

FIRST VIP ROOMS AT STUDIO CITY
Melco Crown Entertainment's most expensive resort is set to open its first gambling rooms targeting high spenders

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Hundreds of people attended a day-long Eid al-Fitr event held at the Macau Mosque yesterday

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WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA-UN A U.N. panel says China has arbitrarily detained an American woman in violation of international human rights norms, bringing her case back into public attention ahead of a visit to Beijing by U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon this week.
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BANGLADESH A Bangladeshi politician whose son was one of the Dhaka restaurant attackers said yesterday that many young men from educated families have been missing like his son was for several months before carrying out the deadly attack.

AUSTRALIA's conservative government remains hopeful of clinging to power after weekend elections turned too close to call. But the opposition leader warned that even if the government musters a majority, it will emerge a divided administration without a mandate for its agenda.

THAILAND Japanese car maker Toyota says it is letting go at least 800 workers at its factories in Thailand under a voluntary departure program, a reflection of deepening troubles in the Thai automotive industry.

YEMEN A suicide car bomber struck a military and security compound adjacent to the international airport in southern Yemeni port city of Aden yesterday, killing at least 10 people and setting off clashes with soldiers, medical and security officials said.

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FORBES CONRAD

PANSY HO EXCLUSIVE

Partnership with MGM Resorts is a 'marriage made in heaven'

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Beijing wants bookseller back but Hong Kong says no chance

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MDT INTERVIEW

Pansy Ho: Creating an exquisite urban landmark of art and taste

Grace Geng
MDT/Macau Inc.

A business leader with a sprawling collection of interests across the region, Pansy Ho needs no introduction to the average reader. Yet what often impresses interviewers about the billionaire daughter of Stanley Ho are her poise, manners and wit. All three come to the fore as we sit down to discuss a wide range of topics in an exclusive interview, starting with the question of what might have been different if she had decided as a teenager to go against her father's wish and attend the prestigious liberal arts college, Vassar College, in New York State.

Ho does not skip a beat, saying she never regrets having pursued a business education instead. And the proof of the wisdom of her choice is evident all around us, at the property she helped to create, MGM Macau, otherwise known as "the palace of art".

"Almost every city in the world has one classic hotel, or what the French call an iconic hotel, which attracts people to visit even if they are not staying there," she says. "The Peninsula Hong Kong, renowned for its historical heritage, architectural style and first-class service, is a fine example, a hotel which strikes a chord with anyone who visits. My wish, then and now, is to create such an iconic hotel."

Ho is quick to pay respect to her partners in this effort, describing her relationship with MGM Resorts International as a "marriage made in heaven". It is not difficult to see why. MGM is vastly experienced in such areas as gaming, MICE and entertainment, whereas Ho is very knowledgeable in management and marketing in an Asian environment, in addition to being well-connected in the artistic field. Together, they have already created one exceptional property that combines Western inno-



FORBES CONRAD

vation and modernity with Eastern subtlety and service; early next year, they will create another benchmark for quality with the opening of MGM Cotai.

Over the course of the past eight years, since MGM Ma-

cau opened, Ho says she has been generally content with what they have done. This is despite the current difficult market conditions, which she clearly is looking beyond. "It is about time for the gaming sector to become more settled,"

she says. "This is conducive to consolidating the market and improving services."

Diversification is a key focus of Ho's. She clearly relishes the opportunity to build more creative attractions and services into the new property, just as she has done with the current one. In fact, her artistic philosophy is already deeply embedded in her business. This much is evident in the Grande Praça, the atrium of MGM Macau, which was her brainchild.

"During its construction," Ho recalls, "I insisted that Grande Praça must have its own character. Chinese and Portuguese cultures have been interacting with each other for centuries: on a Portuguese-style street, for example, there will always be a few elements that are distinctly Chinese, and some that are a fusion of the two cultures. We wanted Grande Praça to incorporate both Portuguese and Eastern elements. As extensive as it is, Grande Praça is not meant to be commercial; it is for leisure and romance. We would like visitors to know that, rather than shopping, Grande Praça is here as a public square for people to meet, enjoy and communicate with one another, thereby creating a collective culture."

Few corridors, windows and corners of MGM Macau are without paintings or sculptures, many of which are artistic masterpieces. All this stems from Ho's love of art. "We do not want to place artworks in any specific locations for exhibition," she explains. "Even less do we wish to state who the artists are and their price tag. Visitors may notice the existence of artworks, and if they appreciate them, we are more than content. If they investigate deeper and realize that the artworks are masterpieces, we would be pleasantly surprised. Even if visitors simply pass by without paying any attention, that is fine with us, for this is the MGM style."

MGM Macau's branding

strategy by way of interacting with film and art, according to Ho, has had a significant impact on promoting Macau as a world tourism and leisure destination as well. This was most obvious with the movie, "Look for a Star" [2009], starring Andy Lau and Shu Qi, which was the first to be shot at MGM Macau. "That movie allowed us to show that the era of 'God of Gamblers' [1989] was long gone, and that Macau has since become a prosperous city of charm and modernity," Ho ex-

“Every city would have one classic hotel... My wish, then and now, is to create one such iconic hotel.”

plains. "On that basis, we went on to have 'Finding Mr Right 2 - Book of Love' [2016], which showcased Macau's unique function as the platform linking mainland China and the U.S. Coming up next this summer is Jacky Chan's new film 'Skiptrace' [2016], which shows viewers that Macau is much more than gaming alone, as it is a dynamic and trendy city. Another way in which MGM Macau hammers this message home is by supporting the filming of TV and reality shows from mainland China and the U.S."

Pansy Ho believes Macau is a city with great artistic and cultural heritage. In addition to promoting the UNESCO World Heritage and organizing art exhibitions, she also believes Macau needs to encourage creativity and combine local art with innovation in order to reach a higher level of development.

MGM Macau has helped in this effort. One example is the

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Macau is much more than gaming alone, as it is a dynamic and trendy city.



Biennial of the Lions, an event which saw 50 artists from Macau, mainland China and France creating environmentally friendly statues made of resin, which were then exhibited – and very well received – at not only MGM Macau, but also at venues such as the MGM Art Space, Macao Museum of Art and the Macau Tower.

“Local and foreign artists may have very different takes on the same subject-matter,” Ho notes, “and this kind of exchange is conducive to a city’s artistic atmosphere. By organizing similar events, MGM Macau hopes to partner with other institutions to promote art exhibitions and trade as well as the gathering of artists in Macau.”

What MGM Macau has done with cuisine is another example of this strategy, Ho elaborates. “Macau is endowed with every possible advantage of ‘haute cuisine’ from around the world,” she says. “So how

do we make good use of this to attract visitors from abroad? This requires vision and patience. We ought to have our own, idiosyncratic style, built on the basis of diversity.”

Partnering with renowned chefs and restaurants from mainland China, last year MGM Macau launched the Huaiyang Epicurean Delights, in addition to hosting the MGM Oktoberfest for seven years in a row. These innovative events may have been transient, but they have been helping bring in new ideas to the local culinary scene. Ho firmly believes that cuisine is a pull factor for not only hotels, but also cities.

Pansy Ho knows what she is talking about. As Secretary-General of the Global Tourism Economy Forum for the past 4 years, Ho is focused on the practical realities of building a MICE industry here. Aware of Hong Kong’s success in the sector, she takes note of Macau’s advantages such as am-

ple supply of hotel rooms, flexible and spacious venues and numerous culinary attractions.

“Hong Kong being the MICE capital,” she says, “and considering our geographical proximity, we should consider the feasibility of hosting one event in both cities,” Ho says. “One city can do the events and the other the forums, so that business travelers get the best out of both.”

While admitting that “Macau has to up its MICE capabilities and quality of human resources,” Ho is clearly confident about the city’s prospects. As she should be, with a new property opening in Cotai next year. She is somewhat coy about releasing details on MGM Cotai, yet it is clear she is focused on the longer term.

“We did not build this project for current customers,” she says. “We did this for the younger demographic, people who will be our customers in 10 years’ time. For now, these future customers are teena-

gers, and our goal is to keep up with their development and interests in the next decade. By encouraging creativity and endeavoring to offer guests a brand new experience through our diverse and interactive entertainment facilities, we aim to be the benchmark for customer experience in Asia.”

Ho did reveal a few juicy tidbits, however. These include that MGM Cotai will have its own atrium with cutting-edge technology. Visitors can also expect to experience the most astounding entertainment facility which would be a dynamic theater in a flexible setting, 14 seat configurations and a 180-degree LED wall, capable of 4K content with 28 million Megapixels. Equipped with such cutting-edge features, this facility will serve as forum, banquet hall, concert venue or theater.

“For more details, please come and visit us when we open next year,” Ho says, with a smile. **MDT/Macau Inc. Exclusive**

UM to charge for parking



The University of Macau (UM) will start to charge fees for parking in any of the car parks located on its campus from July 17. UM announced yesterday that non-UM members, whose vehicles are currently parked within the school, are urged to vacate these spaces before July 17, otherwise they shall be dealt with in accordance with the law. The hourly rate will be roughly the same as that of all public car parks in Macau. Vehicles can stay parked at UM for a maximum of eight consecutive days.

Definition of ‘special students’ to be clarified

An amendment to the special education system will feature a clearer definition of the term ‘special students,’ Chow Pui Leng, head of the Centre of Psycho-Pedagogical Support and Special Education of the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) said yesterday. According to Chow, the amendment will mainly attempt to provide subsidies to talented students and to offer financial aid to schools and members of staff that help students with special needs.

Macao Foundation appointments renewed



Wu Zhiling has been re-appointed to the position of president of the Administrative Council of the Macao Foundation, according to an Official Gazette notice published this week. Zhong Yi will be the vice-president. Zhong Yi has been appointed as a member of the Administrative Council of the Macao Foundation since July 2010. Vong Hin Fai will be the chairman of the supervisory board of the foundation. Appointments of several members of the trustee committee have also been renewed, including Anabela Fátima Xavier Sales Ritchie and Angela Leong. The new appointments will take effect from July 11.

Live poultry trade resumed

Macau resumed its live poultry trade yesterday. According to the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau, live poultry from Zhuhai will be available in today's markets if the produce test negative for avian flu. Authorities suspended live poultry sales and culled 9,000 live birds after an H7 avian flu virus strain was detected in poultry sold in a Macau market on June 22. In the two weeks that followed, all poultry markets in Macau underwent daily sterilization. The Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau has maintained contact with Guangdong's inspection and quarantine authorities in preparation for resuming Macau's live poultry trade.

