



FORUM AIMS TO BE 'MORE RELEVANT'

Interview with Chang Hexi, who is leaving the Forum for Economic and Trade Co-operation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries

P4



POPULATION BY-CENSUS BEGINS

The 15-day census aims to obtain up-to-date information on the demographics of Macau, in order to keep track of the changes in the population

P5



CHINA TRIES TO LURE FOREIGN-EDUCATED TALENT

China sees a need to bring home more of its brightest as it works to transform its largely labor-intensive economy into one fueled by innovation

P11

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WORLD BRIEFS

CHINA In halting televised confessions and emotional courtroom testimony, Chinese lawyers and activists held in a government crackdown have voiced the same ominous message: Shadowy foreign forces are funding, directing and encouraging activities bent on destabilizing China's government and smearing its reputation. More on p10



PHILIPPINE president has publicly linked more than 150 judges, mayors, lawmakers and military personnel to illegal drugs, revoked their gun licenses and asked them to surrender for investigation.

INDONESIA's counter-terrorism police on Friday arrested six suspected militants who were allegedly planning to launch a rocket attack on downtown Singapore from nearby Batam island. He said the arrests, which included the 31-year-old alleged leader of the group, highlight the continued threat posed by extremists in Indonesia despite a sustained crackdown by authorities.

More on [backpage](#)

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FINANCIAL TIMES

War and peace in Asia

F1

Thais approve military backed constitution

P13



A change of mind: ride-hailing services not totally illegal in Macau

P3 MDT REPORT

Health Bureau to open 68 breastfeeding rooms this year



THE Health Bureau (SSM) announced on Saturday the development of 68 breastfeeding rooms by 15 government services under the supervision of the Secretariat for Social Affairs and Culture.

The 68 new breastfeeding rooms will be open within the year. SSM director Lei Chin Ion announced the initiative at a Saturday ceremony to promote breastfeeding, as part of "World Breastfeeding Week 2016."

The Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, addressed the issue at the Legislative Assembly (AL) on July 21 when responding to questions by several lawmakers. Tam stated the goal to set up 68 breastfeeding rooms by the end of 2016, adding that 42 of them are already in operation

(11 on SSM premises and eight in day nurseries).

Tam said that out of the 68 breastfeeding rooms, eight would be exclusively for civil servants' use. SSM added that measures will be enforced to regulate the mandatory opening of breastfeeding rooms across all services and public entities.

The government expects such measures to serve as encouragement and an example to the private and non-governmental sector, creating a "more favorable environment for lactating mothers."

SSM's website and mobile app now provides relevant information on breastfeeding, as well as guidelines on the creation and management of breastfeeding rooms, among other topics.

At the ceremony, the president of the Macau Breastfeeding Association noted that "the active promotion of the Health Bureau in supporting breastfeeding has already allowed a steady increase in the breastfeeding rate."

She added that the disclosure of the guidelines for the equipment and management of breastfeeding rooms will enable more public services to improve their current rooms and encourage more private companies to follow suit.

According to SSM statistics, from the 5,700 babies born in Macau in 2015, 5100 (approximately 88 percent) were breastfed and more than 630 were exclusively fed with the same milk for at least the first four months of life.

At the AL presentation, lawmaker Wong Kit Cheng criticized the government for having promoted and opened breastfeeding rooms long before they had approved and released the guidelines.

The legislator also criticized the fact that the "experience sharing sessions" planned and enforced by the government take place during normal working hours, which prevents participation in these sessions.

The legislator also urged the Labor Affairs Bureau to fix a breastfeeding period for mothers in the general law. **RM**

Credit cards in circulation grow

ACCORDING to statistics released by the Monetary Authority of Macao, the total number of personal credit cards in circulation continued to grow in the second quarter of 2016. The credit card turnover rebounded from a quarter ago and credit card repayments dropped mildly.

The total number of personal credit cards in circulation was 1,009,590 at the end of June 2016, equivalent to an increase of 3.3 percent over the first quarter of the year.

The number of credit cards denominated in MOP, HKD and RMB were 715,147, 85,968 and 208,475 respectively. MOP cards, HKD cards and RMB cards witnessed respective growth of 3 percent, 2.6 percent and 4.8 percent quarter-to-quarter. Compared with a year ago, MOP cards and HKD cards rose 13.7 percent and 8.8 percent respectively, while RMB cards, the majority of which were MOP/RMB dual-curren-



cy cards, rose even faster by 28.5 percent.

At the end of June, the total credit limit extended by banks in Macao reached MOP23.7 billion, up 4.2 percent from the end of March.

Credit card repayments, in which payments for interest and fees are included, dropped 5.6 percent during the second quarter to MOP4.4 billion

The delinquency ratio - the ratio of delinquent amount overdue for more than three months to credit card receivables - edged up from 1.35 percent at the end of the first quarter to 1.46 percent at the close of the second.

CRIME

Man allegedly killed himself while held in hotel room

EVIDENCE indicates that a man found dead last Friday inside a hotel bathtub in ZAPE had most likely committed suicide, police authorities said Saturday.

The initial investigation found that the mainland man and his female friend, who arrived in the region last month to gamble, owed loan sharks a gambling debt and were being guarded by the loan shark's security staff in the hotel room.

The two gamblers were subjected to confinement in a residential tower earlier this month after losing HKD30,000, which was later settled by the deceased's son.

However, after borrowing and then losing another HKD30,000 from the same illegal moneylender, the pair was again confined in an Emperor Hotel room with two lookouts on Friday at around 6 a.m.

The police initially believed the case to be a murder, but now suspect that the two guards employed by the syndicate discovered the lifeless man, who had locked himself in the bathroom, lying in his own blood with a fruit knife.

The two suspects escaped the hotel room when the female friend woke up and called the police through the hotel's security guards.

"We aren't ruling out the possibility of suicide, judging by the angle of the wound and coroners' opinions. Yet the exact cause for the death has to be determined by an autopsy," said Tam Weng Keong, Judiciary Police spokesperson.

The man was declared dead at the hospital at 7.15 a.m.

The police on Friday arrested the alleged chief of the loan-sharking syndicate. The search for the two men is still ongoing.

HEALTH

Inspectors fined over 35,000 smokers

SINCE the entry into force of the Tobacco Prevention and Control Law on January 1, 2012, the smoke inspection agents have fined a total of 35,084 people caught illegally smoking in prohibited venues, the Health Bureau (SSM) stated.

According to the most recent figures until July 31, the over 35,000 fines resulted from over 1.1 million inspections of several kinds of establishments, with an average of 694 inspections a day.

According to SSM, this year alone (until July 31) has registered 185,488 inspections, raising the average rate of 871 per day.

These inspections resulted in 3,932 fines for illegal smoking and 5 cases of sale of tobacco products that did not meet the labeling standards.

Male smokers totaled over 92 percent of those fined. In most cases (61.1 percent) the offenders were Macau residents, while tourists were responsible for 34.5 percent of violations.

Internet cafes continue to top the list of the venues with the most cases registered (17.4 percent) but are followed closely by the parks/gardens and leisure areas (12.6 percent) and video gaming rooms (10.3 percent).

Regarding the enforcement of the law in casinos, the SSM stated that, in cooperation with the Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ), a total of 282 inspections took place in casinos between January and July, revealing 337 illegal smokers of which 79.8 percent are tourists.

The reported figures show an accusation rate of approximately 120 percent, an exponential figure compared to the average of all operations, which registered an accusation rate of around 2 percent.

The SSM also said that in 2016, the rate of people that voluntarily paid the fines reached 81.3 percent (3,202 fines). On the other hand, in 150 cases registered between January 1 and July 31, the inspectors had to request the support of the police forces.

The bureau also noted that during the first seven months of 2016, the Office for the Prevention and Tobacco Control received 1,800 calls, resulting in 526 smoking-related inquiries, 1,259 complaints and 154 suggestions from residents.

In July 2016, the SSM released for the first time a list of the 111 places that register a higher incidence of offences, stating that a total of 254 inspections had issued 106 fines at those venues. **RM**

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Renato Marques

UBER CONTROVERSY

A change of mind: ride-hailing services not totally illegal in Macau

IN a recent reply to the Times, the Transport Bureau (DSAT) acknowledged that, according to Macau law, “taxi hailing applications are not illegal. What is illegal [is] the collaboration between such applications and unauthorized parties to run a fare-charging passenger transport service.”

The reply follows new rules enforced in mainland China regarding ride-sharing applications. Beijing instructed local officials to promote the booming industry, thus confirming the legal status of companies like Uber Technologies Inc. and Didi Chuxing, following run-ins with regulators.

The decision from the government’s cabinet set guidelines for registration, fares, employment of drivers, and payments. Local authorities will decide on the details for each city.

In the reply to the Times, DSAT mentioned that it has “also noticed the newly released national guidelines on the regulations on online ride-sharing services in China.”

“With the gaining popularity of smartphones and the increasing need for online taxi hailing services, when granting the special taxi license concession, the government required that the concessionaire should develop other ways of hailing; such as mobile applications besides providing on-call taxi services (including immediate and advanced booking), in order to respond to the needs of the members of the public,” DSAT noted.



A customer holds a phone displaying the Uber Technologies Inc. car service taxi application logo

Such a reply opens the door to

a scenario that until now had been discarded by both the police and the transport authorities.

