



COMPANY OFFERS TRADITIONAL JUNK CRUISES

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ACTIVIST GETS SUSPENDED SENTENCE



A Chinese court issued a suspended three-year prison sentence to a human rights activist charged with subversion of state power

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SINGAPOREAN PM MEETS OBAMA



Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong urged the United States to maintain its "indispensable role" in the Asia-Pacific

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA's navy has fired dozens of missiles and torpedoes during exercises in the East China Sea that come amid heightened maritime tensions in the region. The live-fire drills that began Monday follow China's strident rejection of a ruling last month that invalidated Beijing's claims to a vast swath of the South China Sea. **More on p10**

AP PHOTO



INDIA The death toll in flooding from heavy monsoon rains in India has climbed past 90, with about a million people taking shelter in government-run relief camps, officials said yesterday. Incessant downpours have damaged swaths of land, uprooted trees and snapped telephone cables in dozens of districts in the states of Bihar in the east, Assam in the remote northeast and Himachal Pradesh in the north.

AP PHOTO



JAPAN's Cabinet approved a fresh economic stimulus package yesterday worth more than 28 trillion yen (USD275 billion), Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's latest effort to get the stalling recovery back on track. It focuses on Japan's agriculture and tourism, and on providing support for the child and elder care industry to enable more women to work full-time, since the labor force is shrinking as the population ages. **More on p12**

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Weather bureau defends Typhoon Nida forecast

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XINHUA



Uber's surrender and the humbling of U.S. tech giants in China

▲ P11 ANALYSIS

More money exchange counters granted to casinos

Three gaming companies have been granted authorization to operate additional currency exchange counters in their casinos, according to a notice published in the Official Gazette. The three casinos, Melco Crown, Galaxy Casino and the Venetian Macao, have been allowed to operate 16, 14 and 6 more counters respectively. The order came into effect yesterday. Besides being used for bills and coins, the exchange counters at Galaxy and Venetian can be used also for purchasing travelling cheques.

Fishing moratorium extended due to typhoon

The two-and-half-month-long moratorium on fishing has been extended as the typhoon struck the city, according to the Marine and Water Bureau. The ban on fishing was supposed to have ended on Monday. Currently, more than 150 fishing boats are anchored in the Inner Harbor as a result to the ban. The bureau urged the fishermen not to sail into the sea due to its extension. The department is also increasing inspection works around the area in order to keep the fishermen wary of breaching the edict. In the neighboring region, the Guangdong province's maritime and fishing industry authority has also issued a notification to Guangdong's fishermen indicating that the opening of the fishing season has been postponed.

Local swimmers join Taiwan Strait challenge

Two Taiwanese brothers have come home victorious after winning a cross sea swimming competition, held between Taiwan's Kinmen and China's Xiamen. This marks the first time Taiwanese swimmers have held the championship title in the annual event's eight-year-long history. A total of 90 pairs of swimmers from Taiwan, China, Hong Kong and Macau, in addition to overseas Chinese contestants, took part in this year's event. The race is organized in pairs of swimmers who form a relay team. The first swimmer starts from Kinmen's Lieyu islet and then change hands with the second swimmer waiting at the islet of Binglangyu, who, in turn, will swim to the finish line in Xiamen.

Nautical company aims to provide historic cruise experiences

Lynzy Valles

IN a bid to create a new type of entertainment in the peninsula and to pay homage to the region's sailing history, Macau Sailing Ltd opened its doors in September 2015 to accommodate both sea and boat lovers.

The company was initiated by Bibito Henrique, a boat enthusiast, who thinks that the boating community in Macau is still small but growing.

The company uses a traditional sailing junk. The 40-year-old classic Chinese sailing vessel recently underwent a general restoration in order to re-establish it to its original splendor.

The renovated "Shrimp Junk" offers private cruises to boat lovers departing from Macau, and is also used for various other events. Henrique stated the vessel is a part of the region's heritage as the traditional junk was built last century in the Coloane boatyards.

"It is a vessel that both sym-



The renovated "Shrimp Junk"

bolizes and reclaims the tradition and culture of Macau along with its history linked to the sea," he explained to the Times.

The entrepreneur claimed that what the company offers is different from other tourist offers in the territory, stressing that they provide experiences to customers by showing the "different side of life in Macau."

Henrique described the Shrimp Junk as a "floating museum," as guests have the chance to visit the fishermen's community, hidden by the inner harbor buildings, who still embrace a traditional lifestyle.

Macau Sailing offers "Full Day Tours" and "Saturday Sunset Cruises" to the public. The company intends to offer a weekly run of the sunset cruise for guests to get a glimpse of their tours.

"We provide different routes and different packages for different experiences. [...] We are currently working in close relations with tourist operators in order to create a personalized Macau identity brand," he emphasized.

According to Henrique, the junk has hosted private tours for a number of different events including celebrations, univer-

sity programs and companies' appreciation events.

He also revealed that the company is currently developing an educational course on sailing for both citizens and visitors.

Macau Sailing has created partnerships with nautical companies in Macau and China to ensure the repair and maintenance of locally owned boats.

The company also provides boat maintenance and management services including brokerage, dry dock facilities, and skippering services among others.

Macau Sailing halted its operation between January and April due to weather changes and the junk's maintenance work. According to Henrique, the cruise's operation will pause for four months every year.

Moreover, Henrique believes that the company's offerings will help contribute to the changing economy of the region, emphasizing that there are tourists in the region who are also concerned with cultural experiences other than gaming.

CRIME

Hong Kong police officer arrested for stealing over HKD1.07m

A Hong Kong police officer who allegedly fled to Macau after having stolen approximately one million Hong Kong dollars in bail money, was arrested while trying to return to Hong Kong on Monday, according to a report by South China Morning Post.

The 43-year-old man, surnamed Cheung, was intercepted by immigration officers at the Shenzhen Bay border checkpoint. Cheung had reportedly spent all the stolen money on gambling in Macau, before returning to the city.

On May 2, Cheung, in command of the safe at the Arsenal Street station's report room, was reported to the police by his colleagues. They were informed that HKD1.07 million in bail money had disappeared after Cheung unexpectedly left his duty on that

same day. Cheung was immediately suspected of having left the city to go to Macau, before moving on to mainland China. An initial investigation showed that Cheung was heavily in debt but he had not declared it as unmanageable to the force as per regulation.

Cheung joined the Hong Kong police force in 1992 and was promoted to officer in command last June. He was living with his 21-year-old daughter and his wife in a police quarter before his disappearance.

Cheung's case marks one of the most serious money stealing cases in Hong Kong in recent years. In 2006, an officer at the Mong Kok Police Station took more than HK430,000 in bail money and was later sentenced to jail for 18 months.

EDUCATION

UM finds residential colleges 'satisfactory'

THE University of Macau's (UM) residential college system has achieved "satisfactory results," according to a two-year performance assessment conducted by the university itself.

A statement from UM outlined that the results demonstrate that students who have lived in the residential colleges, which were created by the university two years ago after it relocated to its new campus, tend to outperform those who have not.

More than 1700 students were surveyed, showing a positive correlation between living in the residential colleges and performing better in academic results, sports, art appreciation, cultural engagement, leadership skills and peer relationships.

The assessment took into consideration five criteria: healthy living, interpersonal relations and teamwork, leadership and service, cultural engagement, and citizenship with global perspective



UM's vice rector for Academic Affairs, Lionel Ni, describes the residential college system

and patriotism.

A forum was held last week to share the assessment results with some 300 education experts, scholars, faculty members, and students of UM. The theme of the forum was "student development in a residential college and the shaping of its educational character."

The event was hosted by UM and organized by an alliance of Chinese educational institutions that use the residential college system. The previous two events were hosted by Beihang University in Beijing.

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Renato Marques

Weather bureau defends Nida forecast, T8 not needed

FOLLOWING controversy over the fact that a “signal 8” was not hoisted yesterday morning, the Macao Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau (SMG) called a press conference yesterday to say that the weather was not rough enough to justify a T8 typhoon signal.

“To hoist typhoon signal 8 requires an average wind speed above 63 km per hour,” said the director of the SMG, Fong Soi Kun. “The maximum intensity registered was a little over 60 kilometer per hour on average, with wind gusts reaching around 90,” Fong said, adding the wind gusts for the signal 3 of typhoon criteria “can reach up to 110 [km/h].”

The peak of the intensity of typhoon Nida was registered between 6 and 7 a. m.

When questioned by journalists regarding the discrepant typhoon signals used in Macau, Hong Kong, or Zhuhai, Fong said: “We can’t compare the effects of the typhoon on those regions with Macau.” The SMG head used maps to demonstrate that strong winds primarily affected the area where Hong Kong and Shenzhen are located. He also pointed out that the cri-



Fong Soi Kun



Heavy rains yesterday morning

The decision not to hoist the signal 8 was ours, and ultimately mine.

FONG SOI KUN

teria and signal system used in Zhuhai and mainland China “is totally different, so we can’t compare the warning signals of Macau with the ones in the mainland.”

Critics vented on social networks and other forums, suggesting that the bureau must have been under particular pressure from the gaming industry. To this, the director of the SMG affirmed: “The decision not to hoist the signal 8

was ours [of the SMG] and ultimately mine,” adding that such a decision is made exclusively on the basis of “scientific data, knowledge and experience” which he claimed SMG staff use in order to provide a “forecast as precise as possible.”

Regarding the SMG forecasts, Fong noted: “They are always done by excess rather than by shortcoming” in order to guarantee public sa-

fety, adding that the interference of “gaming revenues or other things” are not topics taken into consideration.

Following questions from the media regarding the malfunctioning of one of the meteorological stations located at Amizade Bridge, and how that could influence the results, Fong added that SMG data is collected across 15 different stations, 14 of which are perfectly operational. He admit-

ted that the failure of the station located on the Amizade Bridge was due to an incident during a thunderstorm on July 10, but reaffirmed that “the lack of information from that station has no influence on the final results.”

Not discarding totally the possibility of moments of “potential risk,” during short periods of time, Fong said that SMG will contact other services to present several proposals, namely regarding the possibility of the government opening the underpass of Sai Van bridge for the transit of motorcycles even during a signal 3 typhoon.

The head of SMG reaffirmed the investment and effort of the bureau in providing accurate and up-to-date information through the meteorological service’s website and mobile app.

Questioned by the Times regarding the referred app, and to the fact that although most of the content is provided in a trilingual version (Chinese, Portuguese and English), it only provides warning messages and the so-called “latest weather tips” in Chinese, Fong admitted he was unaware of that problem and promised to review and correct the situation, saying “all the messages that are posted by the SMG should be done in the three languages [Portuguese, English and Chinese]” apologizing “if our app is currently presenting this flaw.”

Typhoon Nida makes landfall in Guangdong shutting down most cities

TYPHOON Nida made landfall at 3.35 a.m. yesterday at the Dapeng Peninsula in the city of Shenzhen in Guangdong Province, according to local weather authorities.

The strong typhoon, which picked up speed with winds reaching up to 151.2 km per hour, was at the time moving northwest at 25 km per hour and was expected to sweep across the cities of Shenzhen, Dongguan, Guangzhou, Foshan and Zhaoqing and into neighboring Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the Guangdong provincial weather authorities informed the Xinhua news agency.

Due to its passage, nearly 200 train trips were suspended yesterday, including 180 bullet train trips, according to the Nanning Railway Bureau. Trains from Guangzhou to Nanning, capital of Guangxi, and Guiyang, capital of southwest China’s Guizhou Province, were among those suspended.