IAS advises nursery registration closed

The Social Welfare Bureau (IAS) has announced the conclusion of this year's registration and ballot process for Macau's 34 subsidized nursery schools. Parents who withdraw their child's application to a nursery will have their child's place awarded to the next on the waiting list. In some cases, the schools may select applicants through a random draw. Three new subsidized nursery schools are currently being setup, according to TDM, and are expected to start accepting student applications at the end of this year or the beginning of 2017. In the past, the IAS has encouraged local parents to consider half-day childcare services for their children, due to the limited capacity of Macau's nurseries. In April last year it was estimated that the approximately 8,300 places available in Macau could only cater for 40 percent of the local infant population.

TOURISM

Region linked to Indonesia's Sulawesi province

INDONESIA'S leading budget airline Lion Air has just flown some 250 Chinese tourists directly from Macau to the country's province of North Sulawesi.

According to Indonesian media outlet Tempo.Co, Lion Air aims to attract 30,000 Chinese visitors to the capital city of North Sulawesi, Manado.

Lion Group founder Rusdi Kirana told Tempo.Co that the Group is committed to at-



Manado, Indonesia

tracting tourists from China, stressing that North Sulawesi is an "appropriate travel des-

ination" for China, with its substantial market.

Kirana added that Macau, Shenzhen, Chongqing, Wuhan, Shanghai and Changsha have "huge market potential, large population and high purchasing power."

Meanwhile, North Sulawesi Governor Olly Dondokambey welcomed the Chinese tourists at Sam Ratulangi Airport, also known as Manado International Airport.

The governor said the Indonesian government aims to boost the number of visitors, and expressed his hopes for regular and direct visits from numerous Chinese cities.

Olly Dondokambey revealed that Chinese tour guides had visited North Sulawesi two months previously to determine whether it would be "worthwhile" for Chinese tourists to visit the province.

The governor has advised the residents of the province to create a "calm and safe environment" for the tourists.

Following the direct flight from Macau on a Boeing 737 ER aircraft, flights to Manado from Shenzhen and Shanghai will depart tomorrow and July 12, respectively.

Flights between Macau and Moscow to increase

THE Macau International Airport Co. Ltd (CAM) has announced that JSC Royal Flight Airlines will increase their passenger flight services between Macau and Moscow, Russia to three charter flights a week.

A CAM spokesperson revealed to the Times that the increase in number of flights will start July 10. Currently, JSC Royal Flight Airlines flies directly between the two cities twice a week.

According to CAM's statement, the local airport attracted four new carriers in the first half of this year, including Vietjet, Lion Air, JSC Royal Flight Airlines and Nok Air.

The statement also revealed that TransAsia Airways and Thai Smile Airways have officially suspended their air services to Macau, effective from October 30 and August 30, 2016 respectively.

Meanwhile, passengers traveling to and

from Taiwan and Southeast Asia grew by 26 percent and 30 percent respectively in June year-on-year.

The local airport has handled 3.25 million passenger movements between January and June this year, an increase of 16 percent compared to the corresponding period in 2015. Similarly, aircraft movements are 6 percent higher than a year before, with over 28,000 landings and takeoffs.

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opinion

David Fickling, Bloomberg

GLORY DAYS BECKON WITH RETURN OF HIGH ROLLERS

Is China's Gilded Age back? Three-and-a-half years after President Xi Jinping started his crackdown on corruption and lavish spending, there are signs that the belle époque may be ready for one more round. Shares of Kweichow Moutai, the maker of USD500-a-bottle firewater, hit a record Wednesday, and an index of Shenzhen real-estate prices has almost doubled in the past 12 months.

Now Melco Crown, the Macau casino operator at the forefront of Beijing's push for a more egalitarian style of fun at its Hollywood-themed Studio City complex, is looking to introduce private gaming rooms for high rollers there, according to Daniela Wei of Bloomberg News.

Melco has never entirely ruled out having such rooms at the property, but to see them actually opened would be quite a turnaround.

Because of the luxury crackdown, all six Macau casino companies have been making do with less revenue from VIP gamblers, who habitually bet \$10,000 a hand on baccarat and are treated like emperors in return. Even Steve Wynn, the Las Vegas mogul who regards his resorts as positioned at the very top end of Macau's market, saw the number of table games catering to mass-market players overtake the glitzier VIP tables in December.

Studio City was never really pitched at high rollers, who tend to find that Batman rides and Tom and Jerry playgrounds cramp their style. Its struggles to get permits for even mass-market tables continued until days before the site opened. So why private gambling rooms?

One reason is desperation. Stuck on a patch of reclaimed land surrounded by yet-to-be-completed resorts, Studio City isn't close to meeting expectations. "We're not totally happy with our own efforts," Chief Executive Officer Lawrence Ho told an investor call in May. Macau's government granted the casino 250 mass-market gaming tables, compared with the minimum of 400 Ho had told investors it needed last February.

While Melco Crown is still the most highly rated Macau casino stock, valued at 31 times forecast earnings over the next 12 months compared with a median of 20, beneath the surface it's struggling to make an economic profit. Its weighted average cost of capital has risen from 8 percent to 10.8 percent over the past year, according to Bloomberg estimates, while its return on invested capital has slipped to 0.7 percent. Ideally, returns ought to be higher than costs.

Getting a few VIPs in might help. High-rollers tend to be surprisingly low-margin players, due to the cost of providing all that free stuff and their focus on games where the odds are most in their favor. But the vast sums they wager allow casinos to hold less cash against outsized payouts, which would help bring that cost of capital back into line.

Melco may also be pushing at a door that's a bit more open than it was in the past. Tax revenue from gambling, which typically makes up more than 80 percent of Macau government revenues, is running this year at its lowest level since 2011. Government spending in the five months through May rose 12 percent from a year earlier, while revenue fell 14 percent - and the start of the year, when Lunar New Year drives wagers to their annual peak, ought to be the best period for the budget. The shocking prospect of the territory running a deficit is a live issue, raised by Melco's Ho among others.

If Studio City is allowed to open the rooms, it would represent just a toe in the water. Just three VIP rooms are planned at present, people familiar with the matter told Bloomberg's Wei - less than 1 percent of those run by SJM Holdings, the biggest player.

Still, any turn back upmarket would suggest the shape of Macau's casino industry is changing again. As a share of total gambling revenue, VIP baccarat has been edging upward for two quarters. The city's glory days may yet get a fresh lease of life.



Melco said to plan first VIP rooms at Studio City

Daniela Wei

MELCO Crown Entertainment Ltd.'s most expensive resort is set to open its first gambling rooms targeting high spenders from mainland China, switching gears from an earlier strategy that focused on recreational gamblers as it looks to reverse two years of slumping profit.

Studio City, controlled by billionaire Lawrence Ho, is planning three VIP rooms as early as this quarter, according to people familiar with the matter. Suncity Group and Tak Chun Group, which bring in bettors from mainland China and loan them money to gamble with, are among gaming promoters that will operate these rooms, said the people, who asked not to be identified because the plans aren't yet public.

The rooms are aimed to help offset last year's 83 percent drop in net income at the casino company. Melco, which operates VIP rooms at its City of Dreams and Altira Macau casinos, in May reported first-quarter revenue that missed analysts' estimates, and Australian billionaire James Packer's Crown Resorts Ltd. cut its stake in Melco on the same day. The latest move underscores how casino operators in the world's biggest gambling market are struggling to bolster revenue after a two-year slump.

In a statement, Melco said it "will not rule out the possibility of VIP component if we believe that it will result in an improved and more diversified product offering for our customers." Mass and premium mass markets remain Studio City's focus, it said.

"It is sensible for casino operators to try every way to maximize the profit of the existing assets" as Macau's economic environment continues to be "very challenging," said Jamie Soo, an analyst at Daiwa Capital Markets Hong Kong Ltd. Competition will further intensify with new property openings in the coming months, he said.

Nasdaq-listed Melco fell 4.7 percent to USD12.30 in New York trading. The casino operator's shares have fallen about 30 percent since Studio City's opening, double the decline in Bloomberg Inte-

It is sensible for casino operators to try every way to maximize the profit of the existing assets.

JAMIE SOO
DAIWA ANALYST



lligence's Macau Gaming Index in the same period. Crown Resorts dropped 0.5 percent to AUD12.09 in Sydney.

Studio City debuted on Oct. 27 to much fanfare with actors Leonardo DiCaprio and Robert De Niro making an appearance. Ho, chairman of Melco and the son of Macau casino kingpin Stanley Ho, said at the time that the \$3.2 billion resort would target leisure players.

Months later, Lawrence Ho said he was dissatisfied with Studio City's performance. The project lacked premium customers because of the absence of VIP rooms, the Macau Daily newspaper reported in May, citing Ho.

A Suncity spokesman couldn't immediately comment when reached by Bloomberg News. A representative for Tak Chun declined to comment.

Melco boosted its share of the mass-market gaming segment with Studio City, rising to 16.5 percent in the first three months of

this year, from 14.2 percent in the third quarter of 2015 before the project opened, according to CLSA's data. Melco's market share of VIP gambling remained flat over the period, according to the brokerage.

The Hollywood-themed resort boasts a Batman ride, a figure-eight Ferris wheel, and 1,600 hotel rooms aimed at drawing families and leisure-seekers. At Studio City's opening concert, a star-studded cast performed, including Grammy winner Mariah Carey, who walked down the red carpet with Packer.

Casino tycoon Packer resigned as co-chairman of Melco and became deputy chairman after Crown cut its stake to 27 percent from 34 percent. Hong Kong-listed Melco International Development Ltd., of which Ho is also chairman, became the largest Melco shareholder with 37.9 percent after that deal, according to the Macau casino operator in a May statement. **Bloomberg**

HEALTH

3,418 smoking fines issued in the first half of 2016



THERE have been 3,418 smoking-related infractions in public places during the first half of this year, according to a statement by the Health Bureau. During this time, 161,880 inspections were performed, amounting to an average of 889 inspec-

tions per day.

The majority 92.2 percent of infringers were male, compared to the 7.8 percent that were female.

Sixty one percent of the offenders were Macau residents (2,086), over one thousand were tourists, and the

remaining 4.5 percent were non-resident workers (153). In 129 of the cases security forces were involved.

The locations where most fines were issued were internet cafes (611 cases, 17.8 percent), gardens/parks/recreational areas (438 cases, 12.8 percent) and games centers (337 cases, 9.9 percent).