The Public Security Police Force (PSP) stated last week that “we keep paying attention

to the ride-hailing problem [in the territory] and continue to fight illegal operations as, according to the Macau law, it is not legal to operate such a service because of the design of the app and the business model [...] except if the vehicle is a registered taxi [or similar] and if the driver is a registered taxi driver [or similar].”

Mainland regulators last year banned Uber, Didi Chuxing

and other competitors from using drivers without taxi licenses as the services adapted by working through vehicle-rental companies.

The measure came after taxi drivers protested the unfair competition from such services, leading the authorities to perform several police raids on Uber offices in a number of Chinese cities that were accused of operating unlicensed taxi services.

At a press conference last week, the police force also presented the most recent data on the prosecution cases filed against the referred service.

The police force claims that from January to July this year, a total of 413 prosecutions were filed against ride-hailing services, followed by 286 cases against the mobile app company.

During the same period, PSP reportedly fined taxi drivers for 860 cases of overcharging and 883 cases of refusal of transportation.

These 1,743 cases represent 71 percent of the 2455 cases filed during the first seven months of this year.

Didi sees new regulations as a ‘milestone’

THE new regulations enforced last month in the mainland were classified by the market leader Didi as a “milestone in China’s endeavor toward steady and healthy development of the rideshare industry,” the company said in a statement.

The document considers different types of labor agreements with drivers – who had previously been required to sign contracts with companies as fully-fledged employees – and drops the proposal to limit drivers to working for no more than two ride-hailing companies.

The implementation of such measures saw

immediate results just a few days after with the acquisition of Uber China by rival Didi Chuxing last week.

According to Bloomberg, Uber’s CEO Travis Kalanick decided to call off the war, agreeing to a deal in which the local market leader acquired Uber’s China operations in return for a seat on Didi’s board and a slice of the Chinese company. As Kalanick said at the time of Uber’s withdrawal announcement, “U.S. technology companies struggle to crack [China’s] code.”

NOVEMBER: UBER IS ‘ILLEGAL’, SAID ALEXIS TAM

DSAT’S STANCE on ride-hailing services seems to differ from statements by the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam. Back in November, Tam declared that he does “not agree with the provision of transport services in private vehicles by

Uber,” stating that this activity “violates the law and, therefore, is illegal.” The secretary added that the government would continue to oppose these activities, further stating that “the tourism sector is in line with this decision.”

Association demands PH consulate open on Sundays

THE Philippine Consulate in Macau said its plans to reopen on Sundays in mid-September are still pending.

In a previous Times report, Filipino migrant group Migrante Macau urged the Consulate to open on Sundays.

The Philippines’s Consul General in Macau, Lilybeth Deapera, explained to the Times yesterday that they have yet to receive the go-ahead from the Philippine’s Department of Foreign Affairs to operate on



Philippine Consulate in Macau

Sundays as part of a three-month trial.

“We asked for authorization from Manila but we have not received that yet, so it’s just plans,” she wrote to the Times.

The Consulate opened its doors on Sundays a few years ago, but only a few local Filipino migrants requested for services over the weekend.

“We really need an honest-to-goodness study of the scheme because we’ve done it before and [almost] no one came to the Consu-

late,” she stressed.

Early this year, the Consulate documented its dialogue with some members of Migrante Macau and sent it to Manila. According to association president Emerlina de Lina, they have submitted a document requesting for the Consulate to open on Sundays, with 2,832 signatures from Filipinos in the region.

While some said that several signatures were obtained under false pretenses, de Lina argued: “We’re

not inventing [the numbers of] the signatures. There is really a need for the Consulate to open on Sundays.”

Commenting on the possible three-month trial of the Consulate’s Sunday operations, de Lina said that the Office should not have a “try-out” phase.

“If there are [only] a few persons who ask for services [on Sundays] in those three months, are they going to close again?” de Lina questioned. “What we want is for them to operate even though there are no users. The [Consulate] is not a business; it’s a service that they have to provide for the people.” **LV**

Q&A CHANG HEXI
FORUM MACAU'S SECRETARY GENERAL

'Forum Macau's goals will be increasingly oriented toward pragmatism'

AFTER eight years leading the Forum for Economic and Trade Co-operation between China and Portuguese-speaking Countries (Forum Macau), Chang Hexi is leaving the organization. The Secretary General talks about the organization's main achievement in promoting cooperation between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries and offers his views on the institution's future.

– You have headed Forum Macau for more than eight years. What is the major difference between the Forum you are leaving and the one you took charge of in 2008?

– The Permanent Secretariat of Forum Macau – supported by the governments of Macau, participating countries and various local partners – has worked over the years to promote cooperation and exchanges between mainland China, Macau and the Portuguese-speaking countries in the areas of economy and trade, human resources, and language and culture, among others. Considerable progress has been made in achieving the targets set out in Forum Macau's action plan for economic and cultural cooperation, while simultaneously taking advantage of Macau as a platform. I believe that Macau's role as a springboard of services for trade between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries has been consolidated.

– Relations between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries have grown over the years, not just in terms of financial support but also investment. In what sectors do you think this relationship will expand? Agriculture and fisheries? Infrastructure? Social support? Education? Energy?

– In line with the content set out in the action plans for economic and social cooperation, the Permanent Secretariat has promoted multilateral exchanges and cooperation in many different areas, making use of the Macau platform. Based on dynamic and pragmatic principles, the Secretariat has sought to be innovative with its cooperation models, using that platform as a bridge for relations between participating countries.

Encouraging progress and results have been obtained. For



Chang Hexi

example, in the fisheries area, support was given to companies and services from Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces for visits to look into cooperation prospects in Timor-Leste, Guinea-Bissau and Angola. [...] As for human resources, we used the Forum Macau's training center to hold symposiums in Macau; cooperation with the respective MSAR government services led to the arrangement of internships destined for the Portuguese-speaking countries as well as a seminar on bilingual teaching and training, among other activities.

– There is still a great lack of awareness about investment potential and the creation of partnerships between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries. Is there a pressing need to better publicize what those countries have to offer and receive? Do you believe such promotion should be reinforced in the Forum?

– In recent years, the Permanent Secretariat has promoted large-scale exchanges and cooperation between companies from China and the Portuguese-speaking countries; actively participating in exhibitions and meetings held in Macau and mainland China, and setting up the Portuguese-speaking Countries' Pavilion to promote business and investment opportunities in those countries. The Secretariat has made major efforts to deepen knowledge and foster exchanges with companies from inside China, presenting those countries' prospects to Chinese companies by organizing contact pools, presentation sessions and lectures. They indica-

ted a notable lack of knowledge about the Portuguese-speaking countries. The Secretariat will therefore continue efforts to raise awareness and provide Chinese companies sufficient information about those countries.

– The Co-operation and Development Fund was established in 2013 and has been insufficiently utilized. Is there a lack of information, well-grounded proposals or awareness about the fund?

– The Permanent Secretariat has promoted the fund as a stimulus, so that more ventures can be financed. The fund is managed by its respective management body. The operational model is fairly strict regarding the documents that companies must submit as part of applications to the fund. The Secretariat has promoted the fund among companies, providing support to the China Development Bank vis-à-vis the presentation of access conditions and application procedures. A fund representative has been regularly invited to attend the Meeting of Entrepreneurs for Economic and Commercial Co-operation between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries, held annually in one of those countries, to raise awareness about the fund. The Secretariat therefore aims to enhance promotion of the fund among entrepreneurs in mainland China, Macau and the Portuguese-speaking countries, informing them about the fund's current status and application procedures, so projects that meet the fund's requisites can be put forward and quickly processed.

– The activity of the Forum

and the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM) sometimes seems to overlap, even though both institutions promote the Macau platform in relations between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries. Do you believe there should be more distinction between what each is doing?

– The Forum Macau Permanent Secretariat, the IPIM and the respective MSAR public services have been enthusiastic about building the services platform for trade cooperation between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries. The Secretariat and the IPIM pursue common cooperation goals, taking advantage of the Macau platform, mutually supporting each other and closely coordinating actions, specifically to foster business cooperation and exchanges. In the efforts to promote and enhance cooperation between companies from China, the Portuguese-speaking countries and Macau, the IPIM has played a key role in various activities in line with its specific focus.

– Do you believe the Pan-Pearl River Delta (9+2) is the region of China where small- and medium-sized enterprises from Portuguese-speaking countries should concentrate their efforts? Major investments and business pass through Beijing and not Macau. Shouldn't this be a priority area so that entrepreneurs from China and the Portuguese-speaking countries can come into contact?

– The Permanent Secretariat's main mission is to promote business cooperation between enterprises from mainland China and the Portuguese-speaking countries by means of the Macau platform. The region plays a key role in economic and trade exchanges between China and those countries, making best use of its cultural and linguistic advantages and the intermediation of local firms familiar with the respective markets. The Pan-Pearl River Delta and Macau regions work closely to achieve the prospects for promising cooperation with the Portuguese-speaking countries.

– Forum Macau has organized training programs for the Portuguese speaking countries. How do you assess the results of those programs and what do you think should be done in that area?

– Under the action plans and following the creation of the Forum Macau training center, five or six thematic symposiums have been held each year on subjects of mutual interest such as infrastructure, environmental protection, business law and public administration, among others. Thirty-one such symposiums have been held, with 791 participating trainees. The aim is to enhance cooperation and exchanges between mainland China, Macau and the Portuguese-speaking countries, where they have been much appreciated. The Secretariat will continue to consolidate and improve training in this area.