More than 2,000 soldiers and paramilitary forces, as well as over 100 ambu-



Combined photo shows the flooded Zhuhai Fisher Girl Statue on Aug. 2 (up) and visitors at the statue on Aug. 1

lances, were prepared for the emergency response in Shenzhen, the city’s armed police headquarters said.

The Guangdong provincial government



A tree is blown down by strong winds brought by Typhoon Nida in Shantou, south China’s Guangdong Province

on Monday evening requested the suspension of projects, businesses, markets, schools and transportation. Companies and organizations that do not provide critical services or urban operations were also encouraged to offer a day off yesterday.

All ships scheduled to end their fishing ban on Monday were asked to delay their departure and stay at port to avoid the rainstorm. **MDT/Xinhua**

TENNIS

Major tennis tournament returns to Hengqin

THE second edition of the WTA Elite Trophy Zhuhai will be held between November 1 and 6, with 22 matches throughout the week at the custom-designed tennis center on Hengqin Island in Zhuhai.

The neighboring region's event has launched its early-bird tickets, which went on sale recently. Tennis fans can watch the matches at RMB720 if they buy a 'whole session package', which provides admission to all matches during the tournament week.

According to China Daily, the price of a semi-finals and finals package is RMB580 while ticket prices of round-robin games within and between different groups are RMB160 and RMB80 respectively.

"You can see the world's best female tennis players competing for USD2.21 million prize money, as well as all the fun, fine food and entertainment offered on site. After the success of the 2015 event, 2016 promises to be even bigger and better!" said Peter Johnston, Tournament Di-



Former tennis player Stefanie Graf is cooperating with the organizers

rector of WETZ.

Last year, the event featured three former WTA World No.1 players, Venus Williams, Caroline Wozniacki, and Jelena Jankovic, along with rising stars Karolina Pliskova, Madison Keys, and Elina Svitolina.

This year Stefanie Graf, former WTA World No.1 and 22-time Grand Slam champion, will attend the upcoming tournament acting as the Tournament Ambassador for the 2016 WTA Elite Trophy Zhuhai.

The event's second edition will

feature on-site carnival activities such as music, dance and art exhibitions, and will also house Singapore's gourmet event Savor Food Festival. The festival will offer spectators Singaporean cuisines of top chefs from award-winning restaurants.

The tennis competition will feature a 12-player singles field consisting of players ranked No. 9 through 19 in the world, along with one wildcard in a four-group round-robin format.

The winners of each respective group will advance to the single-elimination stage of the event and the winner of the singles event will receive 700 WTA Ranking points, as reported by the media outlet. Meanwhile, the six-team doubles field will compete in a two-group round-robin, and the winner of each group will advance to the final.

Zhuhai will host the event at a 5,000-seat covered center court, in a complex that also features a separate 1,500-seat court, four show courts and a total of 12 hard courts.

Association criticizes Macau's environment evaluation policies

LEI U Tou, vice-president of Choi In Tong Sam Association, declared that Macau's environmental measures are lagging far behind the rest of the world, further criticizing the fact that "regardless of how serious the pollution levels are, they never exceed the imposed standard requirements," according to a report by Jornal Cheng Pou.

In Lei's words, just by collecting samples of random measurements that indicate a reduction of a project's potential pollution, all environment evaluation reports get a pass, and all projects are easily approved for construction.

Currently, Macau does not enforce detailed environmental standards and regulations. The Environment Protection Bureau (DSPA) has not yet elaborated a schedule describing the laws behind environment evaluation policies.

"The lack of regulations concerning environment evaluation policies is where Macau lags behind its peers," said

Lei, exemplifying the many countries in the world where there is, besides an established legal criteria regarding air and sound pollution levels, an established public consultation scheme.

In Macau, the Land, Public Works and Transport Bureau (DSSOPT) is authorized to order contractors to submit their projects' environment evaluation reports. However, according to the Jornal Cheng Pou report, some contractors noted that these reports are just "additional administrative requirements," as no laws force contractors to submit them to the responsible authorities. Contractors can appeal to the administrative court in order to refuse delivering the reports.

Lei recommended that authorities include a few articles in the local legal regulations in order to allow the DSSOPT to legally require contractors to deliver and publish the reports, and also to allow the DSSOPT to forward the reports to the DSPA for approval.

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Average daily wage of construction workers increases

IN the second quarter of 2016, the average daily wage of a construction worker increased 1.2 percent quarter-to-quarter to MOP788.

According to the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC), this increase is attributable to a 3.8 percent rise in the average wage of skilled and semi-skilled non-resident construction workers (MOP687). However, the average daily wage of local construction workers (MOP982) dropped by 0.8 percent quarter-to-quarter.

Overall, the average daily wage of skilled and semi-skilled workers was MOP801, up by 1.8 percent quarter-to-quarter. Among them, wages of air-conditioning mechanics (MOP823) and concrete formwork carpenters (MOP889) increased by 9.2 percent and 4.6 percent, respectively, while the wages of bricklayers and plasterers (MOP728) and painters (MOP806) decreased by 2.3 percent and 1.6 percent, respectively. Meanwhile, the average daily wage of unskilled workers was MOP393, slightly up by 0.3 percent.

After discounting the effects of inflation, the wage index of construction workers (103.1) for the second quarter of 2016 increased by 2.4 percent quarter-to-quarter in real terms, while that of local construction workers (127.3) decreased by 1.3 percent.

TRANSPORTATION

248,680 licensed motor vehicles by end of June

THE Statistics and Census Service (DSEC) yesterday released the transportation statistics for the first half of 2016. The statement documented increased motor vehicle registration and airplane transportation in Macau, while at the same time a drop in the number passenger ferries.

New registration of motor vehicles decreased by 29.8 percent year-on-year to 939 in June 2016, according to the DSEC.

The total number of licensed motor vehicles reached 248,680 at the end of June, up by 1.9 percent year-on-year. Motorcycles and light private cars accounted for 52.1 percent and 41 percent respectively of the total.

In the first half of 2016, new registration of motor vehicles dropped by 31.6 percent year-on-year to 6,869, which saw motorcycles (3,809) and light private cars (2,186) falling by 25.9 percent and 48.4 percent respectively.

Cross-border vehicle traffic totaled 427,258 trips in June 2016, an increase of 2.1 percent year-on-year. In the first half of 2016, cross-border vehicle traffic rose slightly by 0.7 percent year-on-year to 2,549,159 trips. Of this figure, vehicle traffic through the Border



BLOOMBERG

Gate accounted for 77.2 percent.

There were 1,269 traffic accident cases in the month of June, with number of injuries totaling to 364. Meanwhile, in the first half year of 2016, the number of traffic accidents decreased by 2.5 percent year-on-year to 7,425 cases, resulting in 2,276 casualties and four deaths.

Passenger ferry movements connecting Macau to both Hong Kong and mainland China decreased by 6.4 percent year-on-year to 10,966 trips in June, while movements in the first half of the year (68,080 trips) dropped by 6.3 percent.

Commercial flight movements at the Macau International Airport totaled 4,422 in June, an increase of 7.1 percent year-on-year. In the first half-year of 2016, commercial flight movements increased by 6.8 percent year-on-year to 27,202 trips; flight movements to and from mainland China and Vietnam dropped by 2.9 percent and 3.1 percent, while movements to and from Japan, Thailand and Taiwan rose by 64.8 percent, 21.1 percent and 16.6 percent respectively.

Helicopter flights in the first half year (4,808 trips), decreased by 31.8 percent. **DB**

INTERNET SUBSCRIPTIONS UP 10 PERCENT

DSEC RELEASED a statement yesterday outlining the communications usage during June 2016. The statement noted a marked increase in the number of internet subscribers. At the end of the month, the number of fixed-line telephone subscribers decreased by 6.9 percent year-on-year to 140,173, while the number of mobile telephone subscribers rose slightly by 0.5 percent to 1,874,950. Of this number, stored-value GSM card subscribers (1,191,099) accounted for 63.5 percent. The number of internet subscribers increased by 10.7 percent year-on-year to 350,879. In the first half of 2016, the cumulative duration of internet usage rose by 12.4 percent year-on-year to 582 million hours.

AD

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GAMING

Study shows improvements in some services

THE Macau Gaming Research Association's (MGRA) recent survey, conducted by a Hong Kong research company, showed a three percent year-on-year decline on the region's customer service level, TDM reported.

"Mystery clients" visited 13 gaming venues, including nine frontline departments to conduct the study during the first half of the year. The survey, which aimed to evaluate employee's friendliness, proactiveness and tolerance of customers, has garnered some 1,800 respondents.

As cited in the report, the study showed that the index of proactiveness has dropped to 109 points during this year's second quarter, accounting for a three percent drop compared to the same period last year.

The checkpoints for each casino include customer

services in cloakrooms, bus and washrooms, staff at slot machine areas, security staff, cashiers, dealers, and staff at the free food and beverage areas.

The region's overall gaming service index from April to June 2016 went up by 12.8 percent compared to the first quarter of the year.

According to the study, the friendliness index of casino frontline workers was up by 6.3 percent quarter-to-quarter during the three months, which the association described as the second highest in the report's history.

The report also showed a 14 percent quarter-to-quarter increase in the gaming workers' tolerance index.

Since 2013, the Gaming Service Index has been compiled periodically to facilitate the trend analysis in a bid to monitor the service level of the gaming industry.

Casino rally seen overdone as Pictet questions valuations

Kana Nishizawa, Benny Kung

JUST because Macau's gaming industry is stabilizing doesn't mean the city's casino shares are worth buying. That's according to Pictet Asset Management, which says valuations are too high relative to earnings prospects. Diam Co., a Tokyo-based investment manager, is waiting for more evidence of a sustained gambling upturn before buying. Casino shares declined Monday even after gross gaming revenue for July slipped at a slower pace than analysts predicted.

"I would continue to be cautious," said Pauline Dan, Hong Kong-based head of Greater China equities at Pictet, which manages about USD154 billion. "From a valuations perspective, it's hard to make a bullish case."

A gauge of Macau casino operators has jumped 14 percent from a low on June 28, outstripping the 9.7 percent advance in Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index as commentators including Las Vegas Sands Corp.'s Sheldon Adelson said the industry was bottoming out. A Bloomberg Intelligence gauge of six large casino operators trades at 22 times projected earnings, 25 percent above its three-year average and almost twice the level of the Hang Seng Index.

Gross gaming revenue in the city fell 4.5 percent in July, the smallest drop in five months, according to data from the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau. While that was better than the median estimate of a 5.5 percent drop by nine analysts surveyed by Bloomberg, it marked a 26th straight month of declines.

The index of casino shares decli-



ned 0.8 percent on Monday. The measure's relative strength index rose to 73 last week, above the 70 level that signals to some traders shares are poised to decline.

Sands China Ltd. jumped 14 percent last month to be among the top gainers in Hong Kong as its parent reported mass-market gaming revenue in the Chinese city rose in June for the first time in two years. Wynn Macau Ltd. climbed 13 percent, while Galaxy Entertainment Group Ltd. reached an almost three-month high.

Trading in Hong Kong's stock market was canceled yesterday as Typhoon Nida lashed the city, with Storm Signal No. 8 in place at noon. The Hong Kong Observatory lowered it to Strong Wind Signal No. 3 at 12:40 p.m. local time.

Toshihiko Takamoto, a Singapore-based portfolio manager at Diam, which oversees about \$165 billion globally, says casino stocks are unlikely to be a one-way bet and maintains a cautious stance after investors were "repeatedly disappointed" by signs of a recovery.