During the same time frame, the Health Bureau and the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau conducted 277 tobacco-related inspections in casinos resulting in 277 offenses, of which 259 (93.5 percent) were male and 17 (6.5 percent) were female. 224 (80.9 percent) were tourists, 52 (18.8 percent) were Macau

692 INSPECTIONS PER DAY

SINCE THE Tobacco Prevention and Control Act came into effect on January 1, 2012, authorities have conducted a total of 1,137,404 inspections. This represents an average of 692 inspections per day. 34,570 people have been fined for smoking in designated smoke-free areas.

residents and one (0.4 percent) was a non-resident worker.

From January 2 to June 30, the Office for the Prevention and Tobacco Control received 1,557 calls resulting in 450 smoking-related inquiries, 1,090 complaints and 134 suggestions from residents.

In June, the Health Bureau marked 105 sites as having a higher incidence of smoking. Law enforcement officers carried out 154 inspections and issued 51 fines at these sites.

Research points to shortages in professional education

THE Non-Tertiary Education Council held its third plenary meeting yesterday at the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ). The Council presented reports on the development of the region's vocational and professional education system, the amendment to the special education system and other programmes.

In 2014, the DSEJ entrusted the Shanghai Institute of Vocational and Technical Education to conduct research on the city's vocational and technical education system.

According to Chen Song, vice-director of the institute, the research concluded that this education sector is facing "a shortage of students, and lacks cooperation between schools and communities alike, as well as a good work ethic applied by the teaching staff."

In the academic year of 2015/2016, there were 1,360 students spread across 36 majors in local vocational and professional education schools. Additionally, 10 middle-schools were opening vocational and professional courses.

As informed by Ng, the number of students is smaller than that of last year due to "the change in the number of enrolled middle-school students." Last year, there were approximately 1,400 registered students.

According to DSEJ, parents' opinions about vocational and professional education schools – namely, that these schools may not provide advantages to their children when entering the labour market – have made them hesitant in sending their children to these schools.

HERITAGE

IPM holds workshop focused on old shipyards

Lynzy Valles

FROM Monday until yesterday, the Macau Polytechnic Institute (IPM) held a cultural and creative camp for nearly 80 participants from 23 secondary schools.

Students who participated in the camp, entitled "Macau Polytechnic Boat Midsummer Arts Cultural and Creative Camp 2016," held a creative fair where they sold the work they made during the workshop.

The students were introduced to "cultural and creative" activities during the workshop, which included printmaking, pottery and photography. The workshop aimed to raise local youth awareness about the protection of the old shipyards in Lai Chi Vun, Coloane.

Director of Macau Government Tourism Office Helena de Senna Fernan-

des told the Times that the project is an "eye-opener" for the youth in the region and should be further promoted.

"Some of them may not know much about Coloane village and its history and you know, what's stored there. So this kind of activity [...] should be promoted more in the future," she said.

There are plans to revamp the Lai Chi Vun area, which spans about 50,000 square meters. Authorities intend to transform what was once a center for Macau's boat-building industry into a cultural tourism product.

Senna Fernandes believes that the city's younger generation could become more aware about the history of Macau's districts, as well as the differences between them. She hopes that the project will be promoted to the various industries.

"This time it's more of a school project but I guess in the future, if the oppor-

tunity is there, of course this can also be promoted to other tourists and other sectors as well," she stated.

TRAVEL ALERT SYSTEM TO LAUNCH THIS YEAR

SPEAKING ON the sidelines of the event, Senna Fernandes stated his expectation that a travel alert system will be launched within the year. She revealed to reporters that the tourism office has been discussing with the relevant tourism and insurance industry bodies, and is working on building a legal framework. The alert system will cover several destinations of significance in the territory. The MGTO head also said that the law regarding the provision of illegal hotel accommodation is going to be amended.

corporate bits

ALAN TAM TO PERFORM AT THE VENETIAN



Legendary Cantopop singer Alan Tam will bring his "Alan Tam 40th Anniversary Concert Tour – Macau" to the Cotai Arena at The Venetian

on August 20 to celebrate his 40th year in the music industry.

Tam kicked off his latest tour in Hong Kong back in

2015, and the sell-out concert proved his "enduring popularity and enchantment on stage," according to a Sands China statement.

The long-awaited anniversary concert is finally coming to the region for local fans to enjoy. Tam will perform his classic hits from the past four decades.

The singer was crowned "Principal Tam" and is widely known as a mentor to various artists in Hong Kong's music industry. By 2013, Tam had released a total of 115 solo albums that sold over 35 million records worldwide.

Tickets for the one-night only concert go on sale today at all Cotai Ticketing box offices with ticket prices starting from MOP/HKD380.

GRAND COLOANE TO HOST A 'CHILLAXING FRIDAY'



Grand Coloane Resort is set to hold an 80s and 90s music themed party by the pool to kick off the weekend with a chill Friday night on

July 22.

Party revelers will be entertained by live performances from local DJ Filipe Senna Fernandes.

Entrance to the party is priced at MOP285 net per person and includes unlimited alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.

According to a statement from the resort, free parking and scheduled round-trip shuttle bus services are available for every partygoer. Boa Vida and The Club members are entitled to an exclusive offer of a 10 percent discount or free entrance.

Grand Coloane Resort is an eight-storey grand complex, which is terraced into a lush mountainside, featuring Macau Golf & Country Club's 18-hole tournament-style golf course on its rooftop.

Local Muslims celebrate end to month-long fasting



The prayer house of the Macau Mosque

Daniel Beitler

HUNDREDS of people attended an Eid al-Fitr event held at a site on Ramal dos Mouros yesterday to celebrate the end of a month-long fasting festival, Ramadan. Literally translating as the "festival of breaking of the fast," Eid al-Fitr is an important holiday celebrated by Muslims around the world.

"Eid marks the end of the month of fasting [Ramadan], and is an occasion for us to spend time with our family and friends, and to thank God for all we have received," explained Adnan Nasim, a member of the Muslim community in Macau, present yesterday. "The idea during Ramadan is that you skip the middle meal and don't eat for the entire day [during daylight hours]. And in this way you develop sympathy for those who are less fortunate than us. It creates an atmosphere of caring for each other," he said.

The area has a small prayer house that, according to Nasim, can only accommodate about 50 people at a time. On busy days such as Eid al-Fitr, members of the Islamic community must pray

in shifts in order to give everyone an opportunity.

However that is expected to change in the near future, after approval was granted earlier this year for the construction of a larger mosque on the site. According to Nasim, the new prayer house will be able to accommodate hundreds of people at any one time.

"We really need the mosque," he said. "After experiencing today - the chaos and disappointment for some people of not having a place to pray - the new mosque will mark a new beginning for the Muslim community of Macau."

There are as many as 10,000 Muslims in Macau reckons Nasim, and many celebrated the important festival yesterday.

Each year, a full-day program is held at the mosque site, which mainly offers opportunity for prayer and a chance to get something to eat. Some Muslims book the day off work to relish the celebration.

Nevertheless, as many Muslims in Macau are not able to book the day off, it is necessary that the site remains open for the whole day to offer local Muslims the chance to pray and eat when they have the chance to do so.

ADVERTORIAL

Training for success

WYNN COMMISSIONS SERIES OF WORKSHOPS OPENED TO LOCAL SMES

The current economic situation may make it more challenging for local SMEs to grow and prosper. However, Wynn not only believes in the talent and diligence of the local community but strives, as a responsible corporate citizen, to help it bloom. Following the Government's intentions of diversifying the economy as well as to search for good business relationships, Wynn has started a series of business matching opportunities and commissioned the Macau Productivity and Technology Transfer Center (CPTTM) to organize workshops, in order to support the growth of the SMEs.

The most recent workshops took place in early April and May and were well received by the community, drawing a number of attendees to the CPTTM Head Office auditorium. The first, entitled the Workshop on "Creating Startup Success - The Crafting of a Viable Business Model", was an overview of how to create a business model. The focus of the three-hour session was to help entrepreneurs be aware of potential difficulties and avoid being overly optimistic in their planning, as well as the enablement of their business growth through business remodeling and creating a more efficient business practice.

The workshop featured Dr. Ngan LT, a veteran professional and business consultant with experience at the top management level of locally and internationally listed corporations, as its speaker. She has been an internal and external management and training consultant since 2006. One of the attendees, Ms. Lei, is a young, recent-graduate entrepreneur who is branching out of her family's shoe manufacturing business to set up her own shop. According to her, starting out in the business world is no easy feat. She took the notes and points shared by the speaker to heart and now intends to come up with a revised version of her initial business plan. "For me the most important thing was to gain a better understanding of the problems I might face once I start my business. I feel a lot more prepared after the workshop", Lei stated.



The second workshop was held a month later under the topic of "Disruptive Innovation & Entrepreneurship", featuring Mr. Wong Hoi Kuen, an experienced Marketing consultant from Hong Kong, as speaker. In this seminar the speaker illustrated the concept of innovation through real life cases, aiming to inspire would-be-entrepreneurs to identify a gap that presents an opportunity for them to develop products and services that meet unsatisfied demand, potentially upending the competitive structure of the entire industry.

Mr. Yu and Ms. Tung were among the attendees. The duo are the founders of a local wedding planning business, which provides their customers with a one-stop shop for everything wedding-related, from dresses to invitations and honeymoons. Although the focus of their business is not new, the model they are trying to bring to Macau is. "There are not many shops dedicated to taking care of all of the steps involved in a wedding. They usually focus on a specific service, whereas we want our clients to feel they can rely on us to take care of everything", Yu explains. Through the workshop, they feel they gained a professional insight into the business world. "The case-study was very useful to understand how we can identify what the market might need and how to fulfill that need", he added.

These workshops will continue to be hosted quarterly, covering major topics such as SME Financial Management, Sales Strategy and Service Quality. Senior consultants with relevant experience will share their valuable experience, passing down important business advice with the participants. Providing local SMEs with specialized training is essential for their growth. Due to their size, most companies often do not have access to any kind of expert advice. Workshops such as these are therefore a great opportunity for small or young businesses to keep informed. Wynn is proud to have worked with the CPTTM to organize these training sessions as investing in local talent is beneficial for the city in the long term, especially to help Macau develop as a World Center of Tourism and Leisure.



Novo Banco CEO sees buyers interested in Macau, France units

NOVO Banco SA, the lender that emerged from the breakup of Portugal's Banco Espirito Santo SA, is in "more or less advanced" talks to sell its units in Macau, France and Cape Verde, Chief Executive Officer Eduardo Stock da Cunha said.