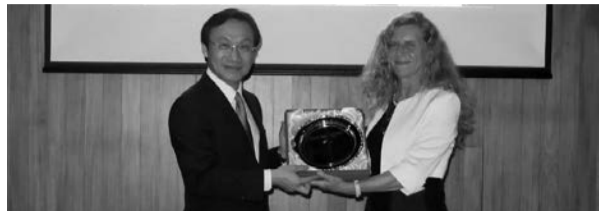
– Your relationship with Macau, Portugal and the Portuguese-speaking countries has been the focus of your career over the last 30 years. How do you see Macau's role in southern China and the growing links with Guangdong province?

– Macau is in the phase of building 'One Centre and One Platform'. Macau's role as a platform will be increasingly consolidated and enriched by way of its specific linguistic and cultural advantages, close ties with Portuguese-speaking countries, and the promotion of economic and trade exchanges between mainland China and Macau. Forum Macau is a multilateral cooperation mechanism that is also complementary in the area of bilateral cooperation. I'm convinced that this mechanism can make a major contribution to boosting the role of the Macau platform, raising businesses' awareness of the Portuguese-speaking countries and exploring more cooperation opportunities via multilateral exchanges arranged through Forum Macau.

– It's hard to predict the future, but how do you think Forum Macau will evolve as a platform in relations between China and the Portuguese-speaking countries?

– Forum Macau has been in existence for 13 years. With the support of the respective governments of the participating countries – as well as the MSAR and the various sectors involved, along with the joint effort of the Permanent Secretariat's staff – the Forum's participating countries have, through the Macau platform, achieved multilateral exchanges with enriched content and various forms of cooperation, consolidating Macau's role over the years. With the fifth ministerial conference, Forum Macau's goals will be increasingly oriented toward pragmatism, and its role and functions ever more relevant. **MDT/Macauhub**

Alexis Tam in Rio for the Olympics Opening



Alexis Tam pictured with the Brazilian General Coordinator of Exchange and Sports Cooperation, Vera Cintia Álvarez

THE Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, Alexis Tam, attended on Saturday the opening of the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil together with a delegation of the Macau Olympic Committee, the Office of the Secretary said in a statement yesterday.

Tam met with several presidents and representatives of Olympic committees from Portuguese-speaking countries such as Brazil, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, São Tome and Principe and East Timor.

Tam also visited the Olympic Village and several sports facilities specially adapted to accommodate the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Since 2009, Macau has presided over the Association of Portuguese Speaking Olympic Committees (ACOLOP). ACOLOP currently has 700 athletes representing their countries in the Olympic Games.

Presently, the International Olympic Committee does not recognize the Sports and Olympic Committee of Macau, China – created in 2008 – as a National Olympic Committee (NOC).

However, local athletes have been allowed to join some international organizations and events such as the Asian Games, due to Macau's international status as an autonomous territory. However, unlikely Hong Kong, this does not include participation in the Olympic Games. **RM**

2016 population by-census begins

DATA collection for the 2016 population by-census started yesterday and will end August 21, according to a statement from the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC).

The acting director of DSEC, Cheng I Wan, stated that the 15-day census aims to obtain up-to-date information on the demographics of Macau, in order to keep track of the changes in the population. Such information is crucial for government policy formulation as well as business and academic purposes, said Cheng.

The 2016 population by-census will adopt a sampling fraction of one-seventh of the housing units in Macau, totaling about 33,000. Information on demographic, social and economic characteristics will be collected from members of households in these units.

According to the statement, notification letters have already been sent by DSEC to the selected housing units this month. Recipients may complete the e-questionnaire via the internet or the DSEC mobile application, or provide information through face-to-face interviews with the visiting enumerators.

All enumerators will wear a yellow uniform and will carry a 2016 population by-census black satchel and identity badge with their name and photo.

Enumerators, who conduct household



interviews in pairs, will introduce themselves to the household upon arrival, present their identity badge and verify the address of the household. The census is adopting paperless data collection methods, so enumerators will use mobile phones to collect the data.

Additionally, DSEC has set up a 2016 Population By-census Hotline (8809 8809) to provide households with a convenient way to make enquiries relating to the by-census, to schedule a face-to-face interview appointment, and to verify the identity of the enumerators.

DSEC is appealing to members of

the public to provide accurate information during the data collection process, stressing that all information will be kept in strict confidence and used "solely for statistical purposes."

The bureau added that "data will be processed and published in aggregate form only, and no information pertaining to individual persons or households shall be disclosed."

In a bid to raise public awareness of the census and its importance, DSEC and the General Union of Neighborhood Associations of Macau co-organized a census "Fun show" on Saturday, which attracted nearly 1,000 people. **DB**

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MGM China sees gaming stabilizing as revenue dip slows

Christopher Palmeri, Daniela Wei

MGM China Holdings Ltd. reported a slowing pace of revenue decline in the second quarter as more recreational gamblers plunked down bets. Shares gained the most in a week.

The casino operator's revenue fell 19 percent from a year ago to HKD3.5 billion (USD451 million), it said last week. The pace of decline in revenue slowed from a drop of 25 percent in the previous quarter. The company posted HKD1.03 billion in earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization.

Investors are divining Macau casino operators' results for signs of a recovery in the world's largest gaming market, which has been mired in a two-year slump after a government crackdown on corruption and graft that increased scrutiny on lavish spenders. The opening of the MGM Cotai next year, along with Wynn Resorts Ltd.'s \$4.1 billion Wynn Palace later this month and Las Vegas Sands Corp.'s \$2.7 billion Parisian in Septem-



ber, are being closely watched for their impact on the industry.

"The company is experiencing a deepening of customer quality, with returning frequency of known customers," wrote Sanford C. Bernstein & Co. analysts, led by Vitaly Umansky, who reiterated the company's outperform rating in a note Friday.

MGM China rose 4.6 percent to close at HKD11.38 in Hong Kong trading Friday, outperforming its casino peers. The Bloomberg Intelligence Macau gaming stocks index and Hong Kong's benchmark Hang Seng Index both gained 1.4 percent.

The high end of the gaming

market dominated by so-called VIP customers could take as long as three years to come back, James Murren, chief executive officer of parent company MGM Resorts International, said in an interview Thursday. While the increased room supply could result in hotel price discounts, the more important factor will be whether betting by mass-market gamblers increases as a result of the new properties, he said. A 4.5 percent drop in Macau betting last month was smaller than analysts expected.

"We think the market has stabilized and started to improve," he said.

The \$3.1 billion MGM Cotai's opening was pushed back to the second quarter of next year, at least the third time it's been postponed.

MGM Resorts posted second-quarter earnings that beat analysts' estimates as profit growth in Las Vegas made up for sluggishness in Macau.

MGM Resorts total sales fell 4.8 percent to \$2.27 billion, trailing analysts' projections of \$2.33 billion. Gaming revenue from high

rollers fell 10 percent from the previous quarter and 31 percent from a year earlier. MGM China's adjusted earnings of HKD1.03 billion is a 10 percent decrease compared to the prior year quarter.

In Macau, revenue from tables frequented by recreational gamblers increased 0.9 percent from the previous quarter, Deutsche Bank AG analyst Karen Tang wrote in a note Friday. The sequential growth in revenue from recreational gamblers "is particularly encouraging as the other two strong players in premium mass market, Wynn Macau and Melco Crown saw declines," she wrote.

Operators including Wynn Macau Ltd., Galaxy Entertainment Group Ltd., and Melco Crown Entertainment Ltd. are wooing tourists and mainstream gamblers to Macau with new family-friendly resorts. The Wynn Palace will offer air-conditioned cable car rides and Sands China Ltd.'s Parisian will feature a half-size Eiffel Tower replica when they open in coming months.

Bloomberg

UM's Portuguese course concludes



The 30th Portuguese Language Summer Course, organized by the Department of Portuguese

at the University of Macau (UM), concluded on Friday after attracting about 400 students from around the world, said UM. During the three-week intensive training course, participants were required to communicate daily with over a dozen experienced Portuguese instructors. According to UM, participants said that the course not only helped them learn more about the Portuguese language and the cultures of Lusophone nations, but also boosted their confidence when communicating in English. Participant Pasky Ho from Hong Kong, who was in the intermediate level class, said the course provided a solid opportunity to learn the Portuguese language. "Earlier I visited Brazil and that experience made me develop a strong interest in the Portuguese language," he said.

GDI to analyze design change to Islands Hospital

The Infrastructure Development Office (GDI) will liaise with different services in order to analyze a design change input to the project of the Islands Health Care Complex, the Health Bureau (SSM) said. The statement cites SSM director Lei Chin Ion, who told journalists that a design change has been proposed for the project by the Architecture Office responsible. "The amendment of the Islands Health Care Complex presented by the Office of Architecture Eddie Wong Limited was received by services on August 1 and was submitted to the Infrastructure Development Office. The GDI will now deliver the project to different services for a re-evaluation," Lei said, adding that not many changes were expected. He emphasized that the project had been legally awarded to Eddie Wong's architecture office, which has "experience in the design of health services infrastructure."

Number of new companies down in Q2

A total of 1,141 new companies were incorporated in the second quarter of 2016, a decrease of 153 year-on-year, according to information released by the Statistics and Census Service (DSEC).

The total value of registered capital for new companies dropped by 61.8 percent year-on-year to MOP140 million, which was attributed by DSEC to a decrease in capital of new companies registered in the segment "capital of MOP1 million or over".