Casino stocks have rallied in the past only to retreat after a turna-

round to Macau's two-year gambling downturn grew elusive. The latest signs of improvement come amid a building boom in Macau casinos, with the \$4.1 billion Wynn Palace scheduled to open Aug. 22 while Sands China's \$2.7 billion Parisian project is slated to open Sept. 13.

Louis Wong, director of Phillip Capital Management (HK) Ltd. says stocks have room to rise further as a crackdown on mainland officials wanes and the new projects bring in more mass-market gamblers.

"Around 10 percent upside is possible from now," Wong said. "The number of arrests of Chinese officials decreased quite substantially since the second half of last year. There is a correlation between the VIP sector and the crackdown on corruption."

The index of casino operators has fallen 67 percent from its 2014 high as Beijing's anti-graft campaign and increased scrutiny of the middlemen who bring in the high-rollers dragged down gambling revenue in the former Portuguese enclave.

Concerns about demand at new resorts were ignited last week after Wynn Resorts Ltd. said its new casino in Macau may be allotted about half of the baccarat tables analysts were expecting. The local government determines how many gaming tables each casino may offer. Wynn Macau slumped 8.3 percent in the two days through Monday, its biggest loss in six months.

"With high valuations it's hard to see shares continuing to test higher without real visitor and revenue recovery," Diam's Takamoto said. **Bloomberg**

PAGCOR RETRACTS 124 ONLINE GAMING LICENSES

THE PHILIPPINE Amusement and Gaming Corp (Pagcor) has revoked 124 online gaming licenses as it imposes President Duterte's order to curb online gambling, The Inquirer reported. Andrea Domingo, Pagcor's president and chief executive officer said Pagcor could lose up to P10 billion in revenue as a result, but this measure is not expected to deviate from meeting the agency's revenue target of P50 billion next year. Domingo added that the projected losses would be felt once Pagcor does

not renew the license of 302 e-Games stations and 324 e-Bingo outlets that cater to local bettors. Meanwhile, Bernstein analysts said in a note that the news is likely to be positive for Macau's gaming industry as online gaming in the Philippines often targets Chinese gamblers at a small scale. "Any impediments to existing VIP practices in the Philippines could lead to some VIP business migrating back to Macau (although we do not see this happening in the near term)," said Pagcor.



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opinion

Leila Abboud, Bloomberg

MARK ZUCKERBERG SEIZES FRESH GROUND IN BATTLE OVER MEDIA

Facebook and Google are the 800-pound gorillas in online advertising because of audience reach and superior targeting. They enjoy another lesser-known advantage: they're largely immune to ad blocking.

People install ad blockers to strip out marketing messages and the trackers used to target ads. They're more widespread on computers but they're migrating slowly to mobile too. Adoption varies by country, as the chart below shows. Analysts estimate that ad blocking cost web publishers nearly USD22 billion in lost ad sales last year, compared with total internet ad sales of \$160 billion.

Yet it's becoming clear that the pain isn't being shared equally, and this is more bad news for newspaper, magazine, and television companies. What started as a consumer movement sparked by rage about intrusive ads, security and privacy seems to be strengthening the internet's big beasts.

Not only does old world media lack the tech chops to beat the blockers, their fragile finances make it hard to turn away ad dollars in the name of user experience. Google and Facebook's resources dwarf the legacy publishers. But even when looked at on a proportional basis, old media's investment in its own future is anemic. Last year, Google spent 16.4 percent of revenue on R&D, according to Bloomberg data, and Facebook almost a quarter. At Daily Mail & General Trust, owner of one of the most popular news sites, it was 3.6 percent.

Facebook is a textbook example of how technology enshrines advantage. While it was prey to ad blockers when most users preferred computers, it's played a blinder in the shift to mobile. The ads within the mobile Facebook app (and its photo-sharing app Instagram) can't be stripped out by blockers. They're delivered by Facebook servers with none of the usual identifiers. The chart below shows how well this is turning out for Mark Zuckerberg and co.

Google's main defense is its iron grip on search ads. These paid-for links, which appear by results when users look for information on plane fares or movie tickets, aren't as annoying as pop-up ads or videos. One caveat: Google's display advertising, such as banner ads or videos on YouTube, is more threatened by ad blockers than Facebook's. Unlike the social media giant, Google ads aren't sheltered within an app.

Yet this is small comfort for traditional media. Once ad blocking usage hits about 20 percent of the population, it really starts to hurt publishers, according to John Montgomery of WPP's GroupM. The New York Times and others are desperate for online ads to make up the shortfall from print, but it's hard going as the chart below shows. Falling prices for their online ads, which cannot match the targeting precision of Facebook or Google, are the main culprit, but ad blockers aren't helping.

Since most publishers rely on external networks to sell their online ad space, the ads are easily identified and cut out by blockers. Efforts to coax people to turn off the blockers are becoming common, but have yet to prove effective. Blocking increases pressure on free sites such as the Daily Mail and Guardian to impose paywalls. But it's tough to sell general news, which is freely available elsewhere.

One answer could be to turn to the web giants for help. A year ago, Facebook created a tool that hosts publishers' content within the social network, theoretically taking them off the ad blockers' radars too. Google has a similar initiative.

Yet such assistance isn't free and makes old media ever more dependent on Silicon Valley for its future. Hardly a secure prospect for a beleaguered industry.

Mitsubishi scandal probe finds unrealistic goals, conflicts

Yuri Kageyama, Tokyo

A group of lawyers asked by Mitsubishi Motors Corp. to investigate mileage cheating at the Japanese automaker found a divided company that had set unrealistic goals, to which employees simply couldn't say, "No."

The Tokyo-based automaker acknowledged in April it had systematically falsified mileage data on its eK wagon and eK Space minicars, also produced for Nissan Motor Co.

The investigative panel said yesterday such data falsifying went on for 25 years, and the wrongdoing was systematic, extensive and escalated with time.

The probe, which included interviews with more than 150 people, found the company lacked a system for checking on the team assigned to improve mileage.

The company said employees did not feel compelled to respect the law or fix the wrongdoing and each department was concerned only with its own performance.



Osamu Masuko attends a press conference at the headquarters of the automaker in Tokyo

"There was utterly no consciousness that the company must work as one to make and sell cars," the panel's 37-page report said.

The government earlier found Mitsubishi had overstated mileage on its vehicles by up to 16 percent.

Mitsubishi Motors, which makes the Outlander sport-utility vehicle and the i-MiEV electric car, struggled for years to win back consumer trust after an auto defects scandal in the early 2000s over cover-ups of problems such as failing brakes, faulty clutches and fuel tanks prone to falling

off dating back to the 1970s.

Panel members, speaking at a news conference at the company's Tokyo headquarters, acknowledged their recommendations might not be followed, just as with past scandals.

Shortly after the problems were made public, Nissan announced it was taking a 34 percent stake in Mitsubishi to help its turn-around. The scandal surfaced after Nissan, which sold Mitsubishi minicars under its own brand, did its own tests and pointed out inconsistencies in data.

Mitsubishi has said it di-

The company said employees did not feel compelled to respect the law or fix the wrongdoing

dn't lie about mileage on models sold overseas. The company is offering a cash rebate to customers in Japan who bought the vehicles for which it had reported inflated mileage, to make up for the extra gas.

Mitsubishi Chairman Osamu Masuko, who helped engineer the Nissan deal, reiterated an apology and promised the company will penalize managers found responsible for the cheating.

"We hope this will mark a new beginning for us as a manufacturer," he told reporters after the panel's findings were released. AP

Lufthansa profits up on lower costs but tougher times ahead

David McHugh, Frankfurt

GERMAN airline Lufthansa repeated a warning that terrorism fears would weigh on bookings and profits in the second half of the year as it reported a solid increase in underlying profits in the first half thanks to cost controls and lower fuel prices.

Once stripping out one-off factors that distort annual comparisons, Lufthansa said yesterday that adjusted earnings before interest and taxes — the company's usual profit gauge — rose 61 million euros to 529 million euros (USD585 million) in the same period last year. If those one-off factors are included, net profit more than halved to 429 million euros from 954 million euros, when profits were boosted by 503 million euros through the early conversion of a convertible bond.

The airline credited strict management of seat capacity for an increase of 3.8 percentage points to 5.2 percent in the profit margin at its passenger airline business. However, Lufthansa's cargo business saw a fall of 95 million euros in first-half earnings due to "massive market overca-

pacities" while yields from air freight had fallen to levels last seen during the financial crisis in 2009.

Lufthansa shares fell 3.9 percent to 10.31 euros in midday trading in Europe.

CEO Carsten Spohr said in a statement that the company achieved "a solid result" in the first half, but warned that "our industry has to prepare for a difficult" second half. The company has already had to abandon its earnings forecast for the full year, saying it expects profits to be below last year's, instead of slightly above.

"The terrorist attacks in Europe and also the increasing political and economic uncertainties are having a tangible impact on passenger volumes," said Spohr, who noted a particular impact on forward bookings for long-distance flights to Europe.

Europe has witnessed a series of attacks over the past year, including last November's in Paris which killed 130 people and the bombings at the Brussels airport and subway in March that killed 32. On July 14, an attacker drove a truck through a crowd in Nice, France, killing 84.

Recently, Germany itself has wit-



nessed an ax-and-knife attack by a 17-year-old Afghan refugee who injured 5 people in Wuerzburg on July 18 and a suicide bombing that injured several people outside a wine-bar in Anspach, Germany on July 24.

Britain's vote to leave the European Union and a failed military coup in Turkey have added to political and economic uncertainty in Europe as well.

The turbulence is affecting other airlines; Air France has warned that the global context "is highly uncertain" and noted "a special concern about France as a destination." EasyJet has warned that the events in Turkey and the Nice attack "continue to impact consumer confidence." AP

Cross-border platform to link Angola to DRC and Zambia

A cross-border logistics platform will be built in Luau municipality, Moxico province, to link Angola to the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia via the Benguela railway, Angolan Transport Minister Augusto da Silva Tomás announced.

The Luau cross-border logistics platform will altogether comprise an integrated and varied multipolar front in economic relations with Angola's neighbouring countries, said Tomás, who spoke on Saturday during the opening session of a conference on "The National Logistics Platform".

Construction of this infrastructure is vital, because many countries in the Great Lakes region and others in southern Africa do not have maritime borders, he said, stressing that it could eventually play a decisive role and become a factor for attracting international trade, both imports and exports.

In the report from Angop news agency, the minister indicated that plans called for the creation of 44 logistics platforms, from first to third level, for urban, regional, port and cross-border typologies as well as for air cargo centres at the country's major airports. **MDT/Macauhub**

GUINEA-BISSAU

Gov't delivers China-donated seeds and fertilizer

THE government of Guinea-Bissau has begun distributing to farmers the agricultural production resources, namely seeds and fertilizer, donated by China at a ceremony last weekend in Bafatá.

Official information indicates that the donation involves 500 tons of rice seed, 617 tons of fertilizer and 20 tons of peanuts, along with bean varieties, and also six new tractors and several power tillers. They will be placed at the disposal of farmers in the country's 39 sectors and eight regions, including the Autonomous Sector of Bissau.

Agriculture Minister Rui Nené Djata said that these production means should enable more than 400 hectares to be planted with peanuts and a similar area with beans. The rice seed should lead to a harvest of 30,000 tons.



Prime Minister Baciro Djá presided at the ceremony. He said the time had come to transform the family-based farming currently practiced in Guinea-Bissau into mechanised agriculture, to increase agricultural production and productivity.

Djá stated that one of his government's goals is to create conditions to enable farmers to harvest up to 80,000 tons of rice, with a view to re-

ducing imports of that cereal.