The Macau unit will probably be sold at a better price than the others, the CEO said in an interview at the bank's headquarters in Lisbon. "It's normal in these regions to pay higher market multiples than those we can get in a small operation like Cape Verde or in a European unit, where most banks are valued in the market at a discount to their book value," Stock da Cunha said.

A planned sale of the Cape Verde unit was halted in February by the Bank of Portugal due to investigations related to that unit's operation.

Stock da Cunha has been trimming Novo Banco's assets and focusing on its domestic

market as the Bank of Portugal makes another attempt to sell the lender after last year's effort failed because offers were too low. The central bank said last week it received four bids for Novo Banco.

Novo Banco is also trying to divest a real estate portfolio that includes stakes in restructuring funds. Sales have reached 40 million euros (USD44 million) to 50 million euros a month lately, and the bank sold real estate assets in the first half at an average discount to net book value of less than 5 percent, the CEO said. It aims to sell about 700 million euros of real estate assets this year.

The separate division set up for disposals had 10.8 billion euros of assets at the end of last year and Novo Banco aims to reduce that to about 4.5 billion euros in 2020.

"It's something that takes its time," Stock da Cunha said. "Rome wasn't built in a day."

Bloomberg

JEWELRY

How do you cut a massive, 404-carat diamond?

James Tarmy

SOON after a 404-carat diamond was discovered in Angola's Lulo mine, a Dubai-based consortium—Nemesis International DMCC—contacted the state-owned miner Endiama and bought the rough stone wholesale. "When the discovery was announced, they were getting calls from China trying to buy it," said Nikolas Polka, chief executive officer of Nemesis. But once he'd successfully acquired the stone, there was still the question of what to do with it. So Polka turned to Fawaz Gruosi, the founder and creative director of Di Grisogono, a Geneva-based jeweler.

Gruosi's plans remained open-ended and would stay that way until he'd made some preliminary, exploratory cuts. "What are we going to do with this big diamond?" he pondered as he sat at a desk on the second floor of his New York boutique. Wearing a trim blue suit, blue shirt, and blue tie, Gruosi puffed on a cigarette and leaned back in his chair. "You don't find these things every day."

Gruosi's company, though, encounters diamonds almost like it fairly often, or at least often enough that Polka and his group felt comfortable entrusting their considerable investment to Di Grisogono's care. Founded in 1993, the jeweler is known for its lavish, large-scale settings: Gruosi said the average price of his stock ranges from USD40,000 to \$400,000. "For us, that's midrange," he said, shrugging.

But despite advancements in 3D-imaging technology, both Gruosi and Polka were unsure of how they should cut the diamond, or even what they'd find once they made the first incision. "We bought it a little bit as a crapsheet," Polka said. "So what we'll do is cleave off the



Diamonds are forever

ends, and that will give us a view into the stone." Next, they planned to cut several windows at different angles "to plot the imperfections," Polka explained. After that, they'd use a computer to assess imperfections and plot the optimal series of cuts.

Some of their cutting strategy involved commercial considerations — a buyer might pay more for one of the largest diamonds in the world than he would for four reasonably large pieces, or another person might prefer two giant pendants. But Gruosi said he wasn't really worried about cutting the stone down too far. "To have, say, two 80-carat pendants, a perfect match, is basically impossible to find on the market," he said. "Even the No. 1 jeweler in the world today would have a problem finding something like that." In other words, Gruosi was confident that whatever he makes, someone will buy.

Polka, who was more explicitly concerned about those commercial considerations, was unwilling to put a price

on what the stone would go for when it's eventually sold, but noted that recent auctions had seen sales "for more than \$200,000 a carat—it could even be more than that." When reminded of the recent slump in the diamond market — the conversation occurred a few days before a \$70 million diamond failed to sell at auction — Polka remained undeterred. "Listen," he said. "If you look at the exceptional diamonds and the prices they've gotten in the last few months, you'll see that exceptional diamonds command exceptional prices."

Just how exceptional this diamond is remains to be seen. After the first cuts, Gruosi will spend several weeks imaging the diamond and then make more incisions. According to Gruosi and Polka, after a three- or four-month-long process, plus a review by the Gemological Institute of America, the diamond—or diamonds—will be polished, set, and ready for sale by the end of this year. **AP**

MGM Resorts beats Toys 'R' Us with biggest rooftop solar system

MGM Resorts International surpassed Toys 'R' Us Inc. with the largest U.S. rooftop solar installation, an 8.3-megawatt system completed this week.

With an expansion that included more than 26,000 panels covering 28 acres atop the Mandalay Bay Con-

vention Center, MGM broke the record that the toy seller had held since 2011 with a 6.2 megawatt system at a distribution center in Flemers, New Jersey, according to GTM Research.

NRG Energy Inc. built and owns the system on the convention center's roof and

is selling the output to the casino operator under a 25-year contract, the Princeton, New Jersey based company said in a statement yesterday. The panels will be able to provide 25 percent of Mandalay Bay's electricity, according to the statement.



Three Gorges analyses new acquisitions in Brazil

CHINESE state group China Three Gorges (CTG) plans to invest in wind and solar power plants in Brazil, having spent more than 15 billion reais (USD4.5 billion) to acquire hydroelectric power plants, said the head of the group in Brazil.

Li Yinsheng told Reuters news agency that the group, which opened an office in Bra-

zil in 2013, has been assessing several acquisition opportunities and may even "make its debut in these new renewable sources of electricity within a year."

To date CTG has acquired stakes in hydroelectric and solar projects owned by EDP – Energias do Brasil, of the EDP – Energias de Portugal group and two hydro plants owned by Triunfo Participações e Investimentos, in addition to hydroelectric plants belonging to Companhia Energetica de Sao Paulo (CESP).

"The first two years were focused on hydropower, but we started to look more closely at renewable energy and may even conclude a deal in this area within a period ranging from six months to a year," said Li.

Last week CTG took control of operating two of CESP's hydroelectric facilities 5 gigawatts of power. CTG is now the seventh largest power producer in Brazil, with almost 6 gigawatts in operation. **MDT/Macauhub**

The first two years were focused on hydropower, but we started to look more closely at renewable energy.

LI YINSHENG

National Bank of Angola raises basic interest rate to 16 pct

A decision of the latest meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee of the National Bank of Angola has raised the basic interest rate for the Angolan market, the BNA, by two percentage points to 16 percent.

The Committee also decided to increase the interest rate on the marginal lending facility from 16 percent to 20 percent and the interest rate on the permanent absorption facility from 2.25 percent to 7.25 percent.

The Monetary Policy Committee of the Angolan central bank said in the statement that the increase in the key interest rates of the National Bank of Angola is intended to encourage savings, and called on financial system operators to find innovative and attractive solutions to promote savings by economic agents in general and by families in par-



National Bank of Angola headquarters


ticular.

Committee members also paid special attention to recent price trends in the Angolan economy noting with concern that monthly inflation (measured by the Consumer Price Index in the

province of Luanda) was persistently around 3 percent.

The inflation rate stood at 29.23 percent in May, up 2.81 percentage points on the figure recorded last April. **MDT/Macauhub**

Macau Daily Times contest



at The Venetian® Macao

SHREK The Musical © 2016 DreamWorks Animation LLC. All Rights Reserved. Photos by Tristram Kenton



SHREK THE MUSICAL with book and lyrics by Pulitzer Prize® winner David Lindsay-Abaire and music by Olivier Award-winner Jeanine Tesori, is coming to Macao for the very first time as part of its first ever international tour.

SHREK THE MUSICAL, The Smash Hit Broadway Musical, brings the hilarious story of everyone's favorite ogre to the stage. In a faraway kingdom turned upside down, things get ugly when an ogre – not a handsome prince – shows up to rescue a feisty

princess. Throw in a donkey that does not keep quiet, a villain with a short temper, a cookie with an attitude and over a dozen other fairy tale misfits, and you've got the kind of mess that calls for a real hero. Luckily, there's one on hand and his name is Shrek.

Question for readers:
What's the donkey's personality like in Shrek the Musical?

Please email the answers to: shrek@macaudailytimes.com
Along with your name and contact details.

Tickets-Giveaway
Four sets of two tickets each will be awarded to the four readers who send us more correct answers the fastest. The contest will run for 3 days (Tuesday to Thursday), each day with a different question to be answered. Each ticket is valued at MOP580 for a total prize value of MOP4,640.



Ticketing Details:
Show: SHREK THE MUSICAL
Date: July 22 – Aug. 7, 2016
Venue: The Venetian Theatre
Ticket Price: MOP180-780
Book via cotaiticketing.com or call 2882 8818

Martin Crutsinger, Washington

THE U.S. trade deficit climbed in May as a surge in imports of Chinese-made cell-phones and computers pushed the politically sensitive imbalance with China to the highest level in six months.

The trade deficit rose to \$41.1 billion in May compared to April's USD37.4 billion, the Commerce Department reported yesterday. It was the largest imbalance since February.

Exports, which have struggled this year because of a strong dollar and weak growth in overseas markets, edged down 0.2 percent to \$182.4 billion. Imports jumped 1.6 percent to \$223.5 billion.

Jennifer Lee, senior economist at BMO Capital Markets, said the weakness in exports could become more pronounced in coming months given the dollar's recent rise following the financial market turbulence caused by the vote in Britain to leave the European Union.

"Given the way the greenback is headed, and quite likely slower growth in Europe, don't expect too much" from exports this year, she said in a note to clients.

America's deficit with China jumped 19.4 percent to \$29 billion, the largest imbalance since November. Presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump has accused the Obama administration of failing to protect U.S. workers from unfair trade practices in China and other countries.

Trump has sought to tap into the economic anxiety of Americans who have seen jobs disappear in an increasingly global economy. In a recent trade speech, Trump said he would exit from the North American Free Trade Agreement with Canada and Mexico if it was not renegotiated, kill the pending Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement and take a more aggressive approach to



Shipping containers are unloaded at the Port of Oakland in Oakland, Calif.

Chinese imports push up US trade deficit in May

Given the way the greenback is headed, and likely slower growth in Europe, don't expect too much from [US] exports.

JENNIFER LEE
BMO CAPITAL MARKETS

China's trade practices, which he said were costing American jobs.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, normally an ally of Republicans on trade, charged that Trump's approach would cost 3.5 million U.S. jobs and result in higher prices for American consumers and a weaker economy. Trump said he would brand China a currency manipulator, a charge which could lead to trade sanctions if negotiations with China did not resolve the issue.