Analyzed by industry, there were 400 new incorporations operating in "Who-

lesale and Retail" and 277 in "Business Services". Companies in dissolution totaled 228 in the second quarter, and the value of registered capital of companies in dissolution amounted to MOP58 million.

Analyzed by size of registered capital, there were 786 new companies (68.9 percent of the total) registered with capital under MOP50,000, and the total value of that capital was MOP20 million.

On the other hand, there were 24 new companies registered with capital

of MOP1 million or over, and the total value of capital amounted to MOP77 million (54.8 percent of total).

As for the origin of capital, the majority came from Macau (MOP77 million) and Mainland China (MOP30 million). Capital from the nine provinces of the Pan-Pearl River Delta region totaled MOP21 million (93.1 percent of which originated in Guangdong Province).

At the end of the second quarter of 2016, the number of registered companies totaled 54,892, an increase of 3,789 from a year earlier.

DSEJ to hold language courses in September

The Centre of Languages of the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau (DSEJ) will organize a variety of community language courses in September; including courses in Mandarin, Portuguese, English, basic Cantonese and basic Mandarin. DSEJ said local residents may choose courses according to individual language proficiency, as there are different learning levels for each course. The registration deadline for the Portuguese and English courses is August 10, while registration for the Mandarin, basic Cantonese and basic Mandarin courses are open until August 24. Certificates will be issued to candidates who complete the courses and pass the assessments.

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Corinne Gretler

HUGO Boss AG, the embattled German fashion label, rose after showing its first signs of a potential turnaround under new Chief Executive Officer Mark Langer as second-quarter revenue beat estimates.

Sales fell 1 percent excluding currency effects, the Metzingen, Germany-based company said in a statement on Friday, beating the 4 percent decline expected by analysts polled by Bloomberg. Gross profit margins also widened in the quarter by more than 1 percentage point thanks to lower discounting and sharper inventory management, offsetting a cut in its full-year earnings forecast that analysts had anticipated. The shares advanced as much as 6.7 percent in early Frankfurt trading.

The performance signaled "signs of life," Citigroup analyst Thomas Chauvet said in a note, as the results were "surprisingly above expectations."

Langer, promoted from finance chief in May to replace Claus Dietrich Lahrs, needs to cut costs and revive weak U.S.

Hugo Boss rises on signs of recovery as sales beat estimates



sales, which have been marred by discounting. The company said it will shut some 20 of its 443 freestanding stores in the next 18 months, adding to the closures of shops in China. Terrorist attacks in Europe have deterred tourists from traveling there, denting sales. Still, Italy's Marzotto family has increased its stake in Hugo Boss, showing confidence that Langer can turn things around.

Full-year earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization and other items will decline by 17 percent to 23 percent, the company said. That compares with its previous forecast of a low double-digit decline. Hugo Boss also said currency-adjusted sales will be stable to down 3 percent, after predicting a low single-digit increase. Gross profit margin should remain stable.

Investors had already priced in a dismal earnings outlook, pushing the stock down 54 percent in the year through Thursday. Hugo Boss shares rose 4.1 percent to 54.37 euros at 9:45 a.m. in Frankfurt.

"The flat gross margin which the company kept is a positive, showing progress in disciplined promotional activity and inventory management," Zuzanna Puszczyk, an analyst at Berenberg, wrote in a note to clients.

In the U.S., where sales were down 21 percent, Hugo Boss has limited distribution of its core Boss brand in other retailers' stores. The company said it's "deliberately sacrificing sales in order to avoid brand damage from promotional activity."

While revenue in China was weighed down by weak demand

in Hong Kong and Macau, price cuts introduced earlier this year helped the company achieve a double-digit increase in units sold in mainland China. Total sales in local currencies declined 4 percent to 622.1 million euros (USD692.9 million), the company said, beating the 608.5-million-euro estimate.

John Guy, an analyst at Main-First Bank AG, expects Hugo Boss to unveil a more comprehensive restructuring program at an investor day later this year. The company, which markets four brands - Hugo Boss, Boss Orange, Boss Green and Hugo - may cut its portfolio to keep just one or two of them, Guy added.

"Hugo Boss' dilemma is that nobody knows the difference between the brands," Guy said. **Bloomberg**

When China sneezes these countries will be first to feel a chill

IF (or when) China sneezes - ranging from a sharp devaluation of its currency or protectionist measures to defend local industries - Singapore, Taiwan, Vietnam, South Korea and Malaysia would be first to feel the chill, according to analysis from Natixis SA.

By contrast, Indonesia, India and the Philippines are rather more immune, based on trade, tourism and investment links that were collated by the French Bank's Hong Kong-based economists Alicia Garcia Herrero and Trinh Nguyen.

For those with the largest exposure to China, trade

ties are the biggest link.

Tourism is another important factor linking the fortunes of Asia's smaller economies to their regional giant. In 2015, the number of Chinese outbound tourists climbed 14.5 percent to 35.4 million, according to the China Outbound Tourism Research Institute. They spent USD235 billion in 2015, Natixis said, and most Chinese tourists prefer to holiday in Asia with 60 percent of the trips to the region.

Still, those countries gaining most from Chinese tourists also experience a "heightened sensitivity" because that demand can

rub both ways, Natixis said, citing the 20 percent drop in Chinese tourists to Vietnam last year after the two nations were embroiled in a spat over disputed territories in the South China Sea.

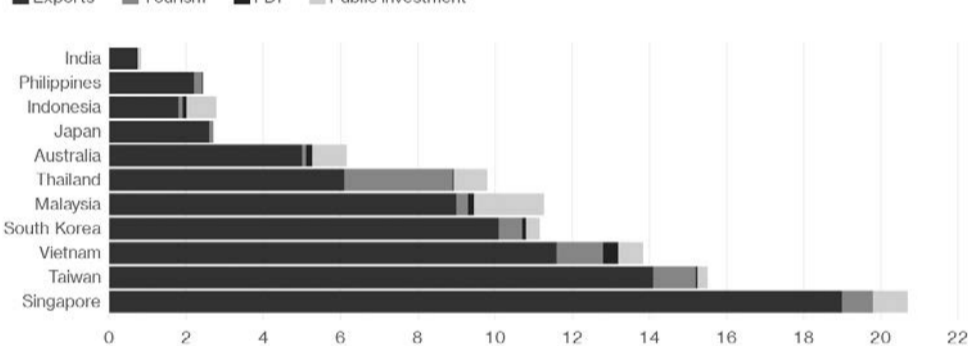
Another bond comes from China's projects like the "Belt and Road" initiative and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. As China pumps money into the region, partly to export excess capacity, it's also increasing its soft power.

While providing a boost to growth, a more powerful China is also posing a dilemma for its neighbors

The China Effect

A summary of Asia's exposure to China (% of GDP)

■ Exports ■ Tourism ■ FDI ■ Public Investment



Natixis, Bloomberg

Bloomberg

who have to tussle between the need to assert their sovereignty without discouraging Chinese investors

and spenders. That's a tough balancing act that's only going to get trickier as Chinese President Xi

Jinping pursues his "China Dream" of increased economic and political clout. **Bloomberg**

corporate bits

MGM HOLDS 'HAIRCUT OF LOVE' CAMPAIGN

For the third consecutive year, between July 27 and 29 a group of 30 MGM Volunteer Team members set out for care homes in different parts of the region to offer free haircuts to 160 senior citizens as part of the "Haircut of Love" campaign.

Over two months, MGM invited professional hairstylists from the Hair & Beauty Professionals Association of Macau to train its Volunteer Team, including management, to acquire hairstyling skills during their spare time.

MGM has extended the haircut service to two additional charitable organizations, where its volunteers took care of senior residents with health and mobility impairments.



The "Haircut of Love" was part of MGM's fourth Community Care Campaign, which ranged from giving haircuts to seniors and a culinary "fun day" with the mentally disabled to renovating the walls of youth dormitory rooms. The campaign was held between July 18 and 29.

CEM HOLDS ECO TOUR IN HONG KONG

Twenty winners of the online quiz "Green Light in Macau" Lucky Draw were brought to Hong Kong for an ecological tour on August 1.

The tour began in the morning with visits to the Hong Kong Railway Museum and the Lam Tsuen Wishing Tree at Tai Po district. The visit to the "Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden" in the afternoon was cancelled due to the threat of typhoon Nida.

Participants discovered that Hong Kong has conserved a large area of green belt zones and performs well in terms of the conservation and utilization of plants.

The online quiz organized by the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau and CEM attracted



over 3,500 responses from local citizens.

According to CEM, the company has implemented environmental protection and sustainable development policies. It also co-organizes various activities with different institutions and organizations every year to promote environmental protection.

SHERATON GRAND ANNOUNCES SPECIALTY MOONCAKES

Sheraton Grand Macao Hotel will offer a variety of specialty mooncakes as part of celebrations for this year's Mid-Autumn Festival.

The resort will introduce a new range of "Assorted Nuts Mooncakes with Salted Pork" filled with five kinds of nuts: walnuts, black melon seeds, almonds, white sesame seeds and olive seeds.

Sheraton Grand added that it will bring back the "Mini Egg Custard Mooncakes," wrapped in a golden brown pastry. For the calorie-conscious, the "Low Sugar Deluxe Lotus with Double Egg Yolk Mooncakes" are the perfect blend of traditional flavors and healthy ingredients.



From August 15 through to September 16, guests can purchase Sheraton Grand Macao Hotel mooncakes at the Palms lobby lounge or from Xin Restaurant. Prices start from MOP328 per box, and mooncake gift sets with WG Moments Tea are available from MOP728. SPG and Sands Reward Club Members are entitled to a 10 percent discount.