Beijing's ambassador to the West African country notified the media last week that Chinese technical personnel would soon be arriving in Bissau to begin a project to manufacture tractors and other agricultural machinery.

Wang Hua made his statement at a ceremony on Friday, during which he said that the delivered goods are meant to help Guinea-Bis-

sau produce rice "so that the country can become self-sufficient in this cereal."

The ambassador stressed that Guinea-Bissau has natural resources such as plentiful water, arable land, a good climate and above all farmers, whereby the country can produce enough for domestic consumption and also export surpluses.

Guinea-Bissauan President José Mário Vaz in turn thanked China for the donation, adding that the production goods would be delivered directly to his country's farmers.

Vaz said that agricultural transformation and diversification are currently a national priority, which will necessarily involve gradual mechanization of the production chain and eventual marketing of the products in Guinea-Bissau.

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Chinese human rights activist gets suspended sentence

Helene Franchineau, Gerry Shih

A Chinese court issued a suspended three-year prison sentence to a human rights activist charged with subversion of state power after a brief trial yesterday, the first publicly acknowledged hearing in a secrecy-shrouded year-long case involving hundreds of rights activists.

The official Xinhua News Agency said a court in the northern city of Tianjin issued the sentence to Zhai Yanmin, who was arrested in July last year as part of a nationwide government campaign against legal activists. About 300 lawyers and activists were initially seized and questioned before most were released.

Zhai's case is the first of four expected to be heard this week. Prosecutors announced in July they would try a lawyer, Zhou Shifeng of the Beijing law firm Fengrui that worked extensively on human rights cases, and three activists who worked with the firm, including Zhai. More than a dozen others remain jailed, their legal status uncertain.

Xinhua said Zhai confessed in court that the group of lawyers, citizens and petitioners who believed in "pushing the wall" — a Chinese expression for overthrowing the government — methodically hyped politically sensitive cases. It quoted him as saying they organized popular rallies during controversial human rights cases to draw international attention and undermine the Chinese state — remarks that echoed previous government accusations toward the group.

Xinhua said the court was told that Zhai, 55, and the three others "conspired and plotted to subvert state power," and "established a systematic ideology, method and steps to



Yuan Shanshan (left) the wife of detained Chinese lawyer Xie Yanyi, is questioned by a police officer near the Tianjin No. 2 Intermediate People's Court

achieve it."

In a video from the trial shown on state television and posted on government websites, Zhai read a statement saying he accepted all the charges against him, was "extremely regretful" of his actions and would not appeal his sentence.

Zhai said he would urge others not to be used by "hostile foreign forces" and domestic opportunists, or be blinded by "so-called democracy, human rights and justice."

"I hope the court will give me an opportunity to correct my mistakes and start life anew," Zhai said, standing in the defendant's box and flanked by two bailiffs.

The court permitted Hong Kong journalists to attend the session, although foreign diplomats were barred.

Zhai and his fellow activists worked alone or in affiliation

with law firms to gather evidence of government abuses and lead clients and the disgruntled in protesting outside courts and government offices. Their actions were harshly denounced by the authorities as interference in the legal process.

Many wives of the detained activists say they and their retained lawyers have been denied access to the detainees for more than a year, receiving only occasional updates by word of mouth, while some family members seeking information have been briefly detained themselves.

Zhai's wife, Liu Ermin, was taken into custody on Sunday night and returned late Monday to her Beijing home, where she said she is effectively held under house arrest by security agents outside her door.

"It's unfair, it's too unfair," she said in a text message upon

learning of Zhai's verdict.

She said she intends to appeal the verdict but does not know how to reach his government-appointed lawyer, whose identity has not been disclosed to relatives or in state media reports.

Zhai's three-year sentence was suspended for four years, meaning he will not go to prison but will have to live under considerable restrictions and supervision. He also will lose all political rights for the same period, making him ineligible to run for local councils or other offices. He can be sent to prison to serve his sentence if he disobeys the rules set for his release during the four-year period.

A three-year sentence is the minimum for people convicted of subversion, which carries a maximum sentence of life in prison.

"It is an unprecedentedly light

sentence [...] almost a symbolic punishment," said Beijing political commentator Zhang Lifan.

That may be a deliberate move by the ruling Communist Party, which permits no political opposition, to demonstrate that those who cooperate can be treated leniently, while harsh penalties await those who refuse, Zhang said.

"The point is not whether you committed any crime, but whether you obeyed or not," Zhang said.

Zhai's wife, Liu Ermin, returned late Monday to her Beijing home, where she said she is effectively held under house arrest

The trial also fits a pattern established under the administration of President Xi Jinping to use more sophisticated legal means to attack perceived opponents as it maintains pressure on activists and non-governmental organizations.

Police cordoned off the Tianjin No. 2 Intermediate People's Court yesterday, one day after protesters flanked by foreign diplomats demanded more information about the cases.

The trial was attended by five foreign media outlets invited by the court and other observers, according to Xinhua, in an apparent attempt to address criticism from the activists' supporters about a near-total lack of transparency surrounding the cases.

It isn't clear whether Zhai will be allowed to immediately return home. A lawyer and legal assistant who were recently released have been videoed apparently recanting their actions, but their whereabouts remain unknown. AP

Live-fire navy drills held in East China Sea



A missile is launched from a guided-missile destroyer during a live ammunition drill in the East China Sea

CHINA'S navy has fired dozens of missiles and torpedoes during exercises in the East China Sea that come amid heightened maritime ten-

sions in the region, underscoring Beijing's determination to back up its sovereignty claims with force if needed.

The live-fire drills that began Monday follow China's strident rejection of an international arbitration panel's ruling last month that invalidated Beijing's claims to a vast swath of the South China Sea.

That led to days of angry statements from Beijing,

followed by live-firing naval exercises in the South China Sea and the launch of regular aerial patrols in the area.

Yesterday, the Defense Ministry said the East China Sea exercises were aimed at improving the "intensity, precision, stability and speed" of its military.

"An information technology-based war at sea is sudden, cruel and short, which requires fast tran-

sition to combat status, quick preparation and high assault efficiency," the ministry said.

The drills include ships, submarines, aircraft and coast guard forces, illustrating China's growing emphasis on integrated training under realistic conditions.

China's navy has been closing the gap with its U.S. rival in both ship numbers and technology, including the deployment

of advanced anti-ship missiles, nuclear submarines and the country's first aircraft carrier.

While global attention has been drawn to the South China Sea, where five governments exercise territorial claims overlapping with China's, Beijing also operates extensively in the East China Sea, where it claims a string of uninhabited islands controlled by Japan. AP

ANALYSIS

Uber's surrender and the humbling of U.S. tech giants in China

Christina Larson

NOT so long ago, American tech giants viewed China as theirs for the taking: 1.4 billion people, a growing middle class, an affinity for American pop culture from Titanic and Friends to Michael Jackson. And, apparently, a tendency to see U.S. goods and services as attractive or superior.

That triumphal script was again rewritten as Uber conceded defeat in its no-holds-barred dust-up with Didi Chuxing. After a costly battle in which both sides shelled out billions subsidizing rides, Chief Executive Travis Kalanick decided to call off the war, agreeing to a deal in which the local champion acquires Uber's China operations in return for a seat on Didi's board and a slice of the Chinese company. The move came only a year after the famously brash Uber impresario declared China, the world's largest ride-hailing market, his most important target.

In other words, Kalanick came, he saw, he most certainly didn't conquer.

"Uber's approach to markets around the world has been fairly arrogant," from flouting local taxi regulations to threatening to sabotage media critics by digging up personal dirt, says Zennon Kapron, managing director of Shanghai-based consulting firm Kapronasia. "But arrogance is a very difficult attitude to have to be successful in China."

The particular twists and turns of Uber's battle for market share in China are distinct – it went up against a nimble competitor backed by deep-pocketed internet standard-bearers Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. and Tencent Holdings Ltd. But its ordeal reflects a changing reality for Silicon Valley stalwarts like Amazon.com Inc. or Apple Inc. that may view China as a gold mine, but wind up floored by formidable competition and shifting consumer tastes. As Kalanick said in announcing Uber's withdrawal, "U.S. technology companies struggle to crack the code."

"The days of simply entering China with something new" – a soda brand or a novel smartphone – "are gone," said Tom Birtwhistle, a senior manager at PricewaterhouseCoopers in Hong Kong. "Now if you're entering China, you're having to compete with lots of companies already there."



Moreover, it's no longer the case that Chinese consumers and companies are "happy with crappy," as one China hand explained to The Atlantic Monthly in 2007. Observe how Huawei, Xiaomi and Oppo have taken a big bite out of Apple, a series of successes stemming from savvy marketing and homegrown tech wizardry.

"The local competition has improved dramatically. Look at smartphones: the Chinese smartphone manufacturers used to offer phones that were cheap and crappy, but now they're both affordable and very good," Birtwhistle said. "There also used to be a challenge around branding," he said. "But today, a lot of the newer companies are doing brand and marketing as well as western brands. Now they can offer high specs, low price-tags, and world-class branding – that's hard to beat."

Silicon Valley grew cocky after successes in Europe, where Google's runaway dominance, for instance, has seen it defending against anti-trust accusations. But perhaps Europe is the exception, suggests analyst

Now if you're entering China, you're having to compete with lots of companies already there.

TOM BIRTWHISTLE
PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS
HONG KONG

Duncan Clark, author of Alibaba: The House that Jack Ma Built.

"In a market the size of China, there should be a 'home court advantage,' driven as much by culture and language as by government diktat or influence," he said. "Many U.S. companies had got used to the fact that they could succeed overseas through their dominance in Europe. But China is different; it has a ready supply of entrepreneurs and capital, and a government that if anything prizes dominance over competition."

The deal Uber finally accepted – retreating from direct competition in China, in exchange for shares in a Chinese champion – echoes a similar arrangement struck between Yahoo and Alibaba in 2005. Ebay saw its early promise in China eclipsed when Alibaba found better ways to attract consumers in a low-trust environment: using escrow, instead of up-front fees for goods. Google chose to pull its search engine in 2010, rather than accept Beijing's censorship terms (and following discoveries of hacking, it said).

To be sure, the Middle Kingdom doesn't always tease, and leave suitors empty-handed. Apple iPhones have sold handily in China as both tech gadgets and luxury objects, although with the smartphone market increasingly saturated and competitive, Apple's future prospects are now less certain. Its market share in China has eroded over the past year, driving down earnings. But the company has displayed smarts in China in the past, winning consumers over with a hardware-software-apps ecosystem that's proven tough to replicate. Its reliance on Foxconn and

other manufacturers with factories in China creates hundreds of thousands of jobs – winning points with Beijing.

There're still sectors where foreign companies have the edge, especially where product safety and cutting-edge technology hold sway – think infant formula, computer processors, automobiles, passenger aircraft and engines.

While Google, Yahoo, Ebay, and now Uber have retreated from China or settled for a narrow market position, some like Microsoft, Qualcomm and Apple are still slugging it out. Meanwhile, one Silicon Valley behemoth, currently blocked from China, is gunning for its chance.

Facebook was briefly allowed in China, before being blocked in 2009. In recent years, founder Mark Zuckerberg has made clear his intention to bring the platform to China. To win favor, much to the amusement of Chinese netizens, he's handed out copies of Xi's tome, The Governance of China, to Facebook employees; showed off his Mandarin skills; and posted photos of himself jogging through hazardous Beijing smog. It remains to be seen whether that multi-faceted courtship will be effective.