Through the first five months of this year, the deficit is

running 3.5 percent below the same period in 2015, a year in which America's deficit in goods and services trade rose 2.1 percent to \$500.4 billion. The lower deficit so far this year reflects the fact that while U.S. exports are down, imports are down by a larger amount, reflecting in large part lower oil prices.

For May, oil imports increased 8.4 percent to \$11.1 billion, reflecting a rebound in prices during the month. The average price for a barrel of crude oil rose \$4.71 to \$34.19, the biggest one-month increase since a \$5.55 rise from April

to May in 2011.

Even with the gain, the average price for a barrel of crude is still \$16.57 below the price a year ago.

The deficit with China is running 6.4 percent below last year's pace, although the deficit is still the largest with any single country.

The deficit with the European Union rose 12.6 percent to \$13.4 billion in May. America's trade relationship with the 28 nation EU could undergo a significant change if Britain goes ahead with its decision to leave the EU.

U.S. export sales this year have been hurt by a strong dollar, which makes American products more expensive in overseas markets. The dollar had been weakening slightly but has strengthened following the British vote as foreign investors have sought the safety of U.S. investments. **AP**

SOUTH CHINA SEA

Flagship paper warns US of 'price' to pay



In this May 6, 2016, file photo, soldiers from the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy watch as the USS Blue Ridge arrives at a port in Shanghai

THE flagship newspaper of China's ruling Communist Party yesterday warned Washington that there would be a "price" to pay if it crosses China's "bottom line" by meddling in disputes over the South China Sea.

The People's Daily editorial comes as Beijing ramps up efforts to assert its stance ahead of a ruling by an international tribunal in a case

filed by the Philippines challenging China's claims to most of the South China Sea. China is boycotting the case before The Hague-based court and says it will not accept the verdict.

The paper said that bilateral ties and regional stability were at stake and that the U.S. should recognize that "there is a bottom line with every issue, and a price will be paid if that line is cross-

sed."

"If the United States, regardless of the cost, chooses the path of 'brinkmanship' that pressures and intimidates others, there will be only one result, that is, that the U.S. bears all the responsibility for possibly further heightening tensions in the South China Sea," the editorial said.

"China has a solid-rock position over safeguar-

ding China's national sovereignty and territorial integrity. It will not want anything that does not belong to it, but it will ensure that every inch of land it owns is safe and sound," the paper wrote.

The newspaper has previously accused Washington of seeking to turn the South China Sea "into a powder keg" and warned it not to underestimate China's determination to defend its territorial claims.

Earlier this week, China also started holding seven days of military drills around disputed islands in the sea. **AP**

Kelvin Chan, Hong Kong

HONG Kong officials said yesterday there's little chance a bookseller wanted in mainland China will be sent back after mainland authorities threatened him with tougher punishment if he didn't return.

Security officials also said they will further investigate the case of Lam Wing-kee, whose revelations last month about being secretly arrested and interrogated over his company's books rekindled fears that Beijing is tightening its grip on the semiautonomous city.

Ningbo police warned Lam to return to the mainland, 'otherwise they will be forced to take other legal measures'

Lam, who went missing last year, said he was allowed to return to Hong Kong in June on the condition he bring back information about his bookshop's customers. But he went off script and held a news conference to talk about his ordeal of being held for months in the city of Ningbo, near Shanghai, and vowed never to return to the mainland.

Ningbo police warned Lam

Beijing wants bookseller back but Hong Kong says no chance

AP PHOTO



Lam Wing-kee

on Tuesday to return to the mainland, "otherwise they will be forced to take other legal measures," the official Xinhua News Agency reported. The police said Lam violated his bail terms by declaring his intention not to return to the mainland.

Hong Kong Secretary for Security Lai Tung-kuok said "there is no legal arrangement for the transfer of persons to the mainland autho-

rities" because the city has no extradition agreement with the mainland. Lai and other officials spoke to reporters a day after meeting with their counterparts in Beijing about the case.

The Hong Kong delegation was given a summary of the case against Lam by police in Ningbo, where the investigation started after police found books published outside the mainland were being sold

illegally, Xinhua said.

They were also shown a video of Lam eating meals, having a haircut and getting his blood pressure checked as evidence he was well treated during his detention. However, it also showed him sitting in a room with padded walls and no visible windows, watched over by surveillance cameras from several angles.

Lam was one of five men who worked for a publisher churning out racy books on China's Communist leaders.

They operated their business legally in Hong Kong, which has wide autonomy and a separate legal system, but their books were banned in the mainland. He and the others disappeared last year, only to turn up months later in the mainland, detained or involved in investigations. AP

BEIJING AGREES TO REPORT DETENTIONS OF HK SUSPECTS FASTER

HONG KONG Chief Executive Leung Chun-ying said mainland Chinese officials have agreed to report detentions of the city's residents within two weeks, as the government seeks to calm concerns raised by the months-long booksellers saga.

The two sides would in the future

summarize the nature of allegations against residents held in either jurisdiction within 14 days, Leung told reporters yesterday, after Hong Kong officials returned from a meeting in Beijing. They planned additional talks later this month to discuss greater law enforcement communication. **Bloomberg**

UN panel says China is arbitrarily detaining US citizen

Louise Watt, Beijing

AU.N. panel says China has arbitrarily detained an American woman in violation of international human rights norms, bringing her case back into public attention ahead of a visit to Beijing by U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon this week.

International business consultant Phan "Sandy" Phan-Gillis, 56, has been in detention in China for more than a year, accused of stealing state secrets.

The U.N. Working Group on Arbitrary Detention says she hasn't been brought before judicial authorities or given access to legal assistance, in an opinion released last week.

The San Francisco-ba-

AP PHOTO



Phan "Sandy" Phan-Gillis

sed human rights group The Dui Hua Foundation said that it was the first time that the working group in its 25-year history had deemed an American citizen to have been arbitrarily detained by China. A detention is deemed arbitrary if it has no legal basis or legal rights

are ignored.

Ban is scheduled to meet President Xi Jinping in Beijing today and Premier Li Keqiang tomorrow, though it isn't clear if Ban plans to raise Phan-Gillis' case in talks with the leaders.

The U.N. working group says that the Chinese

government told it that Phan-Gillis is charged with "assisting external parties to steal national intelligence." The U.N. group called for her to be released or given proper assistance by a legal counsel.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei, in a faxed response to questions, said: "All of Sandy Phan-Gillis' rights have been fully guaranteed, and she has been treated well." He urged the U.N. working group to "perform its duties impartially, respect China's judicial sovereignty and stop groundless accusations against the relevant Chinese authorities' lawful handling of the case."

The U.S. Embassy in China had no immediate comment.

Phan-Gillis, a Vietnamese-American of Chinese descent, often worked as an intermediary in ventures between Chinese and U.S. business interests.

She was detained in March 2015 during a visit to China as part of an American trade delegation that was promoting business opportunities in her hometown of Houston, Texas. She disappeared from the rest of her group in Zhuhai at the Gongbei border crossing into Macau, as reported by Macau Daily Times.

For the first six months she was held under residential surveillance — a coercive measure that allows for people suspected of endangering state security to be held at an undisclosed location. Then she was formally

arrested and moved to a detention center in the southern city of Nanning.

The U.N. report included submissions from an unnamed source, who alleged that Chinese authorities flouted the country's own laws, including failing to notify Phan-Gillis' family that she had been detained.

The U.N. Working Group on Arbitrary Detention "has, over the years, ruled that the Chinese government has arbitrarily detained scores of its own citizens, but this marks the first time it has ruled that agents have arbitrarily detained an American citizen in violation of international human rights law," John Kamm, executive director of The Dui Hua Foundation, said in a statement. **MDT/AP**

Help, please save me! Thermomix will save you!



Save Money

Save on your grocery bills by swapping expensive pre-packaged items for 'whole' foods and pantry staples. Plus, Thermomix has an advanced heating system that cooks with minimized energy consumption, so you can enjoy savings on your household bills!

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BBAM @ St. Regis Breakfast
on Tuesday 12th July
Guest Speaker: **Timothy Feather**
Owner and Operator of Claret Wines

ENGLISH BUBBLES – THE STORY SO FAR

English Sparkling Wine has seen a huge rise in interest over the past few years, as consumers and journalists alike cotton on to the potential for growing grapes on the South of England's chalk hills, and high-profile blind tastings have shown its potential to rival the world's very best.

English vineyards now attract top winemakers from around the world, who are creating impeccably balanced wines which can rival some of Champagne's finest. Come and listen to the story and liven up your breakfast by tasting it for yourself!



Venue: Amber Room I, 5/F, The St. Regis Macao, Cotai
7.45 am: Registration
8 am: Sit-down and breakfast
8.15: Presentation and Q&A session
9 am: Close

*Strict No-Show/Late Cancellation policy applies for this event
Vegetarian dish to be requested before Thursday 7th July*

BBAM Members: Free of charge
Non-Members – MOP/HKD 180.00
RSVP to: bbam@britchammacao.org or phone +853 8798 9697



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Eric Talmadge, Pyongyang

NORTH KOREA

Once smokers' paradise, now urging people to quit

NORTH Korea, one of the last bastions of free, unhindered smoking, a country where just about every adult male can and does light up almost anywhere he pleases and where leader Kim Jong Un is hardly ever seen without a lit cigarette in his hand, is now officially trying to get its people to kick the habit.

It's a battle Pyongyang has tried before and won't easily win, especially since, beyond some stepped-up propaganda, it doesn't appear to have a lot of funding. But this time around, the effort does have one big thing going for it: the increasingly vocal support of North Korean women, virtually none of whom smoke.

Ri Yong Ok, a 57-year-old pharmacist whose heavy-smoking husband nearly died of lung cancer, is leading the charge.

"I've been on TV, my whole family has been on TV, so everyone knows who I am," Ri, flanked by no-smoking posters, told The Associated Press during an interview at the small anti-smoking center she manages in Pyongyang. The center, one of only 11 in all of North Korea, has something you almost never see in the North — a no-smoking sign placed prominently above its entrance.

■ The new [anti-smoking] drive prompted speculation in foreign media that Kim himself had quit, since cigarettes were missing from his hands in photos

"I'm optimistic that we can get people to stop," she said. "Our goal is education."

The potential health benefit to the nation could be tremendous.

Ri estimated about 54 percent of adult male North Koreans smoke — a higher figure than the 43.9 percent given by a World Health Organization report released at the end of 2014. Smoking is a social taboo for women and it's illegal for anyone under the age of 17.

