 of the deceased were Australian soldiers killed in Vietnam

THE bodies of 32 Australian service personnel and their dependents, many of them killed during the Vietnam War, were handed over by Malaysian soldiers to their Australian counterparts yesterday. Australian officials say it's among the biggest single repatriations in the nation's history.

The remains handed over at Subang military air base had been interred for decades at Terendak Military Cemetery in Malaysia. Malaysia soldiers carried coffins draped with Australia flags to the tarmac, where Australian troops carried them aboard two Royal Australian Air Force C-17 Globemaster aircraft.

Malaysian officials said 21 of the deceased were Australian soldiers killed in Vietnam and three others died in the fight against communist insurgents in Malaysia. The remaining eight consisted of two wives and six children of Australian military personnel who died from accidents or

sickness, they said.

The bodies, plus one additional set of remains from Singapore, are to arrive in Sydney on Thursday. After a formal military repatriation ceremony that will include some veterans who served with those killed, a private memorial service will be held.

The Australian government offered a year ago to repatriate 36 Australian servicemen and dependents from Malaysia and Singapore. The families of 33 servicemen and dependents accepted that offer.

Before January 1966, Australia's policy was to bury soldiers killed in battle in foreign countries in the nearest Commonwealth war cemetery.

"As 2015 marks 50 years since the arrival of combat troops and the escalation of Australian involvement in Vietnam, it is right and proper that we honor their service with this gesture," then Prime Minister Tony Abbott told Parliament in May last year.

Australia deployed more than 60,000 military personnel to the Vietnam conflict between 1962 and 1973, of whom 521 were killed. **AP**

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Paulo Barbosa



'Goose boats' at the Nan Van Lake. The pedal-driven boats are still unused. They are expected to be made available soon.