"All the kowtowing and meeting the leadership maybe won't matter so much if Facebook won't agree to allow some level of censorship, or allow the Chinese government access to data on the site, in exchange for market access," Kapron said. LinkedIn Corp. operates in China, but only by agreeing to abide by content restrictions. "Otherwise, he's just hitting his head against the wall."

More fundamentally, in the

age of WeChat, do Chinese consumers still need Facebook? Tencent's ubiquitous service has a virtual lock on mobile social media, while dozens of other niche services cater to all sorts of needs.

"Globally, maybe 7 or 8 years ago, when social networks went mainstream, the general consensus was that there will be one social network to rule them all. We'd all join one, and it would be dominant," says PwC's Birtwhistle. "But what we're actually seeing is a huge proliferation of a variety of social networks."

The rise of Chinese tech powerhouses isn't exactly new, even if it's recent headlines – the pounding of Apple – that have caught readers' attention overseas. "What a lot of western policy makers and institutional investors have not recognized [...] they've been focused on how the outside world is going to change China. What many people have missed is actually how China is going to change the world," says Andy Mok, managing director at Red Pagoda Resources in Beijing. He cited how Chinese audiences are now influencing Hollywood casting decisions. "The more and more the Chinese middle class becomes a driving force globally of product decisions, that's becoming more apparent."

Elliot Ng, now director of product management at Google, returned to California in 2015 after four years in China leading development projects for the company. He thinks that tech companies in Silicon Valley may have to settle for changing half the world, counter to the industry's mantra.

"China demands total focus and optimization in order to win [...] and practically speaking, most companies have to choose whether to accept those terms, or instead focus on the 40, or 70, or 190 countries and markets that global companies would define as the world ex-China."

Indeed, while Uber's Kalanick may have mis-gauged his company's prospects in China, one prediction he made about the country could turn out to be true. At a "Geekpark" conference in Beijing in January, he told reporters: "In the next five years, there will be more innovation, more invention, more entrepreneurship happening in China, happening in Beijing, than in Silicon Valley."

This week, he was proven right. **Bloomberg**

HE has seen the body, and authorities say the fingerprints match. But Towhid Rouf is having trouble believing that this skinny, bearded man — killed with eight other suspected Islamist militants in a Bangladesh police raid — could possibly be his smart, well-behaved son.

Shazad Rouf Orko, who once lived in the U.S. and held an American passport, was a fun-loving student and a member of a musically inclined family who played guitar, his father said. He disappeared early this year, and before his death he reportedly left behind an audio tape in which he denounced his own family as apostates.

“My one mind says he is my son, again another says most probably not,” Rouf said Monday from Dhaka in a telephone interview. “Some features match, but I can’t imagine he is my son [...] that] my son can be part of it.”

Orko, 24, and the other suspected militants were killed July 26 when police raided an apartment in the Kalyanpur area of Dhaka, the Bangladeshi capital. One suspect was captured by police when he tried to escape and he was being

I can't believe he has joined any militant groups. It seems to me impossible.

TOWHID ROUF

TERRORISM

Bangladeshi struggles with son's fatal fall into militancy



Policemen stand guard outside a morgue at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital during the autopsy on the bodies of suspected Islamic militants

treated with bullet injuries.

Bangladesh's secular government has geared up its drive against militancy after several months of deadly attacks targeting foreigners, atheist bloggers and religious minorities in the Muslim-majority South Asian nation. The worst came July 1, when armed men killed 20 hostages, including 17 foreigners, at a Dhaka restaurant.

The Islamic State group has claimed responsibility for the attacks but the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has rejected the claim, saying they belong to banned domestic group Jumatul Mujahedeen Bangladesh.

Orko disappeared in February while he was a first-semester MBA student at Dhaka's North South University. His father filed a complaint with a police station seeking his whereabouts.

Rouf, who supplies arms and other items to Bangladesh's security agencies as a local agent, said he and his wife raised Orko and two daughters in a liberal environment.

“I myself play drums, my wife was a singer, my one daughter learned Bharat Natyam [Indian classical dance] and another sings Bengali songs very well. And Orko used to play his guitar so well that [...] I can't believe he has joined any militant groups,” he said. “It seems

to me impossible.”

Rouf, along with representatives of the U.S. Embassy in Dhaka, saw Orko's body in a mortuary of Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Authorities said Orko's fingerprint matched with his national identity card, but Rouf did not fully identify his son. Authorities say they will conduct DNA tests for all suspects.

“Again I have reasons to believe that he is my son. The fingerprint point is very important here. Maybe I will go to the hospital again and re-check and take responsibility,” he said.

Rouf said his son had “a status in the U.S.,” and that he

brought him back to Bangladesh in 2009 after his mother was diagnosed with cancer.

“Currently I can't tell you about his citizenship status in the U.S. It has been seven years since he has left America. My two daughters live there, they are progressive and they live their life there peacefully. I don't want to jeopardize my daughters' lives.”

Emails to the U.S. Embassy in Dhaka to confirm Orko's citizenship status remained unanswered. A spokesman at the U.S. State Department referred questions to Bangladesh authorities.

Orko's involvement in the militant group has been confirmed by police investigators, according to the country's leading English-language Daily Star newspaper.

The nine suspected militants killed in last week's raid recorded messages one by one to call upon people to join their cause for establishing a caliphate.

Orko spoke in English and criticized his family and those who “support Sheikh Hasina” and everyone who does not support Sharia law, according to the report.

He said he gave everything up for jihad and citing a holy verse to justify his action, he said, “Either you kill [us] or get killed, paradise is for us.” AP

Japan Cabinet OKs new stimulus package to pump up growth

Mari Yamaguchi, Tokyo

JAPAN'S Cabinet approved a fresh economic stimulus package yesterday worth more than 28 trillion yen (USD275 billion), Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's latest effort to get the stalling recovery back on track.

Abe called the package, part of a supplementary budget for the parliament to approve in an extraordinary session starting in September, “an investment for the future.”

It focuses on Japan's agriculture and tourism, and on providing support for the child and elder care industry to enable more women to work full-time, since the labor force

is shrinking as the population ages.

Japan's economy has stagnated for years, with short spurts of faster growth, as companies have focused investments in faster-growing markets overseas.

Economists said the measures approved yesterday include a total of only 7.5 trillion yen (\$73.5 billion) in government spending, spread over a number of years. The rest is meant to be subsidized lending and private sector spending.

“Publishing a vastly inflated headline spending figure is nothing new, and especially popular during times of acute crisis,” Marcel Thieliant of Ca-

pital Economics said in a commentary.

He said the official forecast that the package would boost Japan's GDP by only 1.3 percentage reflected that “the government doesn't believe its own numbers.”

Public works projects that would be covered by deficit bonds are also raising concerns because of their possible impact on Japan's already huge public debt, which is more than twice the size of its economy.

Since Abe took office in late 2012, he has sought to boost growth by pumping massive amounts of money into the world's third-biggest economy. But lavish monetary ea-

sing and public works spending so far have failed to reignite growth as much as hoped.

Including both the government and other spending, the package includes:

—3.5 trillion yen (\$34.3 billion) for measures to expand child and elder care support, including improving salaries and benefits for caregivers to attract more workers, while introducing robots in short-handed nursing homes. The money will also go to measures to promote paid maternity and child-care leaves, scholarships and loans for students.

—Payments of 15,000 yen (\$147), announced earlier, to low-income



Shoppers walk next to a clothing shop in Tokyo

households.

—10.7 trillion yen (\$105 billion) for infrastructure projects to help promote tourism — one of the few sectors of the economy that is booming — by expanding ports to accommodate ultra-large cruise ships, upgrading airport facilities and accelerating a decades-long high-speed maglev train project.

—Subsidies for exporters of farm produce and

other products.

—10.9 trillion yen (\$106 billion) is to help support small and medium-scale companies affected by Britain's decision to exit the European Union.

—3 trillion yen (\$29 billion) will be spent on reconstruction of areas hit by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami and by another deadly quake that struck southern Japan earlier this year. AP

Josh Lederman,
Matthew Pennington

Singaporean PM meets Obama, asks U.S. to ratify trade pact

PRESIDENT Barack Obama found common cause with the leader of Singapore in the face of growing political headwinds against the Trans-Pacific Partnership, warning that to “pull up a drawbridge” on trade would only hurt the United States and its workers.

Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong urged the United States to maintain its “indispensable role” in the Asia-Pacific and ratify the TPP as he joined Obama at the White House to celebrate the 50th anniversary of U.S. diplomatic relations with the Southeast Asian city state.

Obama said that people have legitimate fears about the impact of globalization and being “left behind” but the answer cannot be to back away from trade and the global economy.

“To try to pull-up a drawbridge on trade would only hurt us and hurt our workers. The answer is to make sure that globalization and trade is working for us and not against us,” Obama told joint news conference after talks with Lee in the Oval Office.

“TPP is designed to do precisely that,” Obama added.

Singapore, a close U.S. partner, is one of the 12 nations in the TPP, an agreement key to Obama’s effort to boost U.S. exports and build strategic ties in Asia. But Lee’s Washington visit comes as opposition to the TPP intensifies in the United States. Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump and his Democratic rival Hillary Clinton are both against it.

Asked about that opposition, Obama responded: “Right now I’m president and I’m for it, and I think I have the better argument.”

Calling Singapore a “rock solid” partner, Obama welcomed Lee after an elaborate ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House, where hundreds of U.S. military members in blue and white uniforms formed an honor guard. Lee will also be honored with a state dinner today [Macau time].

The U.S. president said they shared a “common vision of a

AP PHOTO



Lee Hsien Loong (left) and Barack Obama (right)

peaceful and prosperous Asia-Pacific and a more secure world.” He paid tribute to the tiny nation’s transformation from third world country to a first world country, describing it as a “red dot on many maps, but with a very big impact on the world.”

On his arrival at the White House, Lee also acknowledged that some Americans are anxious and frustrated with economic uncertainty and the uneven result of globalization and trade, but said the U.S. is strengthened by its engagement in Asia.

“Singapore fervently hopes that the U.S. will stay engaged and maintain its indispensable role in the Asia-Pacific. In particular, we hope, and I’m sure the president shares this hope, that Congress will ratify

the TPP soon,” Lee said.

The Obama administration says it remains determined to try and win congressional approval for TPP, but the chances of achieving that in the “lame duck” session after the Nov. 8 election and before the new president takes office Jan. 20 appear slim because of the depth of political opposition, not least from Obama’s fellow Democrats.

Obama said he was ready to sit down publicly with people on both the right and left of the political spectrum to go through provisions of TPP to address “misinformation” about the agreement.

The deal would eliminate trade barriers and tariffs, streamline standards and encourage investment between the 12 countries that include Mexico,

Japan, Vietnam and Australia. But critics say the pact undercuts American workers by introducing lower-wage competition and gives huge corporations too much leeway.

Singapore, a city state of 5.7 million people, is heavily dependent on international trade for its prosperity. In 2004, it became the first Asian nation to strike a bilateral free trade agreement with the U.S. Last year, the bilateral trade in goods totaled \$47 billion, with the U.S. enjoying a \$10 billion surplus.

Singapore is also a strong advocate of the U.S. security role in Asia although it retains cordial ties with China too. Under Obama, the U.S. has deployed littoral combat ships in Singapore, and last December, deployed a P-8 Poseidon spy

plane there for the first time, amid heightened tensions in the South China Sea.

Lee’s meeting with Obama will be watched for reaction to an international tribunal ruling July 12 that invalidated China’s historical claims to most of the disputed South China Sea. The U.S. says the ruling is binding but China has rejected it. Southeast Asian nations have been reluctant to speak out against Beijing.