North Korea has toyed with the idea of pushing harder to get smokers to kick the habit before — Ri's humble anti-smoking center has been arou-



North Korean men sit and smoke by a river in the North Pyongan Province

nd since 2007. But it has stepped up its effort to at least provide more education of smoking's health risks since an anti-smoking decree was made by Kim in April.

The start of the new drive prompted speculation in the foreign media that Kim himself had quit, since cigarettes were conspicuously missing from his hands in photos carried by the state media of his "on-the-spot guidance" visits around the country from around that time.

The buzz didn't last long. He was pictured smoking on a visit to a children's camp in June.

North Korea joined the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in 2005 and dutifully holds events on World No Tobacco Day every year. The infomercial on Ri and her family was broadcast by state-run TV on that day this year and a big anti-smoking poster for no smoking day hangs in her offices.

According to recent government reports, the country has reduced the amount of land devoted to growing tobacco. In May, state media quoted a Health Ministry official saying the ratio of male smokers in 2013 was down 8 percent when compared with 2009 and "the number of nonsmokers is remarkably increasing with each passing day."

"I would guess about 300 people visit smoking cessation centers a day, nationwide," in a country with a population of about 24 million, Ri told AP.

Cigarettes are a big business in North Korea.

Unlike many other consumer products, the array of domestically produced brands that are available to the public is amazing — from the status-symbol 727s (which take their name from the anniversary of the armistice that ended the Korean War) to brands like Pyol (Star), Craven and Tazo (which means ostrich and features the bird on every pack).

Menthol cigarettes are essentially non-existent but, because of the heavy competition among makers, gimmicks abound — one kind of Pyongyang-brand cigarette has filters tipped with smiley faces. Another brand is now putting flavored balls in its filters that when popped give the smoke a vaguely fruity taste.

Prices range from around USD5 for the 727s and \$7 or so for the popular Japanese Seven Star brand — despite international sanctions on luxury good exports, it's easy to obtain imported cigarettes in Pyongyang — while Ostrich and other typical domestic smokes go for \$1 or less a pack.

Some smokers roll their own blends, a practice that is more

common in the countryside. Though the possibility can't be ruled out, the sight of people puffing away on paper-rolled, odd-smelling mixtures of tobacco and whatever else they can stuff in with it may contribute to persistent but unsubstantiated reports by visitors and foreign media outlets of widespread marijuana use.

Health warnings are now required on cigarette packs, but remain inconspicuously placed in small lettering on the side of most and only state that smoking can be harmful

to the health. A similar warning is posted in the smoking area at Pyongyang's new international airport, though most smokers probably don't see it — they just go outside.

Even so, the media campaign and pressure from wives, daughters, mothers and girlfriends does appear to be paying off, at least a little.

Yun Jin, a 27-year-old IT worker, said he made the decision to kick the habit after he saw Ri on television.

"I started smoking when I was a university student and smoke about 10 cigarettes a day," he said before a consultation at Ri's cessation center. "My mother wants me to quit, but it's my decision."

Consultations at the centers are free, in keeping with North Korea's policy of providing free health care to its citizens. Medicines intended to help them quit are not covered, however.

Ri, being a pharmacist, has developed one such medicine. Brightly colored boxes of it — a 10-day supply of 21 lozenges goes for \$10 a pop — cover one of the walls of her center. She boasts that, being entirely made of traditional Korean mountain herbs and medicinal plants, "it's the best in the world."

"There are many anti-smoking medicines around the world, but they contain nicotine, so ours is better for quitting," she said. "But in the end, the most important thing is to really make the decision to quit." AP






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Jill Lawless, London

INTELLIGENCE

Scathing report slams Blair over botched Iraq war

BRTAIN'S decision to go to war in Iraq was a failure born of flawed intelligence, lack of foresight and "wholly inadequate" planning, an official inquiry concluded yesterday in a report seven years in the making.

Retired civil servant John Chilcot, who oversaw the inquiry, said "the U.K. chose to join the invasion of Iraq before the peaceful options for disarmament had been exhausted. Military action at that time was not a last resort."

The 2.6-million-word report is an exhaustive verdict on a divisive conflict that — by the time British combat forces left in 2009 — had killed 179 British troops, almost 4,500 American personnel and more than 100,000 Iraqis.

It continues to divide Britain and overshadows the legacy of then-Prime Minister Tony Blair. As Chilcot introduced his report at a London conference center yesterday, dozens of anti-war protesters with placards reading "Blair" rallied outside.

For families of British troops who died in the conflict, the long litany of mistakes by Blair and others provides some vindication of their struggle to hold the war's planners to account.

But it did not declare the conflict illegal, which might have opened the way for Blair to be prosecuted for war crimes.

Chilcot refrained from saying whether the 2003 invasion was legal and didn't accuse Blair of deliberately misleading the public or Parliament. But he said that "the circumstances in which it was decided that there was a legal basis for U.K. military action were far from satisfactory."

For Iraqis, it was little comfort. They continue to live with violence, including a massive weekend bombing in Baghdad claimed by the Islamic State group that killed more than 175 people.

"Since 2003 until now, our country has been a scene of destruction, killing, massacres, explosions and sectarianism," Baghdad resident Ali al-Saraji said.

The UK chose to join the invasion of Iraq before the peaceful options for disarmament had been exhausted.

JOHN CHILCOT
RETIRED CIVIL SERVANT



Protesters hold placards outside the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in London, shortly before the publication of the Chilcot report into the Iraq war

He said that Blair "destroyed our country" and should be prosecuted as a war criminal.

Chilcot said "the people of Iraq have suffered greatly" because of a military intervention "which went badly wrong."

The report said Blair's government presented an assessment of the threat posed by Saddam Hussein's weapons with "certainty that was not justified." The inquiry also found military planning for the war and its aftermath were not up to the task.

In a statement, Blair said he would "take full responsibility for any mistakes without exception or excuse."

But he said he made the decision to go to war "in good faith and in what I believed to be the best interests of the country."

Relatives of soldiers killed in the conflict said they hadn't ruled out legal action.

"All options are open," said Matthew Jury, a lawyer for some of the families.

In a statement, a group of families said "we must use this report to make sure all parts of the Iraq fiasco are never repeated again."

"Never again must so many mistakes be allowed to sacrifice British lives and lead to the destruction of a country for no positive end," they said.

The inquiry was set up after U.K. combat troops left Iraq in 2009 by then-Prime Minister Gordon Brown, who was under pressure for a public accounting of the deeply unpopular conflict.

Chilcot and his panel heard from 150 witnesses and analyzed 150,000 documents. His conclusions are a blow to Blair, who told President George W. Bush eight months before the March 2003 invasion — without consulting government colleagues — "I will be with you whatever."

The report says Blair went to war to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Britain's main ally, only to find the U.K. excluded from most important decision-making about the military campaign and its aftermath.

"Mr. Blair, who recognized the significance of the post-conflict phase, did not press President Bush for definite assurances about U.S. plans," the report concluded.

And it said that after the invasion, Britain had only "limited" ability to influence U.S. decision-making.

Iraq descended into sectarian strife after the occupiers dismantled Saddam's government and military apparatus, unleashing chaos that helped give rise to the Islamic State group.

Jack Straw, Britain's foreign secretary at the time, blamed the U.S. for that, saying actions by U.S. administration officials "blindsided" the British government.

The report found failings by military chiefs who did not provide adequate equipment to forces in the field, and whose main post-invasion strategy "was to reduce the level of [U.K.] deployed forces."

The report concludes that Britain's combat mission, which ended in 2009, did not achieve the objectives laid out in 2003 and saw British forces make a "humiliating" deal with militias in southern Iraq to avoid attacks.

"The U.K. failed to plan or prepare for the major reconstruction program required in Iraq," the report said.

The war has overshadowed the legacy of Blair, whose government has been accused of exaggerating intelligence about Saddam's alleged weapons of mass destruction in order to build support for the invasion.

Chilcot criticized spy chiefs who failed to ensure their partial intelligence about Saddam's weapons was not hardened into certainty by government spin. He said they also failed to consider "that Iraq might no longer have chemical biological or nuclear weapons" — which turned out to be the case.



Britain's then-Prime Minister Tony Blair meets soldiers at Shaibah logistics base, Basra, Iraq

■ In a statement, Blair said he would 'take full responsibility for any mistakes without exception or excuse'

The report said the widespread perception that the government had exaggerated intelligence evidence "has produced a damaging legacy, including undermining trust and confidence in government statements."

The report also faults Blair for making key decisions with only a few key aides rather than through collective Cabinet consultation.

Chilcot's report has been repeatedly delayed, in part by wrangling over the inclusion of classified material, including conversations between Blair and Bush. Some of Blair's pre-war letters to the president are published in Chilcot's report, but not Bush's replies.

It remains unclear what, if any, legal action could be taken against Blair or others.

The International Criminal Court is looking into alleged war crimes by British troops in Iraq, but says has said that Britain's decision to go to war falls outside its jurisdiction.

Sarah O'Connor, whose airman brother died in a plane crash in Iraq in 2005, said the war remained "an indelible stain on the whole world."

"There is one terrorist in the world that the world needs to be aware of, and his name is Tony Blair," she said. **AP**

what's ON



INNOCENCEPEDIA - WORKS BY KAY ZHANG
 TIME: 11am-7pm
 (Closed on Mondays and public holidays)
 UNTIL: July 24, 2016
 VENUE: Art For All Society Macau,
 Av. do Dr. Rodrigo Rodrigues n. 265
 ADMISSION: free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6064

EDGAR DEGAS: FIGURES IN MOTION - A COLLECTION OF 74 BRONZE SCULPTURES
 TIME: 12pm-9pm
 (Closed on Mondays, except public holidays)
 UNTIL: November 20, 2106
 VENUE: MGM Art Space, Macau
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (852) 3678 0150

THE CHARMS OF FLOWERS - EXHIBITION OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE FLOWER ARRANGEMENT
 TIME: 10am-6pm (no admission after 5:30 pm, closed on Mondays, open on public holidays)
 UNTIL: July 31, 2016
 VENUE: Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida, No. 95 C-D, Macau
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2852 2523

MACAU GIANT PANDA PAVILION
 TIME: 10am-1pm and 2pm-5pm daily (Except Mondays, closed on the following day instead if a public holiday falls on Monday and no admission after 4:45 pm; six viewings per day)
 VENUE: Seac Pai Van Park, Coloane
 ADMISSION: MOP10
 ENQUIRIES: Civil and Municipal Affairs Bureau
 (853) 2833 7676

THE COLLECTION EXHIBITION OF TAI FUNG TONG ART HOUSE
 TIME: 2pm-6pm daily (Except Mondays)
 VENUE: Tai Fung Tong Art House, Calçada da Igreja de S. Lázaro 7
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2835 3537 / 2834 6626

EXHIBITION "PLIS & REPLIS 3 - WORKS BY NOËL DOLLA"
 TIME: 10am-7pm
 UNTIL: October 9, 2015
 VENUE: Tap Seac Gallery, Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida, 95
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 8399 6699

Offbeat

COMEDIAN POSTS FAKE ANIMAL FACTS AROUND LOS ANGELES ZOO



Visitors to the Los Angeles Zoo may have been greeted by some misinformation recently, courtesy of a comedian who posted fake facts about animals around the zoo.