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For Rent



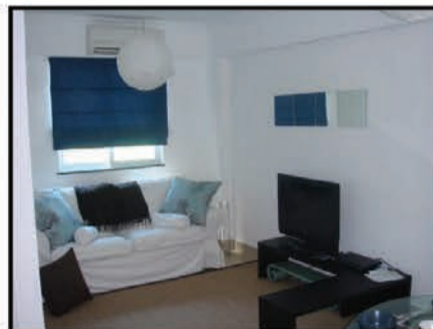
Super Flower City Unit A

(Ref: 16060591)
2,200sq. ft. HKD 21,000
Spacious apartment, in a desirable building located in the centre of Taipa. Close to children's park, supermarkets, cafes, banks, bus stop and Old Taipa Village. The apartment is unfurnished with three double bedrooms and two large bathrooms, one ensuite. Master bedroom is approximately 350 sq ft with stunning views across Old Taipa Village and the Taipa Stadium. Large windows with window ledges larger enough to be lovely window seats in each room. Well equipped modern kitchen



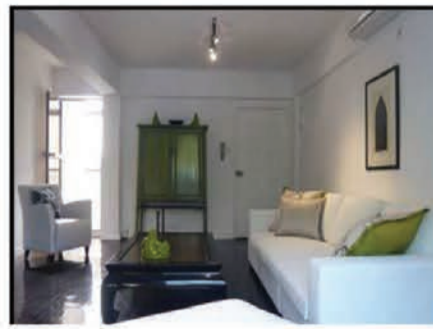
The Manhattan, Taipa

(Ref: 16020570)
1,720sq. ft. HKD22,000
Furnished 3 bedroom apartment luxury residence in central Taipa.
Concierge services. Spacious living areas and bedrooms.
High quality. Full use of Clubhouse facilities.



Tou Un - Taipa

(Ref: 16060595)
500sq. ft. HKD 8,300
Furnished one bedroom apartment in quiet location in Taipa. Recently renovated, lovely décor and furnishings.
Open plan kitchen. Inclusive of electrical appliances.
Lovely green views.



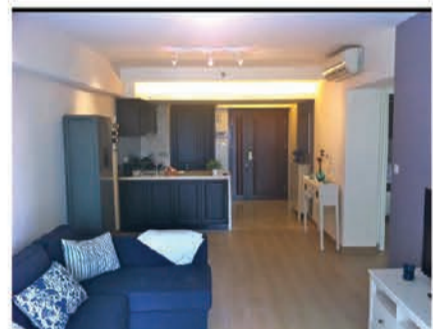
Coloane Village

(Ref: 16060593)
800sq. ft. HKD 11,000
This beautiful furnished 2 bedroom apartment in quaint Coloane Village, renovated and refurbished couple of years ago. The project was designed and managed by our in-house Design Team, and has been finished with amazing attention to detail and high quality materials. A lovely bright apartment with green views from all rooms. Close to cafes, restaurants, post office, and public transport.



Macau One Central High Floor

(Ref: 16050590)
1,300sq. ft. HKD 19,000
A beautifully furnished, 2 bedroom apartment in the famous and luxurious One central of Macau. Rent inclusive of management fee which will allow you to make full use of the clubhouse facilities- indoor and outdoor pool, gym, tennis courts and other extensive recreational facilities. Exclusive clubhouse with 5 levels of indoor/outdoor leisure & recreational space. This apartment has stunning lake



The Buckingham, Mid Floor, Unit D

(Ref: 16020558)
1,147sq. ft. HKD 18,000
Newly furnished apartment in Taipa's latest complex. Fully furnished inc. linens & kitchen ware. Open kitchen inc. built in Siemens appliances. Spacious living area with 3 metre L shape sofa bed. Good size balcony for two. Two bedrooms & one Bathroom.



Macau, One Central Residences

(Ref: 16050589)
1,819sq. ft. HKD 29,000
Fully furnished. 3 Bedroom apartment. Full club facilities. Fantastic views over Nam Van lake and back across Macau city.
Central location next to Wynn & MGM Resorts in Macau. Available for tenancy with a 2 year agreement.



One Oasis, Hyde Park Tower

(Ref: 16070603)
1,200sq. ft. HKD 16,000
Lovely two bedroom apartment on high floor. Well furnished, bright apartments, ready to be lived in. Good size well laid out kitchen.
Great facilities in separate clubhouse, well equipped gym, indoor & outdoor pool, children play areas and more. Car Par can be rented separately for extra HKD3,200 a month, or together for HKD18,000.

For Sale



Va Nam Unit B, Taipa

(Ref: 16065486)
600sq. ft. HKD3.5M
Rate: HKD 5,833sq ft
Lovely property in Taipa. Located on the 2nd floor of a walk up property the apartment was renovated 18 months ago. Currently tenanted, until Dec 2016 the apartment can be viewed by appointment. Cosy open plan dining & living with enclosed balcony. Two good size bedrooms and modern shower room.
Kitchen fitted with modern cabinets. Located across from Kingsville and above Elysee bakery this is great location and investment.

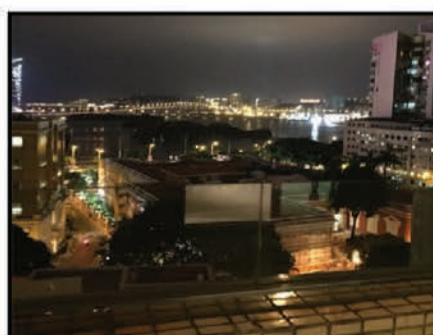
Office: (853) 2835 2699



Nova Taipa E Low Mid Floor - Central Taipa

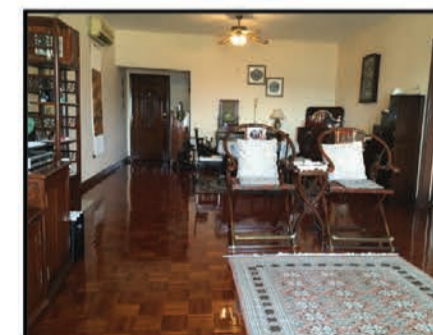
(Ref: 16055475)
2,218sq. ft. HKD 10.8M
Rate: HKD 4,869sq ft
Fantastic apartment with views across Central Park. The property has four double size bedrooms and two large bathrooms; one ensuite, each room has plenty of built in storage and air conditioners. The huge open plan living/dining with windows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

Email: Juliet@eastcityproperty.com



SON SENG LAU

(Ref: 16065018)
799sq. ft. HKD 4.993M
Rate: HKD 6,250sq ft
Renovated 5 years ago this apartment has a modern open plan kitchen, The main floor consists of a good size double bedroom and a separate bathroom.
A wooden staircase leads to the upper floor which has an open area, good for bedroom, office, studio or entertainment area. This apartment has a wonderful private terrace with views over looking Government offices, This is a rare chance to buy a view.



Nova Taipa, 3 Bedroom West Facing

(Ref: 16065488)
1,880sq. ft. HKD 12.8M
Rate: HKD 6,808sq ft
Wonderful family home on the 32nd Floor with open views West facing, providing plenty of sunlight throughout the whole year. Large open plan living and dining area with separate kitchen, store room and separate drying area for clothes. Three double bedrooms with 2 bathrooms, 1 ensuite bathroom off the main bedroom. The apartment has been very well maintained by the current owners. Car park available to purchase separately for HKD2 million.

Contact Property Consultants Today.

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Fan Lili, the wife of imprisoned activist Gou Hongguo, lies on the ground in tears as members of foreign diplomats try to help her following an incident with plainclothes police officer outside the Tianjin No. 2 Intermediate People's Court

Crackdown raises familiar specter of foreign forces

Gerry Shih, Beijing

IN halting televised confessions and emotional courtroom testimony, Chinese lawyers and activists held in a government crackdown have voiced the same ominous message: Shadowy foreign forces are funding, directing and encouraging activities bent on destabilizing China's government and smearing its reputation.

The familiar narrative of a country besieged by foreign enemies - with the United States implied as ringleader - is a key element of China's year-long campaign to stamp out the country's burgeoning legal activism movement. That effort drew new attention this week with the carefully scripted trials of a lawyer and three activists on subversion charges.

Though the tactic is far from new, political observers say the trials are a reminder of how the administration of President Xi Jinping has wielded the specter of foreign threats with far greater frequency and force, a reflection of the leadership's deeply seated belief that China is locked in a pitched, strategic and ideological battle against the West.

The four facing trial this week were associated with the Fengrui Law Firm in Beijing, one of the country's best-known advocates for human rights. Its director, Zhou Shifeng, was

Where do you draw the line of unacceptable interaction? Is being a visiting scholar at Harvard considered subversive?

TONG ZHIWEI
SCHOLAR

sentenced Thursday to seven years in prison while two received suspended sentences and one a term of seven years, three months. All were accused of organizing protests outside courthouses, hyping cases via social and foreign media, and receiving training and funding from foreign nonprofit organizations.

Even if Fengrui's activist tactics crossed ethical or even legal lines, as some Chinese legal professionals believe, it was not apparent from media reports of the cases if their actions amounted to subversion, said Tong Zhiwei, a professor at East China University of Political Science and Law in Shanghai. Rather, the involvement

of foreign actors added legal and political weight to the cases, Tong said.