The state dinner for Lee will be the first held for a Singaporean leader since October 1985, when Ronald Reagan hosted Lee’s father, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew.

The U.S. and Singapore opened diplomatic relations in 1966, a year after the U.S. recognized Singapore’s independence from Malaysia. **AP**

U.S. man cleared of rape after 5 years in Philippine jail

Teresa Cerojano

AN American man jailed in the Philippines for more than five years was freed yesterday after being acquitted of rape.

A court in metropolitan Manila cleared Sco-

tt McMahon, of Seattle, after finding no clear evidence that he committed rape, as a Filipino woman alleged, a court official said on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to reporters.

A jail officer, Omar Suri-

gao, said that after the acquittal, McMahon was released from the Muntinlupa City jail in metropolitan Manila. He said McMahon’s mother, Shelley Campanella, was among those present when McMahon was released.

McMahon, who has two

children with his Filipino fiancée, had been detained since April 7, 2011.

Campanella has said that her son was wrongly accused of rape by the woman after he filed a case against her for allegedly traumatizing his young son.

The woman, the wife of McMahon’s friend, had allegedly burst into McMahon’s home with police, shouting as she looked for her estranged husband. The incident allegedly traumatized the son.

“We are so thrilled that this part of the nightma-

re is over and that Scott will not be spending another day in prison,” McMahon’s sister, Jennifer, said in a video posted on Facebook, calling the rape accusation “retaliation” by the woman for the case McMahon had filed against her. **AP**

Frank Bajak, Jack Gillum

IT was a national scandal. Peru's then-vice president accused two domestic intelligence agents of staking her out. Then, a top congressman blamed the spy agency for a break-in at his office. News stories showed the agency had collected data on hundreds of influential Peruvians.

Yet after last year's outrage, which forced out the prime minister and froze its intelligence-gathering, the spy service went ahead with a USD22 million program capable of snooping on thousands of Peruvians at a time. Peru — a top cocaine-producing nation — joined the ranks of world governments that have added commercial spyware to their arsenals.

The purchase from Israeli-American company Verint Systems, chronicled in documents obtained by AP, offers a rare, behind-the-scenes look into how easy it is for a country to purchase and install off-the-shelf surveillance equipment. The software allows governments to intercept voice calls, text messages and emails.

Except for blacklisted nations

The fact that this market is almost completely unregulated is very disturbing.

MARIETJE SCHAAKE
EU LAWMAKER

Snapping up cheap spy tools, nations 'monitoring everyone'



The Verint offices in Herzliya, Israel

like Syria and North Korea, there is little to stop governments that routinely violate basic rights from obtaining the same so-called "lawful intercept" tools that have been sold to Western police and spy agencies. People tracked by the technology have been beaten, jailed and tortured, according to human rights groups.

Targets identified by the AP include a blogger in the repressive Central Asian republic of Uzbekistan, opposition activists in the war-ravaged African nation of South Sudan, and politicians and reporters in oil-rich Trinidad and Tobago in the Caribbean.

"The status quo is completely unacceptable," said Marietje Schaake, a European Union lawmaker pushing for greater oversight. "The fact that this market is almost completely unregulated is very disturbing."

The Verint documents that AP obtained in Peru, including training manuals, contracts, invoices and emails, offer more detail than previously available on the inner workings of a highly secretive industry.

"There is just so little reliable data on this," said Edin Omanovic, a researcher at Privacy International, a London-based advocacy group. "These commercial tools are being used in

a strategic and offensive way in much the same way that military tools are used."

The scope and sophistication revealed in the Peru documents approximates, on a small scale, U.S. and British surveillance programs catalogued in 2013 by former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden. That trove showed how the U.S. government collected the phone records of millions of Americans, few suspected of crimes. Even after some reforms, there is still much to be done in the U.S. and abroad to rein in Big Brother, privacy advocates say.

Reached at Verint's corporate headquarters in Melville, New York, an assistant to CEO Dan Bodner said the company would have no comment. "We typically don't comment to reporters," said Barbara Costa.

Verint and its main competitors hail from nations with well-funded spy agencies, including the United States, Israel, Britain and Germany, and have operated with limited oversight.

With more than \$1 billion in yearly sales, Verint is a major, longtime player in an industry whose secrecy makes its size difficult to quantify. Verint Systems Ltd., the subsidiary that sold the surveillance package to Peru, is based in Herzliya, Israel, outside Tel Aviv.

In regulatory filings, the pa-

rent corporation boasts upward of 10,000 customers in more than 180 countries, including most of the world's largest companies and U.S. law-enforcement agencies. The company says its products help businesses run better and "make the world a safer place." In 2007, Verint provided Mexico with a U.S.-funded, \$3 million surveillance platform aimed at fighting drug cartels.

The software allows governments to intercept voice calls, text messages and emails

Surveillance sales account for about a third of its business. However, the company discloses little about those products, which it says collect and parse massive data sets to "detect, investigate and neutralize threats."

It also does not identify its law enforcement and intelligence agency clients, but the AP independently confirmed through interviews and documents that it has sales in countries including Australia, Brazil, the United States, Mexico, Colombia and Switzerland.

About half of Verint's surveillance dealings are in the developing world, said analyst Jeff Kessler of Imperial Capital in New York.

The Peru installation — known as Pisco, a nod to the local brandy — illustrates how the private surveillance industry has piggybacked on multibillion-dollar government research in the West. Many security experts who honed their skills in Israel's military have gone to work in the private sector, effectively putting their tech chops at the service of less sophisticated nations for a fraction of the cost.

Like spy tools wielded by larger nations, Pisco lets officials "intercept and monitor" satellite networks that carry voice and data traffic, potentially putting private communications of millions of Peruvians at risk.

A software manual offers step-by-step instructions on how to intercept those communications with Verint equipment: Connect to a satellite, identify the callers, then "open a voice product" — their jargon for a phone call. **AP**

'Who will guard the guards?'

THREE years after Peru acquired the Verint package, it's not yet up and running, Carlos Basombrio, the incoming interior minister said just before taking office last week. "When it becomes operative, it will be used against organized crime [in coordination] with judges and prosecutors."

Located in a three-story building next to the country's DINI spy agency, Pisco sits on a Lima military base off-limits to the public. It can track 5,000 individual targets and simultaneously record the communications of 300 people, according to agency documents, with eight listening rooms and parabolic antennae affixed outside to capture satellite downlinks.

Control of Pisco was shifted to the national police after the spying scandal that crippled the intelligence agency. Verint sent Israeli personnel to train Peruvian operators, adding eight months of instruction at the host government's request, records show.

One major eavesdropping tool has, however, been active in Peru since October. It can physically track any phone in real time using geolocation. Under a July 2015 decree, police can locate phones without a court order, but would need one to listen in.

Government officials wouldn't offer details on what software was being used to track cellphones. But two months before the decree, DINI officials said payment had been authorized for a Verint geolocation product called SkyLock. That software enables phone-tracking within the country, and a premium version can pinpoint any mobile phone in most countries.

All four Peruvian phone companies agreed to cooperate on geolocation, signing a pact with the government the details of which were not disclosed.

Civil libertarians consider warrantless geolocation a dangerous invasion of privacy, especially in a nation with pervasive public corruption. Peru's incoming congress is dominated by Fuerza Popular, a party associated with imprisoned former President Alberto Fujimori. He ran one of the most corrupt Latin American regimes in recent history.

In July 2015, the Verint surveillance platform got caught in the chaos of Peruvian politics.

Word of the purchase was leaked, triggering a government audit. The Miami-based Verint vice president who made the sale, Shefi Paz, complained about the phone companies' apparent foot-drag-



Minister Carlos Basombrio

ging in emails and letters to DINI officials. They weren't making themselves available for meetings.

"Verint should not have to suffer from political delays," Paz wrote. Reached by phone, Paz declined to comment.

The eavesdropping products Verint and its peers sell play an important role in fighting terrorism, said Ika Balzam, a former employee of both Verint and Nice. That is a common industry claim, echoed by politicians.

And yet, Balzam acknowledged, there are no guarantees that nation-states won't abuse surveillance tools.

"There is a saying," Balzam said. "Who will guard the guards?"



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what's ON



AUGUSTE BORGET: A PAINTER-TRAVELLER ON THE SOUTH CHINA COAST
 TIME: 10am-7pm
 (no admission after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)
 UNTIL: December 31, 2016
 VENUE: Macau Museum of Art,
 Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
 ADMISSION: MOP5
 (Free on Sundays and public holidays)
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

MACAU ANNUAL VISUAL ARTS EXHIBITION 2016 – WESTERN MEDIA CATEGORY
 TIME: 10am-8pm (Closed on Mondays)
 UNTIL: August 7, 2016
 VENUE: Old Court Building
 ADMISSION: Free
 ORGANIZER: Macau Cultural Affairs Bureau
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 8399 6699

ABSTRACT PAINTINGS FROM THE MAM COLLECTION
 TIME: 10am-7pm
 (no admittance after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)
 UNTIL: December 31, 2016
 VENUE: Macau Museum of Art,
 Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
 ADMISSION: MOP5
 (Free on Sundays and public holidays)
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

"MEMORIES OF MOMENTS - MACAO AND LUSOPHONE AFRICAN AND ASIAN REGIONS IN PHOTOGRAPH POSTCARDS" EXHIBITION
 TIME: 10am-6pm
 (no admission after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)
 UNTIL: December 4, 2016
 VENUE: Archives of Macao, No. 91-93, Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida, Macau
 ADMISSION: Free
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 2836 6866

EXHIBITION OF THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF HAN TIANHENG
 TIME: 10am-7pm
 (no admission after 6:30 pm, closed on Mondays)
 UNTIL: August 7, 2016
 VENUE: Macau Museum of Art,
 Av. Xian Xing Hai, s/n, NAPE
 ADMISSION: MOP5
 (free admission on Sundays and public holidays)
 ENQUIRIES: (853) 8791 9814

Offbeat

IRANIAN OFFICIAL ACKNOWLEDGES PORN ACTRESS VISITED COUNTRY

A semi-official news agency in Iran is quoting a government official acknowledging that a British-American porn actress recently visited the Islamic Republic following a social media outcry.

ISNA on Tuesday quoted Hasan Qashqavi, a deputy foreign minister in charge of consular affairs, as saying the actress visited Iran after she "applied for a visa through a travel agency" under a different name.

Qashqavi was quoted as telling tourism officials to carefully examine the documents of those trying to visit Tehran.

He added: "We have clerics and lawmakers who have cultural sensitivities and these sorts of events may cause problems later."