Jeff Wysaski puts up fake signs in public places as part of his Obvious Plant project. He has posted photos on his Tumblr blog and social media of signs with absurd "facts" about animals that he put up around the L.A. Zoo.

One reads: "If you give a tiny trombone to 76 ducklings, they will lead the most adorable parade you've ever seen." Another says: "America's first president, George Washington, was actually 9 koalas stacked on top of each other."

L.A. Zoo spokeswoman April Spurlock says the signs were taken down shortly after they were posted June 30.

TV canal macau

13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
15:00	RTPi Live
16:30	UEFA EURO 2016 - Semi-Finals: TBC (Repeated)
18:20	Documentary
18:40	Helena's Shadow (Repeated)
19:30	Soap Opera
20:10	Sports
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	TDM Talk Show
21:40	The Toque 12
22:10	Helena's Shadow
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Variety
00:05	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)
00:40	Sports (Repeated)
01:00	RTPi Live
02:50	UEFA EURO 2016 - Semi-Finals: TBC (Live)

cinema

CINETEATRO

08 JUL - 13 JUL



COLD WAR 2
 ROOM 1
 (2D) 2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm
 Director: Longman Leung, Sunny Luk
 Starring: Aaron Kwok, Tony Leung Ka Fai, Chow Yun Fat
 Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/ English)
 Duration: 110min

THE SECRET LIFE OF PETS
 ROOM 2
 (2D) 2.15, 4.00, 7.30 pm
 (08 Jul) (3D) 5.45 pm
 (3D) 9.30 pm
 Director: Chris Renaud, Yarrow Cheney
 Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/ English)
 Duration: 90min

(08 JUL - 13 JUL) **FINDING DORY**
 ROOM 2
 (2D) 5.45 pm
 Director: Andrew Stanton
 Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/ English)
 Duration: 97min

INDEPENDENCE DAY: RESURGENCE
 ROOM 2
 (2D) 9.30 pm
 Director: Roland Emmerich
 Starring: Liam Hemsworth, Jeff Goldblum, Bill Pullman
 Language: English (Cantonese)
 Duration: 120min

THE LEGEND OF TARZAN
 ROOM 3
 (2D) 2.30, 4.30, 9.30 pm
 (3D) 7.30 pm
 Director: Roland Emmerich
 Starring: Alexander Skarsgård, Rory J. Saper, Christian Stevens
 Language: English (Cantonese)
 Duration: 109min

MACAU TOWER

08 JUL - 20 JUL

COLD WAR 2
 2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm
 Director: Longman Leung, Sunny Luk
 Starring: Aaron Kwok, Tony Leung Ka Fai, Chow Yun Fat
 Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/ English)
 Duration: 90min

this day in history



1969 BRIAN JONES DIED OF 'DRINK AND DRUGS'

Former Rolling Stones guitarist Brian Jones drowned after taking a cocktail of drink and drugs, an inquest has been told.

A verdict of death by misadventure was recorded by the coroner, Dr Angus Somerville, after hearing the inquest into the star's death at East Sussex coroner's court.

Brian Jones was found dead in the swimming pool of his home at Cotchford Farm in Hartfield in Sussex four days ago.

The blonde-haired guitarist with a reputation for wearing flamboyant clothes and jewellery was one of the founder members of the Stones. He left the band a month ago citing musical differences and was planning to set up a new group.

The inquest was told the musician had gone for a midnight swim after complaining of the heat. His girlfriend Anna Wohlin, another friend Janet Lawson and a builder, Frank Thorogood, had spent the evening with him.

Mr Jones and Mr Thorogood had been drinking spirits and the guitarist had also been seen taking some pills.

Miss Lawson, who is a nurse, said she had warned the men they were not in a fit state to go swimming but they had disregarded her warning.

The alarm was raised by the housekeeper, Mary Haddock, who found the musician's body at the bottom of the pool.

Miss Wohlin said she dived in and pulled him out and gave him artificial respiration.

She felt his hand grip hers briefly, but there was no other movement.

By the time the police and ambulance arrived he was dead.

Pc Albert Evans told the inquest he was called to the farm at 1210 hours and found the guitarist already dead.

He recovered a small bottle of brandy, which was almost empty, and a vodka bottle and small bottle of whisky, both of which were partially empty. He also found a number of bottles containing different types of pills.

First reports suggested Brian Jones had died after an asthma attack in the pool, brought on by the high pollen count.

But he lived a rock'n'roll lifestyle, was a heavy drinker and also had a history of drug-taking.

He had spent some time at the Priory rehabilitation clinic in Roehampton, south-west London, where he was diagnosed as paranoid.

Later he escaped a custodial sentence at the Appeal Court for drugs offences. His sentence was overturned on condition he continued to see a psychiatrist and received medical treatment.

He bought Cotchford Farm as a retreat and was reported to have given up drugs and was planning to settle down with his latest girlfriend.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Brian Jones's body was embalmed, his hair bleached white and he was reportedly buried in a special metal casket, paid for by Bob Dylan and flown in from the United States. Speculation surrounding Jones' death continues with a number of conspiracy theories.

A film, *Stoned*, released in 2005 claimed Jones was killed by his builder, Frank Thorogood, to whom he owed money. Mr Thorogood is also said to have made a deathbed confession in 1993.

Another theory is that he was murdered by being pumped full of drugs and then dumped in the pool.

The Brian Jones Fan Club, supported by one of his ex-girlfriends, has been campaigning to get the investigation into his death reopened.

It claims new evidence has been unearthed about his death and it has passed a dossier of information to Sussex Police.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 You need to slow down a bit and try to just relax...

Taurus April 20-May 20 Someone new blows into your life and shakes things up for the better.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Things are a bit weird today - so see if you can just nod along and pretend to understand...

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 People are likely to misunderstand you today - so make sure that you are being as clear as you can be.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 Try to help someone today - your energy is meant to be shared!

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You don't mind openly lusting after that job, gadget or project - your ambition is perfectly okay...

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 This isn't the best feeling in the world, but you are still committed to this project or person.

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Today is perfect for arranging new deals of all kinds - especially related to business.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Things are a little weird today - but that's not such a bad thing!

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You need to feel a sense of accomplishment today - and fortunately, it's easy to come by!

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You're not sure what's going on today - and that's not the end of the world.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 You need to deal with a leadership vacuum today - it could be anywhere.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Easy

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

Easy+

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

Medium

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

Hard

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

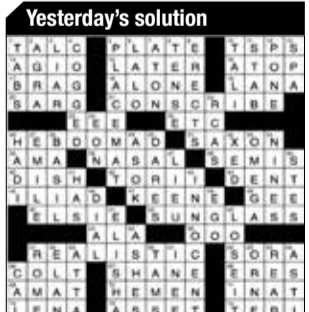
WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Enthusiastic; 6- Made a choice; 11- L.A. clock setting; 14- Elude; 15- Horn-shaped structure; 16- Lord, is ___?; 17- Rogue; 19- Doze; 20- CIA predecessor; 21- Buck follower; 22- Gardeners, at times; 24- One of the Baldwins; 25- Pardon; 26- Capital of Utah; 30- Name; 31- CD earnings; 32- Weeps; 36- City official; Abbr.; 37- Expert marksman; 41- Neptune's domain; 42- Flat sound; 44- Opposite of NNW; 45- Negates; 47- Pool where animals drink; 51- Mediterranean resort area; 54- Babe in the woods; 55- "Peer Gynt Suite" dancer; 56- Oxidize; 57- With it; 60- Frozen water; 61- Confine; 64- Cutting tool; 65- Light on one's feet; 66- Stallone role; 67- Pothook shape; 68- Seeps; 69- Arabian republic;

DOWN: 1- Eiel Saarienen's son; 2- Gardner and others; 3- Openings; 4- Begley and Wynn; 5- Recollected; 6- Word of the hour?; 7- Ralph Lauren brand; 8- Part of TNT; 9- Immensity; 10- Founder of the Red Cross; 11- Languishes with longing; 12- Begin; 13- Slightly intoxicated; 18- Tract; 23- Lock openers; 24- City in GA; 25- Skin disorder; 26- RR stops; 27- Suffers; 28- Old Fords; 29- Down source; 33- Capital of Norway; 34- Ringing instrument; 35- Manuscript enc.; 38- Keep at a distance; 39- On the briny; 40- Machinery; 43- Loretta of "M*A*S*H"; 46- TV dial letters; 48- Of flight; 49- Hardens; 50- Bust maker; 51- Elevate; 52- Early Peruvians; 53- Scenes; 56- Refuse curtly; 57- Soccer star Mia; 58- Let ___; 59- Unskilled laborer; 62- Spy org.; 63- Arctic explorer John;



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Fire department 28 572 222
Water Supply - Report 2822 0088
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
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Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
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Airport 59 888 88



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Coloane Village Coloane 2 Bedrooms Apartment Lovely Bright Apartment HKD 11,000 / 800 sq ft Ref: 16060593

Family apartment Hellene Gardens, Macau 1,663 sq ft / HKD 7.8M HKD 4,690sq ft Includes Parking Space Ref: 16020571
Modern Apartment Central Taipa 2 Bedroom Apartment Newly Renovated HKD 11,500 / 820 sq ft Ref: 16020564

Va Nam Unit B Taipa 600 sq ft / HKD 3.5M HKD 5,833sq ft Great Location & Investment Ref: 16065486
Tou Un Taipa Studio Apartment Fully Furnished HKD 9,000 / 686 sq ft Ref: 16050003

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Friday, 3:00am
Germany v France
H3, D3.1, A2.85

EURO 2016 | PREVIEW

World champions Germany meet hosts France in enticing clash

THE World Cup winners against the hosts, the resumption of an old rivalry, the “Marseillaise” sung loud in Marseille — France’s semifinal against Germany makes for a mouthwatering semifinal today [Friday, 3am].

Germany goes into the game missing key players through injury or suspension, while France is so far untested against top-level opposition at this tournament.