"If there were no foreign elements, it might not have completely changed the complexion of the cases," Tong said.

Tong later said it was unclear how prosecutors and judges viewed the distinction between attacking the country's legal system and sharply criticizing it and whether they saw placing pressure on the government as one way of subverting state power. Conflating conversations the defendants had criticizing the government with actions is problematic, Tong said.

Tong said lawyers could not be viewed as "subversive" simply because they receive training abroad and then return to China and do things that annoyed the government without an evaluation of precisely what they studied.

"China has had legal education exchanges for decades with the West," Tong said. "Where do you draw the line of unacceptable interaction? Is being a visiting scholar at Harvard considered subversive?"

The crackdown on the legal profession, launched in July 2015 with a sweeping roundup of close to 300 activists and lawyers, is part of a far-reaching effort to stamp out suspected foreign influence since Xi took power in 2012. Most have been released although more than a dozen remain in detention.

Also in 2012, the Communist Party issued an internal communique, known as Document No. 9, aimed at limiting the penetration of Western-style "universal values," such as multi-party democracy and media freedoms, into Chinese society, especially its classrooms.

The government followed that up this year by passing a law to strictly regulate the work of thousands of international nonprofits working in China and place them under direct police supervision. In January, China detained and interrogated Peter Dahlin, a Swedish activist who had provided Fengrui lawyers training and support, for 23 days before releasing and deporting him - but only after he gave a confessional interview with the state broadcaster.

The government's message was vividly reinforced in statements from those similarly accused this week. In her televised interview, Wang Yu, a Fengrui lawyer, said she intended to refuse all international recognition, referring to an award from the American Bar Association and other Western groups she had received while in jail. "I am a Chinese," she said. "I can only accept awards from the Chinese government."

Four years into Xi's administration, the trials reflect how the party is leaning on nationalism as a pillar of legitimacy at a time of faltering economic growth, said Willy Lam, a his-

tory professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

"Xi genuinely thinks China is in an existential crisis, and unless the administration can stamp out Western influence, the party may collapse," Lam said. "But there is also the angle of political expediency. A sizeable part of the Chinese public is very nationalist. If they change the narrative to 'human rights lawyers are stirring up trouble because the U.S. is behind them,' they get away from the lawyers' work on the lack of justice in Chinese society."

The cases sent party organs and state media into overdrive this week. The Communist Youth League and Supreme People's Procuratorate, equivalent to the attorney general, circulated on social media an ultra-nationalist video warning of an imminent U.S.-led revolution in China, garnering hundreds of millions of views.

The video's creator, a Chinese Middle Eastern studies student in Australia, told state media he was motivated to make the video after he perceived in the Fengrui cases the classic warning signs of "the early pre-penetration stages of a color revolution" underway in China, a reference to movements that have toppled authoritarian governments in Georgia, Ukraine and the Middle East.

Jerome A. Cohen, a Chinese law expert at New York University, pointed out that in Wang's supposed confession, the Fengrui lawyer said she would not "accept, recognize or acknowledge" international awards - the same language used by the Foreign Ministry in rejecting a June verdict by a Hague-based international tribunal against China's maritime claims in the South China Sea. That verdict prompted Chinese state media to denounce the arbitration process as an American-led ploy to deny China its historical territory.

"Increasingly, law is at the core of both the domestic and international challenges," said Cohen, who has previously consulted for provincial officials. "Xi is ill-equipped to deal with foreign legal claims, whether they concern international human rights, the law of the sea or economics, but he can slap down domestic purveyors of the rule of law."

The unmistakable message has been that, even as Chinese business and society integrates with the world, a hard line has been drawn between Chinese and foreign civil society groups.

"Chinese citizens who have formed relationships with foreign entities are the ones suffering," said John Kamm, director of the Duihua Foundation, a San Francisco-based nonprofit humanitarian organization. "That's the main point: Don't imagine for a moment that a foreign government or entity can save you." AP

Didi Tang, Beijing

Beijing tries to end brain drain, lure foreign-educated talent

As a young biologist at the University of Michigan, Chen Xiaowei had plenty to like about life in the U.S. He was paid well as a researcher and enjoyed raising his family in Ann Arbor, a town he remembers as beautiful, friendly and highly educated.

But an offer from a Chinese university for him to return home to Beijing was too generous not to consider. In addition to a comparable salary, he was promised enough startup research money that he wouldn't have to worry about pursuing grants, and as he saw it, there was a chance to make a bigger difference in China. So in 2014 he moved back with his wife and two children.

"I feel freer to pursue my best ideas," Chen said. He said he has received such generous support that he's able to study a disease through symptoms in both the liver and muscles simultaneously — something he said he would not be able to do in the United States because of limitations on grants, which are often tied to projects instead of researchers.

Chen, who earned a doctorate in physiology at Michigan in 2008, has joined thousands of high-achieving overseas Chinese recruited to come home through the 1,000 Talents program, one of many state efforts launched in recent years to reverse a decades-long brain drain.

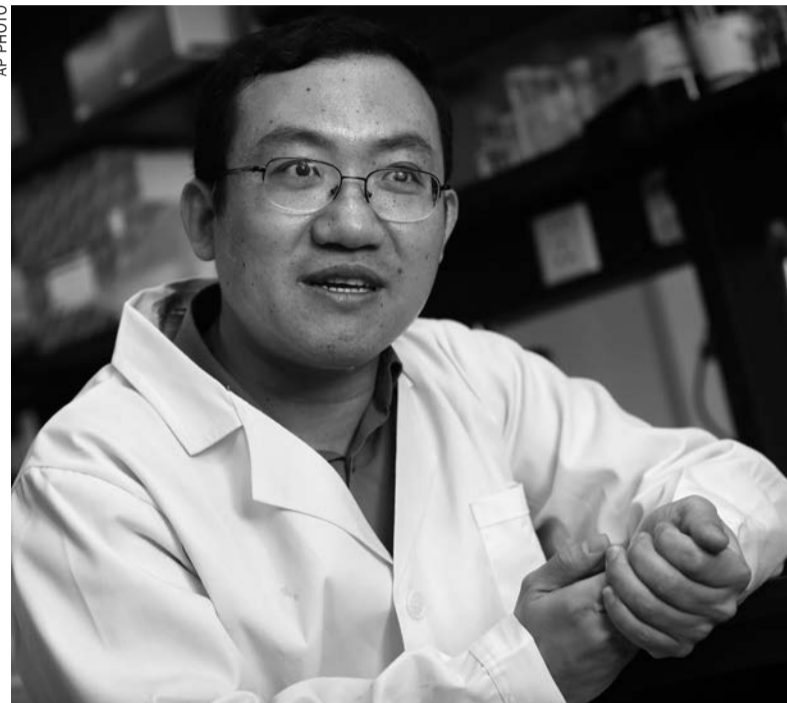
China, the world's second-largest economy and one of the fastest-growing, sees a need to bring home more of its brightest as it works to transform its largely labor-intensive, low-tech economy into one fueled by innovation in science and technology.

Forbidden to study abroad until the 1980s, Chinese students have been attending foreign schools in growing numbers. More than 300,000 studied in the U.S. alone in the 2014-2015 school year.

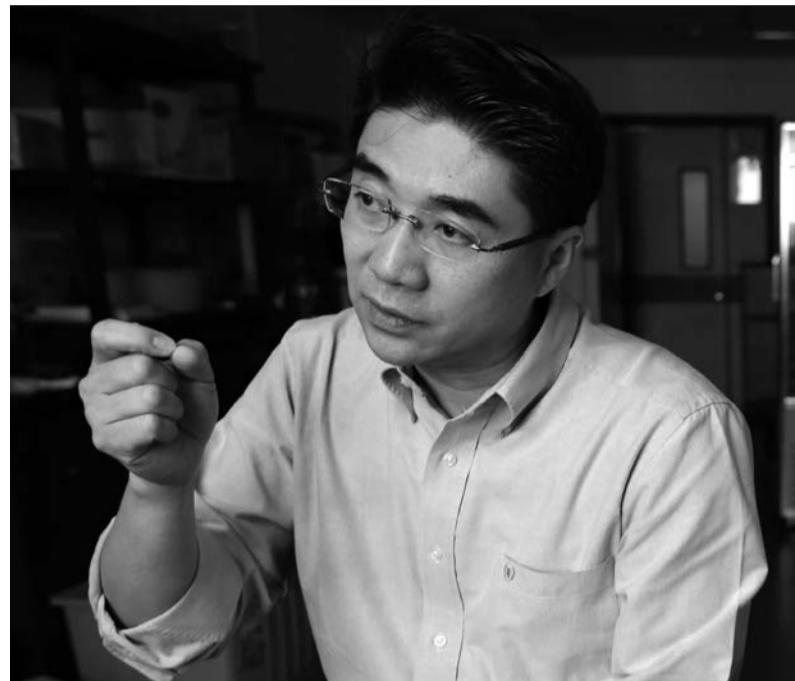
Most of those students return to China, but the country has had difficulty regaining the most coveted graduates — those with advanced degrees and experience in science and engineering.

A 2014 report by Oak Ridge Institute shows 85 percent of the 4,121 Chinese students who received doctorates in science and engineering from American universities in 2006 were still in the U.S. five years later. Still, that marked an improvement: The stay rate had been 98 percent a decade earlier.