The actress, known as Candy Charms, did not immediately respond to a request for comment. She previously said on Instagram that she visited Iran to get a nose job. **AP**

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:45	RTPi Live
18:00	Once Upon A Time S1 (Repeated)
18:50	Helena's Shadow (Repeated)
19:40	Non-daily Portuguese News (Repeated)
19:50	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Survivors of the Great Migration
21:30	Criminal Minds S9
22:10	Helena's Shadow
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Miscellaneous
00:15	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

cinema

CINETEATRO

28 Jul - 03 Aug



ICE AGE: COLLISION COURSE

ROOM 1
 (2D) 2.15, 4.00, 7.30 pm
 (3D) 5.45 pm

Director: Mike Thurmeier, Galen Chu
 Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/ English)
 Duration: 97min

BOUNTY HUNTERS

ROOM 1
 9.30 pm
 Director: Shin Terra
 Starring: Lee Min Ho, Chung Hon Leung, Tang Yan, Karena Ng
 Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/ English)
 Duration: 110min

FINDING DORY

ROOM 2
 2.30, 4.30 pm
 Director: Andrew Stanton
 Language: Cantonese (Cantonese/ English)
 Duration: 97min

START TRECK BEYOND

ROOM 2
 (2D) 7.15 pm
 Director: Justin Lin
 Starring: Chris Pine, Zachary Quinto, Zoe Saldana, Simon Pegg
 Language: English (Cantonese/ English)
 Duration: 120min

ONE PIECE FILM GOLD

ROOM 2
 9.30 pm
 Director: Eiichiro Edo
 Language: Japanese (Cantonese/ English)
 Duration: 120min

GHOSTBUSTERS

ROOM 3
 (2D) 2.30, 4.45, 9.30 pm
 (3D) 7.15 pm
 Director: Paul Feig
 Starring: Melissa McCarthy, Kristen Wiig, Kate McKinnon, Leslie Jones
 Language: English (Cantonese/ English)
 Duration: 116min

MACAU TOWER

21 Jul - 03 Aug

START TRECK BEYOND

2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm
 Director: Justin Lin
 Starring: Chris Pine, Zachary Quinto, Zoe Saldana, Simon Pegg
 Language: English (Cantonese/ English)
 Duration: 120min

this day in history



2003 ANGLICAN CHURCH APPROVES GAY BISHOP

The Anglican Church in America has voted to approve the appointment of an openly gay bishop.

The Reverend Canon Gene Robinson, of New Hampshire, was approved by a substantial majority of the Episcopal Church's House of Deputies, composed of clergy and lay people.

The vote must be confirmed by the House of Bishops tomorrow, but correspondents say it is likely this vote will also be in favor of Mr Robinson. The decision has brought an angry reaction from conservatives and religious leaders in the US and all over the world.

Some have already threatened to walk out if the vote goes in Mr Robinson's favor, and join a breakaway faction with supporters from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean outside the Anglican Convention.

Mr Robinson described himself as "calm but joyous" after the vote, and said he hoped the decision would lead to growth rather than a split in the church. "I think I can do more for gay and lesbian folk in the Church by being a good bishop than by being the gay bishop," he said.

Mr Robinson is a divorced father of two and has lived with his male partner for 14 years. He is highly popular with his New Hampshire congregation, who elected him bishop from a wide range of candidates.

His supporters have also stood by him throughout the storm his appointment has stirred up, and simply ask that he should be judged and celebrated for the work he does.

Religious leaders in the UK have also warned that the decision could split the Church of England. Reverend David Phillips, general secretary of the Church Society, challenged the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, to say where he stood on the issue.

"People want to know where the Church of England stands," he said. "I would like him to say that, because of its decision, the Episcopal Church in America is no longer a part of the Anglican Communion."

A spokesman for the Church of England said the appointment was considered an internal matter for the Episcopal Church in the United States.

The Anglican Church has traditionally tolerated a wide spectrum of beliefs, and its communion includes about 80 million people worldwide. But the current controversy seems likely to stretch the elastic nature of the church to breaking point.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

The vote by the House of Bishops to confirm Gene Robinson's appointment was delayed after allegations of sexual misconduct were made against him.

The charges were dropped, and on 5 August - a day late - the House of Bishops voted for the Anglican Church's first openly gay bishop by a two-thirds majority.

An emergency meeting of Anglican Church leaders at Lambeth Palace in October 2003 strongly rebuked the American Episcopal Church for the appointment, but stopped short of expelling the church outright.

Gene Robinson was consecrated in November 2003, amid further objections voiced during the service, and took up his post in March 2004.

There was a similar crisis in the Church of England, when celibate gay priest Canon Jeffrey John was forced to step down shortly after his appointment as Bishop of Reading.

Protests at the way he was treated led to his appointment to the high-profile job of Dean of St Albans, and he was installed in July 2004.

A number of evangelical churches withdrew funding from the diocese in protest.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 You can finally relax — your hard work has paid off in a big way!

Taurus April 20-May 20 Try to indulge your artistic side today — it's in need of a good workout!

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 You prefer seamless, fluid movement, but today throws walls in your path.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 Has there been a weird project on the back burner for a little too long?

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 You are feeling avaricious today — which isn't always a bad thing!

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 Make sure that you're trying a little of everything tonight — you need to branch out and explore new options!

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 Let go of your biggest, weightiest issues — you know they're only temporary, really!

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 Try to be more flexible today — you know that it's important, and you can tell that just a little effort on your part is all it takes to get things moving.

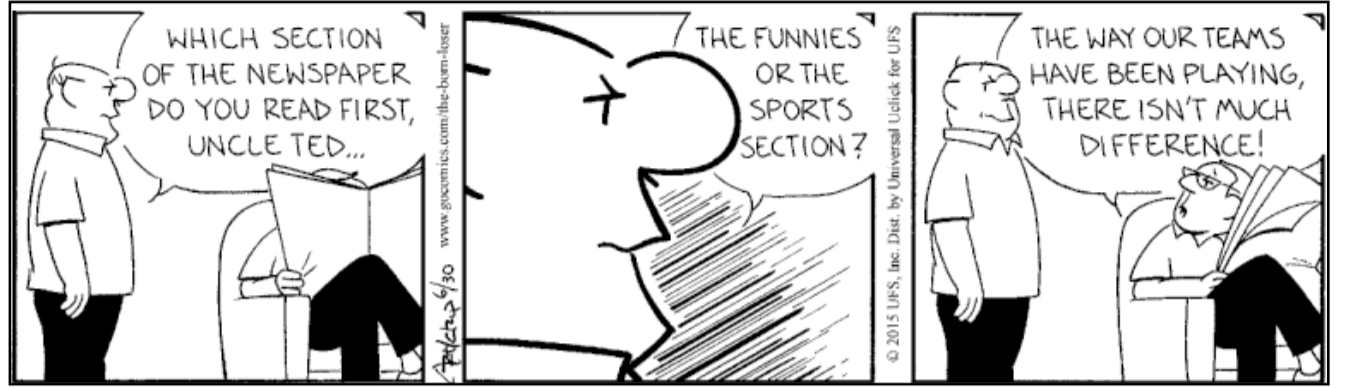
Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Some people think you can be irresponsible — but they don't know what's really happening!

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 Just have fun today — you know you need it, and your friends are more than willing to give you the space to take care of it.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 You usually embrace change — but even you sometimes feel that an idea is misguided.

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 Your romantic side is powered up and ready to go — whether or not you're actually partnered.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzles categorized by difficulty: Easy, Easy+, Medium, and Hard. Each category contains a 9x9 grid with some numbers pre-filled.

WEATHER

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

CROSSWORDS

ACROSS: 1- Gator's kin; 5- Scruffs; 10- ___ Raton; 14- New Ager John; 15- Take ___ for the worse; 16- Oil-rich Islamic theocracy neighboring Iraq; 17- Pro ___ (proportionally); 18- Eagle's home; 19- Held on to; 20- Rebirth of the soul in a new body; 23- Sleeps briefly; 24- Relatives; 25- Cowboy's tool; 28- Outward flow; 31- Fortune-teller; 35- Construction pieces; 37- DDE's rival; 39- Pasture; 40- In spite of; 44- Kind of reaction; 45- ___ Lingus (Irish carrier); 46- Taken care of; 47- Siouan speakers; 50- Pallid; 52- Inventor Howe; 53- Part of a tennis match; 55- Quattro maker; 57- Supernatural; 63- ___ Arabian Nights; 64- "Family Ties" mom; 65- Mimics; 67- Prison; 68- Of the sun; 69- Makes brown; 70- Coloured part of the eye; 71- Remains; 72- Buffalo's lake; DOWN: 1- Geom. point; 2- Caboose; 3- Bone; Prefix; 4- Portable power saw; 5- Civil rights org.; 6- Comfortable; 7- Run smoothly; 8- ___ go brag!; 9- Slink; 10- Two-piece bathing suit; 11- Sweet sandwich; 12- ___ Crunch; 13- Tiny toiler; 21- Mother-in-law of Ruth; 22- ___ the season...; 25- Shoptalk; 26- Circa; 27- Rhubarb; 29- Iraqi port; 30- You ___! Sure!; 32- Russian pancakes; 33- Nosy Parker; 34- Former capital of Nigeria; 36- RR stop; 38- Airline to Oslo; 41- Fell; 42- ___ say more?; 43- Fragile; 48- Catches sight of; 49- Get it?; 51- Deny; 54- Head lock; 56- Consumers; 57- Frost; 58- Hanna-Barbera bear; 59- Story line; 60- Tree frog; 61- On ___ with: equal to; 62- Director Riefenstahl; 63- Henri's here; 66- U-turn from NNW



USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- Emergency calls 999
Taxi 28 939 939 / 2828 3283
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
Customs 28 559 944
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Kiang Wu Hospital 28 371 333
Commission Against Corruption (CCAC) 28326 300
IACM 28 387 333
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Photo shown here may be different from Macau specifications



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Afghanistan's extreme geography attracts extreme sports

Lynne O'Donnell, Panjshir

ON a recent sunny morning in northern Afghanistan, excited children and bemused policemen lined the banks of a fast-flowing river to watch a group of Europeans in multicolored kayaks navigate the white water. A drone-mounted camera also followed the kayakers' progress, buzzing and hovering above them like a mosquito.

The boys, who were on their way to school, squealed and raced along the rocks as they watched the unusual spectacle — no kayakers had ever come to the peaceful Panjshir Valley, some 140 kilometers north of the Afghan capital, Kabul.

But according to Callum Strong, a Scot who recently graduated with a geology degree from Edinburgh University, Panjshir River offers some of the best kayaking in the world.

Together with three friends, he spends all his spare time and money travelling the globe in search of the best white water. Panjshir looked promising on the map — that Afghanistan is grappling with a 15-year insurgency was not going to deter them.

"It's extreme geography that attracts extreme sportsmen, not the fact that the place is at war," he told The Associated Press as he dragged his kayak out of the water following an invigorating three-hour paddle down the Panjshir River.

His three friends — Brit Joe Rea-Dickins, Scot James Smith and Austrian Kristof Stursa — are also recent graduates in their early 20s and amateur



In this July 17, 2016 photo, three foreign tourists kayak along the Panjshir River in Panjshir province, north of capital Kabul

kayakers who met through their love of the sport. They funded the trip to Afghanistan themselves, flying to Kabul with their kayaks and then employing a local travel agent to help them transport their kit, organize permission from security services to travel and move safely through dangerous areas.

Then they spent 10 days paddling the length of the Panjshir River and introducing the local community to the sport.

"Before I came here, I was worried as the only news you hear from Afghanistan is bad news," Strong said. "But I believe most places you go in the world, most people are good — and the river here looked very good, so we wanted to come."

His friend Rea-Dickins was similarly enthusiastic, comparing Panjshir to the best places he's

kayaked in northern Europe, India and Pakistan. "In terms of white water, this is as good as anywhere in the world," he said.

One of the joys of the sport, he said, is that "it takes you to pretty interesting places, it gives you purpose, you can be in a beautiful environment for weeks, you go off beaten tracks and stay where you end up and you meet with local people."

Panjshir is considered one of the safest regions of Afghanistan. The roads are closed to outsiders, who must register with security forces and explain the reason for their visit to gain access. Many people come to enjoy the peace, as well as the pristine environment and the famous produce, including yoghurt, honey and lamb kebabs. Panjshir is also famous for

precious stones — especially rubies and emeralds— and as a smuggling route for millions of dollars' worth of lapis lazuli, a blue stone largely unique to Afghanistan, mostly destined for Pakistan and China.