Though politics and wartime history are certainly part of the France-Germany rivalry, there are plenty of football grudges too.

Few French fans could forgive the World Cup semifinal in 1982 when a physical West German team beat France 3-3 on penalties. German goalkeeper Harald Schumacher became a national hate figure in France after charging into France’s Patrick Battiston, leaving him unconscious and with multiple injuries.

France has won five of eight meetings with Germany since German reunification in 1990 — including a 2-0 win in November — but those victories were all in friendlies. The French lost the one game when it really mattered, going down 1-0 in the quarterfinals of the 2014 World Cup. Indeed, France hasn’t beaten the Germans at a major tournament since 1958.

Mats Hummels, the German goalscorer in 2014, misses Thursday’s game in Marseille through suspension after picking up a second booking in the quarterfinal win over Italy. Germany must also face France without forward Mario Gomez and midfielder Sami Khedira, who are both injured. There



are also doubts over the fitness of veteran midfielder Bastian Schweinsteiger [see box].

By contrast, France coach Didier Deschamps has a fully fit squad. However, his team has so far avoided the other leading contenders at its home European Championship.

While Ireland and Iceland’s fans entertained the French public, their teams didn’t stretch France’s players to the limit in its two knockout games to date. Conceding a goal against the Irish and two against Iceland is also unlikely to lift lingering concerns over the French defense. The hosts’ toughest test so far came in the group stage, when they

were held to a 0-0 draw by the solid if unadventurous Swiss.

France would do well to be cautious in the semifinal. The last time Germany faced the host nation in the semifinal of a major tournament, it was more a demolition than a victory.

While Germany’s injury-depleted team may struggle to repeat its 7-1 crushing of Brazil at the 2014 World Cup, the world champions remain a big threat to French dreams of dominance at home.

A fired-up crowd in Marseille’s Stade Velodrome will just drive Germany on, coach Joachim Loew said this week.

“I don’t know how many thousand fit, but the vast ma-

majority of fans will be behind France in Marseille, you’ll have this energy,” he said.

“Super, when it’s like this, no really, it’s a motivation.”
AP / Oddschecker.com

GERMANS HOPING TO HAVE SCHWEINSTEIGER FIT FOR SEMIFINAL

GERMANY IS hoping captain Bastian Schweinsteiger can recover to play the European Championship semifinal against France in Marseille.

Schweinsteiger, who took a knock to his injury-prone right knee in the weekend quarterfinal win over Italy, started the team’s last training session at its tournament base yesterday but his participation remains in question.

Borussia Dortmund’s Julian Weigl or Liverpool’s Emre Can could step in for their tournament debuts if the 31-year-old Schweinsteiger doesn’t make it.

The combative midfielder strained a ligament in the same knee that sustained two serious injuries this season and put his availability for Euro 2016 in doubt. He trained with tape bound just below both knees.

MEANWHILE IN SPAIN...

Messi given 21 months for tax fraud, won’t go to prison



Argentina’s Lionel Messi

A Barcelona court gave Lionel Messi and his father suspended sentences of 21 months in prison for tax fraud.

The court last week found both the Barcelona star and his father, Jorge Horacio Messi, guilty of three counts of defrauding the tax department to the tune of 4.1 million euros (USD4.6 million).

In Spain, sentences of less than two years for first offences are suspended, meaning neither man will go to jail.

The court also fined Messi 2 million euros and his father, 1.5 million euros.

During the four-day trial last month, Messi and his father denied any wrongdoing. Both said the player was unaware of the tax issues that led to the fraud charges.

But the state prosecutor argued that Messi and his father had failed to prove their innocence and were unable to show that the player did not have at least some knowledge of the corporate structures

created to lower his tax burden in Spain.

Tax inspectors testified that they found evidence that Messi’s father used companies in countries such as Uruguay, Switzerland and Belize to reduce tax on the player’s income from image rights. Messi’s father said he was told by a legal adviser that the practice was legal.

The sentence can be appealed.

Messi is Argentina’s career-leading scorer with 55 goals in 113 interna-

tional appearances. But he has lost three Copa America finals with Argentina (2007, 2015 and 2016) and announced his international retirement after last month’s penalty shootout loss to Chile.

With Barcelona, in contrast, Messi has won four Champions League titles and three Club World Cup trophies. He also won eight Spanish league titles, scoring 453 competitive goals in 531 games, including a league-record 312. AP

opinion

Made in Macao
 Jenny Lao-Phillips



CHINESE QUEUING CULTURE

I have often been told that Chinese people, especially those from the mainland, have difficulty understanding the concept of lining-up. They are known for their expertise in pushing their way onto public transportation, into shops, or even pushing their way through on the street. "Why don't the Chinese have a culture of lining-up?" a non-Chinese friend asked me once. Well, it is not that we don't have a line-up culture, but rather the Chinese culture is to not line-up or to jump the queue when lining up is unavoidable. But why? There are quite a few interesting explanations of the Chinese "non-queueing" culture.

A few writers have attributed the culture of not lining-up or jumping queues to the increasing competitiveness of Chinese people since the opening up of the country, as a result of the Chinese economic reform. The famous instruction of Deng Xiaoping to "let some people get rich first" swirled up individual competition among the people to either be the first to get rich or be left in the poverty of which they had tired. So, without any direction or instruction on how to get rich in getting rich, people were merely given the target – to get rich. As a result, people of the nation focused on getting ahead of others to accumulate their own wealth, and thus, wanting to be the first to gain any form of advantage, even just being the first to get on a bus is a form of success. As a Chinese saying goes: "missing out on opportunities is worse than losing all family assets." I guess, that's why Chinese people need to get there first, no matter where or for what, for fear of missing out on any benefits.

Another quite common explanation of the Chinese queueing culture points to bad examples from leading officials during the time of great turmoil in the mainland in the 50s and 60s. It was noted that during that time, resources were scarce and they were centrally distributed to citizens who had to line up everyday to receive their share of food and other daily necessities. However, leaders and officials did not have to line up. Creating a social concept that only the lower-level people had to line up, people of even the slightest importance were not required to queue. Well, how many people nowadays do not think that they are important?

No matter what the reasons that caused the Chinese queueing culture as we know it today, China is well-known as a culture where people generally do not line-up. Although this is not a new complaint against the Chinese, the discussion about the queueing behavior reminded me of an incident over 10 years ago.

It was a summer in Beijing in a crowded train station, and hundreds of passengers were lining up to get on the train. No one was formally lining up though, people were just following one after another in crowds. A teenager was politely following the crowd, when suddenly her mother screamed at her asking her to "push... push... push" and calling her stupid for not pushing through the line. The teenager was embarrassed and finally gave in, perhaps out of filial piety or simply didn't want to argue with her mum, and pushed her way into the train with her head lowered feeling ashamed and apologetic. So, that is hope for change, right?

The younger generation seems to be aware of the significance of a small action such as waiting your turn, perhaps from their school education, or perhaps from their exposure to the outside world. As long as they do not listen to their parents, well, just with the pushing and jumping the queue, there is hope for a more civilized social culture in our future.

THE PHILADELPHIA ARCHBISHOP: DIVORCED CATHOLICS MUST AVOID SEX

The leader of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Philadelphia says divorced and remarried parishioners should abstain from sex and live "like brother and sister" if they want to receive Holy Communion and haven't had their previous marriage annulled. Archbishop Charles Chaput issued a new set of pastoral guidelines for clergy and

other leaders in the archdiocese. He also says Catholics in same-sex partnerships should refrain from sex and shouldn't be permitted to hold positions of responsibility in the church, to avoid "moral confusion in the community." The guidelines are posted on the archdiocese website.

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

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS



INDIA-AFRICA India's prime minister hopes his visit this week to four African nations, some not visited by an Indian leader in more than three decades, will reinvigorate cooperation in energy, trade and investment. Narendra Modi will visit Mozambique today followed by South Africa, Tanzania and Kenya.



BELGIAN authorities say they have handed over two men to France who allegedly helped the top suspect in the Nov. 13 Paris attacks. The federal prosecutor's office identified the two as Mohammed A. and Ali O. and said they were transferred yesterday to France under a European arrest warrant.

MIGRANTS Swiss border guards have sent packing a 21-year-old Eritrean who was caught trying to sneak into southern Switzerland inside a piece of luggage on a train from Italy. Dramatic video posted online showed a man's hand, then arm, then head jutting out of the rectangular bag and him struggling to unzip it from the inside. He then got help from a border guard, unfolding his legs only to be led away.

RAMADAN As Muslims around the world celebrate the end of Ramadan, many are struggling to comprehend a wave of attacks that killed 350 people across several continents during the holy month and made urgent the question of what drives the militants to ever more spectacular violence against civilians. The diverse, high-profile targets underline the warnings of many experts: the Islamic State group, especially when on the defensive at home, will metastasize far beyond its theater of operations.



People gather during the launch of the 'Chupinazo' rocket, to celebrate the official opening of the 2016 San Fermin Fiestas, in Pamplona

Pamplona erupts with start of Spain's Fermin bull-run fiesta

Ciaran Giles & Helena Alves, Pamplona

THOUSANDS of people erupted in party mood yesterday, dousing each other with wine and singing and dancing in the streets of this northern Spanish city to celebrate the start of Pamplona's famed San Fermin running of the bulls festival.

The festival started with the traditional midday launching of a firework rocket – known as the "Chupinazo" – from Pamplona's town hall balcony. Thousands of people waving the festival's traditional red neckerchief

jammed the square down below and immediately began jumping and screaming "Viva San Fermin!" The firecracker also signalled the moment to don the neckscarf, part of the festival garb along with white trousers and shirt.

The nine-day, street-partying fiesta was immortalized in Ernest Hemingway's 1926 novel "The Sun Also Rises" and attracts thousands of foreign tourists.

The "Chupinazo" takes place a day before the first of eight 8 a.m. bull runs, in which daredevils test their speed and bravery by racing with six fighting

bulls along a 850-meter street course to the city's bull ring. The bulls then face matadors and almost certain death in afternoon bullfights.

Bull runs, or "encierros," as they are called in Spanish, are a traditional part of summer festivals across Spain. Dozens of people are injured each year in the runs, most of them in falls.

Ten people, including four Americans, were gored in last year's festival.

In all, 15 people have died from gorings in the San Fermin festival since record-keeping began in 1924. AP

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

AP Photo/Peter Dejong



Le tour. The pack rides during the fourth stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 237.5 kilometers with start in Saumur and finish in Limoges, yesterday [Macau time].