The 1,000 Talents program offers recruits salaries several times more than what a Chinese-educated local hire would receive, as well as heavily subsidized education for children and millions in start-up research funds. The sign-up bonus alone



Chen Xiaowei, an assistant professor at Peking University



Li Chenjian, a vice provost at Peking University, speaks during an interview at the school's campus in Beijing

can be as much as USD150,000.

Chen, now an assistant professor at Peking University, was given a \$1.5 million research fund. "In the states," he said, "it's very hard for young people to get money when they need it the most."

Beijing says the leading 1,000 Talents program since 2008 has brought back 6,000 people who have become vital forces in areas such as science and technology, education and high-tech industry. Similar programs have mushroomed at provincial and municipal levels.

Researchers say 1,000 Talents and similar efforts have worked but with limited success. China is handicapped by a bureaucratic academic system, less-than-friendly political environment, inflexibility in immigration practices and other concerns including pollution.

"I think that the programs to bring back people full time have had some success, but those are not the best people," wrote David Zweig, director of the Center on China's Transnational Relations at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, in an email to The Associated Press. Zweig has studied China's efforts to compete for global talents for 25 years.

He said his research shows that full-time overseas recruits are generally better than homegrown talents, although the very best have yet to return to China. He blames that on the bureaucracy on Chinese campuses and in scientific labs, where administrators wield too much power and complicated interpersonal relations hinder research.

In China, leaders are deliberating about reforming higher edu-

cation and easing immigration policies, but for now, the money-dropping 1,000 Talents program serves as a quick solution.

Still, it has had problems of its own. Some scholars kept overseas positions while taking full-time paychecks from Chinese schools, or had forged credentials, leading to measures to disqualify those who have been dishonest academically.

Younger graduates such as Chen have been a focus of the program only in recent years. Previously, it only targeted senior academics in their 40s.

"That is considered past the prime of a researcher, especially in the field of science and engineering," said Li Xia, a professor of philosophy at Shanghai-based Fudan University. "Why should we pay a good price for someone's declining years?"

Other concerns persist, abroad and at home. In the U.S., private corporate security officials have raised concerns that recruits are being enticed and compensated for access to sensitive material at American firms and universities. They point to cases like a 2015 federal indictment in which several Chinese researchers — recruited by a Chinese university — were accused of stealing trade secrets from a California company and economic espionage.

In China, concerns center on whether it's fair to give foreign-educated Chinese special treatment.

"The local faculty is not opposed to attracting talent but we want equal opportunity, not increasing disparity," Li said.

Such sentiments were on display last year when Tu Youyou won a Nobel Prize in medicine

for the discovery of an effective malaria treatment. She was the first Chinese to win a science Nobel for work conducted in China, and she never studied abroad. Many comments took the moment to mock Beijing's worship of foreign experience.

China's Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, which helps implement the talent program, did not respond to faxed questions from the AP.

Some returnees see an opportunity — even an obligation — to help change China's education system. They hope to introduce new practices and help set rules, often modeled after the U.S. ones.

Li Chenjian, a neurologist who studied at Purdue University and is now a vice provost at Peking University, is pushing for reforms. Li now considers himself more of a reformist educator and offers a course on critical thinking. He is pushing for more holistic evaluation of high school students in the admissions process, rather than relying solely on test scores

I think that the programs to bring back people full time have had some success, but those are not the best people.

DAVID ZWEIG
DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER ON CHINA'S TRANSNATIONAL RELATIONS

from the annual college entrance exam, and he is building connections between Peking University and foreign universities.

"I think the great thing for U.S. universities is to have their people to go to other places to be leaders," Li said. "The impact will be 100 times more here," he said. "We're changing a humongous system."

Rao Yi, a prominent neurobiologist, has become a lightning rod in China's academic world. His criticism of China's education and research systems has been published in international journals since he left Northwestern University to take a position at Peking University.

Shi Yigong, an accomplished professor of molecular biology at Princeton University, gave up his U.S. citizenship after returning to China and is now a vice president of Tsinghua University. He says efforts such as 1,000 Talents make it easier for Tsinghua to hire top-notch researchers.

Shi said that during his 18 years in America, "I felt like I had been a bystander, not a contributor. I wanted to be part of the progress."

Chen, the Michigan-educated biologist, said he and his wife still consider themselves "true Wolverines," and that he's putting that American experience to good use. This summer, he is helping create a professional organization for biologists in China.

"There are opportunities to grow with a developing system. There are lots of raw talents in China, and lots of students are willing to work with you," Chen said. "There's a great need to polish minds, and I see opportunities to contribute." AP

Lynne O'Donnell, Kandahar

Afghan general bans Pakistani rupee in southern province

A senior Afghan police official regarded as one of the country's most powerful men has banned the use of the Pakistani currency in the key southern province of Kandahar. The police chief of Kandahar, Gen. Abdul Raziq, said he has declared the use of the Pakistani rupee in business transactions a crime. But he says he hasn't yet decided on the punishment.

The rupee has been widely used in Afghanistan's eastern and southern provinces bordering Pakistan. The Iranian currency is used in the western border provinces.

"I'm not against business, but I don't want any other currency to be used in our country, especially the Pakistan and Iranian currencies," Raziq told The Associated Press yesterday.

Raziq's ban came into effect last week. Traders said it had an immediate effect, with the afghani strengthening in recent days.

"This is very good news, as people have been confused about what currency they should use and keep," said Kandahar tribal elder and businessman, Ahmad Shah Khan.

He said the afghani had strengthened to 560 for 1,000 Pakis-



Gen. Abdul Raziq, Kandahar police chief

tani rupees, from 630 per 1,000 before the ban. The official Central Bank exchange rate yesterday was 622 per 1,000.

The afghani has also strengthened against the dollar, from 68 to 65 since the ban was introduced, traders said. The official rate is currently 67.5 afghanis to the dollar.

Azrahsh Hafizi, the head of the international relations committee of the Afghan Chamber of Commerce welcomed Raziq's decision and urged officials nationwide to adopt the ban of foreign currencies.

The use of the U.S. dollar in transactions elsewhere in the country, including the capital Kabul, should also be banned, Hafizi said.

"The central bank almost every week buys afghanis in the market in order to maintain the stability of the Afghan currency but if we used only the Afghan currency all over the country there would be no need," he said.

Raziq's move coincides with a cooling of relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan following the breakdown of a

peace process initiated last year by Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and the apparent failure by Pakistani authorities to move against Taliban leaders believed by Kabul to enjoy refuge over the border.

Taliban leaders moved into Pakistan when the U.S. invaded in 2001, ending their brutal five-year rule of Afghanistan. They are widely believed to live under Pakistan's protection and to direct their war against Kabul, now in its 15th year, from cities including Quetta and Peshawar.

Raziq said the currency ban is in retaliation against Pakistan's protection of the Taliban, a charge Pakistan denies.

"Pakistan is not only using bombs against us, they use every other tactic they can to destroy us — and that includes our businessman," he said. Pakistani authorities have held up Afghan goods, including fresh produce, at border points until the fruit and vegetables rotted, Raziq said.

There are signs that Afghanistan is starting to look elsewhere for imported products as a way of pressuring Pakistani authorities into complying with Afghan demands that they force the Taliban into talks to end the war.

Wheat imports — which totaled 2.4 million tons last year, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture — have traditionally come from Pakistan. But an increase in the customs duty charged by Afghan authorities has cut imports from Pakistan, with the business now going to Central Asian states.

Hafizi said the value of imports from Pakistan had fallen by USD700 million since the start of the current financial year in January.

Afghanistan is in the depths of an economic crisis, with gross domestic product growth close to zero and the government's plans for boosting growth and creating jobs stalled by its inability to improve the security situation. AP

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"THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'"

AP PHOTO



Prayuth Chan-ocha poses as he casts his vote in a referendum on a new constitution at a polling station in Bangkok

THAILAND

Voters overwhelmingly approve junta-backed constitution

Vijay Joshi, Natnicha Chuwiruch

THAI voters yesterday overwhelmingly approved a new junta-backed constitution that lays the foundation for a civilian government influenced by the military and controlled by appointed — rather than elected — officials.

Although near-final results showed that more than 60 percent of voters in a referendum called by the military government approved of the constitution, the vote is likely to be met by some skepticism. The junta — led by Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, a retired army general who has severely curtailed dissent since coming to power in a 2014 coup — imposed severe restrictions on public discussion of the proposed constitution.

Ahead of the referendum, the junta banned political rallies and open discussion about the constitution, and criticism of the draft was made punishable by 10 years in jail. Critics say the restrictions ensured that most people were unaware of the pitfalls of the charter, and were probably anxious to get the long-drawn process over with so that they could move on.

■ Criticism of the draft was made punishable by 10 years in jail. Critics say the restrictions ensured that most people were unaware of the pitfalls of the charter

The “yes” vote “adds that touch of legitimacy to the coup makers,” Pavin Chachavalponpun, an associate professor at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies of Kyoto University in Japan, told The Associated Press.

“It gives them the green light for the next few steps they want to take. They will say the opposition cannot say anything now,” said Pavin, who is Thai and is a vocal critic of the junta.

Prayuth’s office, however,

said in a statement yesterday that the referendum “was conducted with a high degree of transparency and openness on part of the government.”

Despite the curbs on civil liberties, Prayuth’s rule has brought a measure of stability and ended the frequent street violence and divisive politics that had frayed Thailand’s social fabric for years. That veneer of stability could help explain the “yes” vote for the new constitution.

There was also the allure of new elections that Prayuth has promised to hold in 2017, after the approval of the new constitution, although he’s said he would call the vote even if the referendum was defeated.