It is also the home of the so-called Lion of Panjshir, Ahmad Shah Massoud, a military leader who earned his moniker fighting Soviet forces and the Taliban and whose legendary status was cemented when he was killed by al-Qaida sympathizers on September 9, 2001 — two days before the 9/11 attacks that sparked the U.S. invasion and the Afghan war.

The country's chief executive, Abdullah Abdullah, is also from Panjshir. His face beams from massive billboards alongside the portraits of Massoud and local jihadi leaders. Panjshir is

a province that takes its war heroes seriously.

It could soon take kayaking seriously, too, if the efforts of the four enthusiasts find traction here.

After a week of paddling, the four set up a kayaking workshop to teach interested locals. The Panjshir football team showed up to give it a try, arriving straight from training in their bright green-and-white kit.

"They are very good learners, a lot of the guys we have seen are very fit and strong. And they are used to swimming in this river, which is very powerful," Strong said. Strength and comfort in the water are both good starting points for learning how to stay afloat, and have fun, in a kayak.

While it might be many years before the emergence of Afghan kayaking clubs, Strong and his group are hoping that their visit will lay the foundations for others to follow and discover the beauty and power of the Panjshir River.

"We have paddled the river so we can tell other people the river is good and that when we were here, the political situation and security was good," he said. "If that prevails, then kayaking can grow here, and you might see more international teams come here to do this river."

Mohammad Zahir, a member of the Panjshir football team, was most excited by the possibility that kayaking could take him abroad.

"I would love to reach the level of our friends who are here from other countries, so I could travel to other places for kayaking," he said. **AP**

FOOTBALL

Germany forward Leroy Sane joins Man City

Steve Douglas

MANCHESTER City took its off-season spending close to USD100 million under coach Pep Guardiola by signing Germany winger Leroy Sane from Schalke yesterday.

The 20-year-old Sane joined City for a reported \$49 million, making him the most expensive German player ever and the costliest signing by a Premier League team this off-season. The English

club didn't disclose the transfer fee.

Germany midfielder Ilkay Gundogan, Spain forward Nolito and Ukraine attacking midfielder Oleksandr Zinchenko are the other main signings since Guardiola took over as coach in June. City has also been heavily linked with a bid for Everton center back John Stones, who is thought to have a price tag of about \$66 million.

Sane, who can play anywhere across the front line and is one of Europe's

most highly rated young players, said the presence of Guardiola was key to him joining City.

"I followed Pep at Barcelona and at Bayern where he achieved a lot and worked really well with young players," Sane said. "I think he can make me a more complete player."

"I think I will need a bit of time to start with because it's another league and there's a different style of play but I think I can adapt very quickly."

Sane played 42 games

for Schalke last season, scoring nine goals. He also broke into Germany's national side and was a member of the squad at this year's European Championship.

Guardiola described Sane as "a special talent and an exciting player."

"There is much to admire about the way he plays football," the Spanish coach said. "He is fast, enjoys creating chances for others, works hard for the team and scores goals, too." **AP**



Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola (center) leaves the field after his team's training session in Beijing on July 24

opinion

Legal Wise

José Leitão
Partner, MdME



LAND LAW: SEE THE RIGHT, DO THE RIGHT

Macau remains awash with the polemic of the expiry of land concessions. There are at least 81 concessionaires that were not able to develop their lands for reasons caused by the Government, but the law makes no provision for their cases.

To try to break these supposed legal shackles, a local legislator, Mr. Tong lo Cheng, together with a grassroots movement of endorsers (which, in the interest of full disclosure, includes myself) recently sought to introduce an interpretative law clarifying that the deadlines for development and concession (where they are the same) should be considered as suspended and extended for the duration of events preventing the development of the land which are not imputable to the concessionaire.

This proposal has been rejected by Mr Ho lat Seng, who has refused to submit the proposed interpretative law to the Legislative Assembly's vote, on the basis that Mr. Tong's proposal in effect amends the law and does not simply interpret it and that changing laws is a prerogative of the Government. In doing so, he has placed the ball squarely in the Chief Executive's court.



Tong lo Cheng

I for one heartily endorse support Mr Tong's proposal because, throughout this entire "storm" that has been tearing at the credibility of Macau as an investment destination and in fact at the very concepts of rule of law that exist in Macau, it is the only acknowledgment of two fundamental truths: The effects of enforcing this provision of the Land Law are creating serious injustices and that something has to be done to solve them.

I sincerely hope that Mr Ho lat Seng's decision and the demagoguery of some lawmakers who have been quick to attack efforts to interpret the law will not pull stakeholder attention towards the accessory and away from the essential: It is not important how the Land Law is revisited. The aim is, and must be, applying it in a fair and equitable manner, which has not been the case.

Mr Tong's initiative should be applauded, as should any initiatives that attempt clarity and forward movement in times and places of misdirection and stalemate. It is a call to action, an alarm in the corridors of power, urging something to be done, and to be done quickly, by anyone. Apparently, it will now be up to the Chief Executive to help correct this injustice. One can only hope that when faced with this momentous decision, the Chief Executive does not choose to do the worst: nothing.

THE FORMER CEO OF ITALY'S VENETO BANCA UNDER HOUSE ARREST

Italian financial police have arrested the former CEO of Veneto Banca and seized millions in cash, shares and property as part of a wide-ranging investigation.

Police said yesterday that prosecutors in Rome are investigating allegations of market rigging and interfering with regulatory authorities dating from 2013-2014. The regional lender's former CEO, Vincenzo Consoli, has been placed under house arrest.

Veneto Banca, based north of Venice, was rescued in June by a private recapitalization fund organized by the government.

Prosecutors are investigating allegations that the bank loaned money to customers so they could buy shares, while concealing the transaction from regulators, in an exercise aimed at making the bank appear more solid than it was. Consoli resigned last year after two decades as CEO. The bank had no immediate comment.

RELIGION

Pope sets up Vatican panel to study female deacons issue



Pope Francis greets faithful as he arrives at the Shrine of Divine Mercy in Krakow, Poland

Frances D'Emilio, Vatican City

POPE Francis has set up a panel to study whether women could serve as deacons, a role now reserved to men.

The Vatican said yesterday Francis "after intense prayer and mature reflection" decided to set up the commission, with 12 members — six men and six women — including priests, nuns and laywomen.

It noted that he had told superiors of nuns' orders in May that he intended to "set up an official commission to study the question" of the diaconate for women "above all regarding the early times of the church." Some historians point out there were female deacons in the early

church.

Married men who serve as deacons can preach and preside at weddings, baptisms and funerals. But only priests can celebrate Mass.

There has been absolutely no sign from the Vatican that any change on deacons would impact on its strict ban against women being ordained as priests.

Heading the commission is a top official, Archbishop Luis Francisco Ladaria Ferrer, a Jesuit who is the No. 2 official the Congregation of the Faith, the Vatican office entrusted with ensuring doctrinal orthodoxy. Putting the commission under his watch signals the Vatican is intent that whatever the panel concludes will be scrutinized for conformity to

church doctrine.

In a possible insight to the pope's thinking, Francis has noted that the deaconesses of the early church weren't ordained as the male deacons of today are.

A U.S.-based organization dedicated to achieving the ordination of women as priests cautiously hailed yesterday's development.

The Women's Ordination Conference "welcomes and is encouraged by Pope Francis' gender-balanced and lay-inclusive appointments to study women deacons in the early church," a statement said.

The group called the commission "an important step for the Vatican in recognizing its own history of honoring women's leadership." It also expressed hope its conclusions will lead to "a new reality for women in our Church: one that models equality and inclusion."

Among commission members are Marianne Schlosser, professor of spiritual theology at the University of Vienna, and Phyllis Zagano, a professor of religion at Hofstra University in New York and author of the book "Women Deacons: Past, Present, Future." AP

Station	Air quality
Roadside	15-35 Good
High Density Residential Area	25-45 Good
Ambient	25-45 Good

SOURCE: DSMG

WORLD BRIEFS

JAPAN called North Korea's nuclear and missile development a "grave and imminent threat" to the region and international security, and criticized China's increasingly assertive military action as dangerous in an annual defense report approved yesterday.

RUSSIA The governor of a Siberian region where nomadic reindeer herders were evacuated after an outbreak of anthrax says a child has died in the epidemic. The appearance of the bacterial disease in the Yamalo-Nenets region is the first fatal anthrax outbreak reported in Russia in 75 years.

SOUTH SUDAN The United Nations refugee agency says about 60,000 people have fled South Sudan since fighting broke out between rival army factions almost four weeks ago. The agency says about 52,000 people went to Uganda, 7,000 to Sudan and 1,000 to Kenya. A peace deal reached a year ago has been repeatedly threatened by fighting.

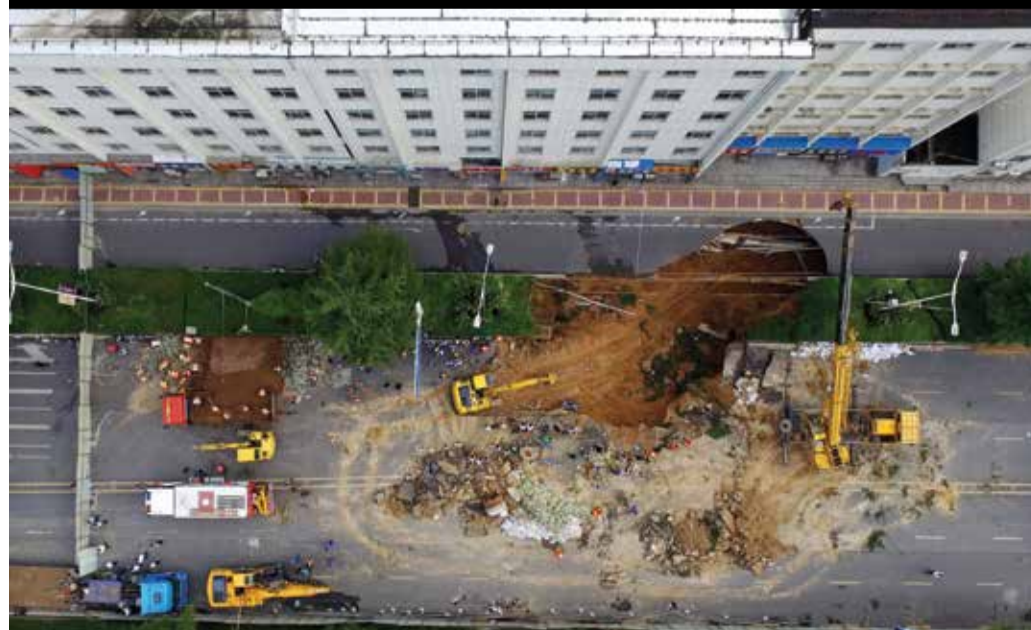


NIGERIA's army gunned down 348 Shiite Muslims in an attack last year in which one soldier was killed, according to a commission of inquiry report published Monday that calls for all involved in the killings to be prosecuted.

BULGARIA The trial of three Syrian nationals charged with terrorism offenses in Bulgaria was adjourned yesterday after their defense lawyers complained that the translation of the indictment into Arabic has been received only a day ago. The specialized court, which handles cases of terrorism and organized crime, accepted the request and adjourned the trial for September without fixing an exact date.

THE DECISIVE MOMENT

Xinhua/Li Bo



Machines work at the collapsed site in Zhengzhou, capital of central China's Henan Province. A road collapsed on Monday night, causing a couple of pedestrians to fall into the cave, which was 30 meters wide and 20 meters deep.