The charter “speaks to a lot of worries and concerns that a majority of Thai people have,” Gotham Areeya, a professor at Thailand’s Mahidol University, told the AP. “Many Thais want to see an end to corruption and the return of peace and development. Even though experts like me may criticize it a lot, our message just didn’t reach a lot of the people.”

With 91 percent of the ballots counted, 62 percent of the voters said they approved of the constitution, while 38

percent rejected it, Election Commissioner Somchai Srisuthiyakorn told reporters. He said the result was not expected to change much after all votes are in.

Only 55 percent of Thailand’s roughly 50 million registered voters cast ballots in the referendum.

In addition to asking for an opinion on the constitution, the referendum also asked a supplementary question on whether voters wanted an appointed Senate to choose a prime minister. That question elicited a less enthusiastic approval — 58 percent “yes” and 42 percent “no.”

Analysts have said that a “yes” vote would be a setback for democracy in Thailand.

Pavin, the Kyoto University professor, said that even when the military is no longer in power and a civilian government is in place after the 2017 elections, the military “will have the constitution as a remote control. The constitution can be used as a device to hold onto political power.”

The main criticisms of the draft constitution are:

- A transition period of at least five years to civilian rule.
- A 250-member appoint-

ted Senate that includes the commanders of the army and other security services.

— A deadlock in the 500-member elected lower house could trigger a selection of a prime minister who is not an elected member of parliament. Under the abolished 2007 constitution, half the Senate was elected, and the prime minister had to come from the lower house.

— Emergency decrees enacted by the junta without any parliamentary consent remain valid.

Thailand has endured 13 successful military coups and 11 attempted takeovers since it replaced an absolute monarchy with a constitutional one in 1932. This would be Thailand’s 20th constitution.

Leaders of the latest coup say frequent political conflicts had made the country ungovernable and that military rule was necessary for stability. The junta set up hand-picked committees to draft a charter that would enshrine its declared goal of reforming politics by eliminating corruption.

But others believe the new constitution has a different aim: to weaken allies of former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, the central figure in the roiling of Thai politics.

Thaksin’s political machine has easily won every national election since 2001, mainly due to the support of working-class and rural voters who benefited from his populist policies. Leading the other side is Thailand’s traditional ruling class and royalists — known as the “yellow shirts” — unnerved by Thaksin’s support, especially as it contemplates its future. King Bhumibol Adulyadej, whose righteous rule has anchored the kingdom since 1946, is 88 and ailing.

The army ousted Thaksin in a 2006 coup, after “yellow shirt” protesters took to the streets and accused him of abuse of power, corruption and disrespecting the king. He has lived abroad since 2008 to avoid prison for a corruption conviction that he says was politically motivated. The 2014 coup ousted his sister Yingluck Shinawatra, who was elected prime minister in 2011.

Those who brought Thaksin down now seek to weaken major political parties, which would ensure that real power stays in the hands of what is dubbed the permanent bureaucracy: the military, the courts and other unelected guardians of the conservative bloc.

Gotham, the Mahidol professor, said that Thailand may see peace now, but that it will likely be a peace enforced by military power.

“How much or how little freedom of expression will be allowed to the people, we will just have to wait and see,” he said. **AP**

Nasser Karimi, Jon Gambrell

IRAN executed a nuclear scientist who defected to the U.S. in 2009 and later returned to the Islamic Republic under mysterious circumstances a year later, authorities said yesterday, acknowledging for the first time that they had secretly detained, tried and convicted a man authorities once heralded as a hero.

Shahram Amiri vanished in 2009 while on a religious pilgrimage to Muslim holy sites in Saudi Arabia, only to reappear a year later in a series of online videos filmed in the U.S. He then walked into the Iranian interests section at the Pakistani Embassy in Washington and demanded to be sent home.

In interviews, Amiri described being kidnapped and held against his will by Saudi and American spies, while U.S. officials said he was to receive millions of dollars for his help in understanding Iran's contested nuclear program. He was hanged the same week as Tehran executed a group of militants, a year after his country agreed to a landmark accord to limit uranium enrichment in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions.

Speaking to journalists yesterday, Iranian judiciary spokesman Gholamhosein Mohseni Ejehi said Amiri was convicted of spying charges as he "provided the enemy with vital information of the country."

Amiri had access to classified information "and he was linked to our hostile and number one enemy, or the Great Satan," Ejehi said, referring to the U.S.

Ejehi did not explain why authorities never announced Amiri's conviction or his subsequent, failed appeals court bid. He said Amiri had access to lawyers.

"He neither repented nor compensated and he was trying to leak some information from inside prison, too," Ejehi said, without elaborating.

News about Amiri, born in 1977, has been scant since his return to Iran. Last year, his fa-

Iran says it executed nuclear scientist in US spy mystery



In this July 15, 2010 file photo, Shahram Amiri, an Iranian nuclear scientist greets his son Amir Hossein as he arrives at the Imam Khomeini airport after returning from the United States

ther Asgar Amiri told the BBC's Farsi-language service that his son had been held at a secret site since coming home.

Last week, Iran announced it had executed a number of criminals, describing them mainly as militants from the country's Kurdish minority. Then, an obituary notice circulated in Amiri's hometown of Kermanshah, a city some 500 kilometers southwest of Tehran, according to the Iranian pro-reform daily newspaper Shargh. It announced a memorial service on Thursday for Amiri, calling him a "bright moon" and "invaluable gem."

Manoto, a private satellite television channel based in London believed to be run by those who back Iran's ousted shah, first reported Saturday that

US officials told the AP in 2010 that Amiri was paid USD5 million to offer the CIA information about Iran's nuclear program

Amiri had been executed. BBC Farsi also quoted Amiri's mother saying her son's neck bore ligature marks suggesting he had been hanged by the state.

The Associated Press could not immediately reach Amiri's family.

U.S. officials told the AP in 2010 that Amiri was paid USD5 million to offer the CIA information about Iran's nuclear program, though he left the country without the money. They said Amiri, who ran

a radiation detection program in Iran, travelled to the U.S. and stayed there for months under his own free will. Analysts abroad suggested Iranian authorities may have threatened Amiri's family back in Iran, forcing him to return.

But when he returned to Iran and was welcomed by government officials, Amiri said Saudi and American officials had kidnapped him while he visited the Saudi holy city of Medina. He also said Israeli

agents were present at his interrogations and that CIA officers offered him \$50 million to remain in America.

"I was under the harshest mental and physical torture," he said.

Amiri's case indirectly found its way back into the spotlight in the U.S. last year with the release of emails sent by U.S. Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton while she served as secretary of state. The release of those emails came amid criticism of Clinton's use of a private account and server that has persisted into her campaign against Republican candidate Donald Trump.

An email forwarded to Clinton by senior adviser Jake Sullivan on July 5, 2010 — just nine days before Amiri returned to Tehran — appears to reference the scientist.

"We have a diplomatic, 'psychological' issue, not a legal one. Our friend has to be given a way out," the email by Richard Morningstar, a former State Department special envoy for Eurasian energy, read. "We should recognize his concerns and frame it in terms of a misunderstanding with no malevolent intent and that we will make sure there is no recurrence."

"Our person won't be able to do anything anyway. If he has to leave so be it."

Another email, sent by Sullivan on July 12, 2010, appears to obliquely refer to the scientist just hours before his story became widely known.

"The gentleman [...] has apparently gone to his country's interests section because he is unhappy with how much time it has taken to facilitate his departure," Sullivan wrote. "This could lead to problematic news stories in the next 24 hours." **AP**

Crowds gather for massive anti-coup rally in Istanbul

HUGE crowds gathered yesterday in Istanbul for a massive rally to mark the end of nightly democracy demonstrations following Turkey's abortive July 15 coup that killed over 270 people.

A 60-meter stage was set up at the Yenikapi meeting area by the Marmara Sea in Istanbul's European side. It was framed by two platforms and draped with massive national flags and banners depicting Turkey's



founding father Mustafa Kemal Ataturk and current President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Following the abortive putsch, the Turkish government has been encouraging nightly anti-coup rallies in all of the country's 81 provinces as well as in certain foreign locations such as Cologne, Germany.

Yesterday's grand finale in Istanbul, officially called the "Democracy and Martyrs' Rally," aims to

represent Turkish unity, with Erdogan urging attendees to bring only the Turkish flag instead of party banners.

"There we will stand together as a single nation, a single flag, a single motherland, a single state, a single spirit," he said Saturday in comments carried by Turkish media.

The event will be attended by the highest levels of Turkish leadership and two of Turkey's three opposition parties. The

pro-Kurdish People's Democracy Party, or HDP, was not invited.

Nearly 15,000 police will be providing security at the event, which the state-run Anadolu news agency estimates could be attended by millions. Anti-aircraft batteries have also been set up at the event grounds.

Thousands of buses and over 200 boats have been commissioned to bring attendees to the area, where they will pass through one of 165 metal detectors before being given hats and flags. **AP**

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what's ON



Ox WAREHOUSE CHILDREN'S ARTLAND 2016 – JOLLY JOINT EXHIBITION II
TIME: 12pm-7pm (closed on Tuesdays, opened on public holidays)
UNTIL: September 18, 2016
VENUE: Ox Warehouse, intersection of Av. Coronel Mesquita and Av. do Almirante Lacerda
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2853 0026
ADMISSION: free

SILVER ANNIVERSARY ANIMATION
TIME: 12pm-8pm (Mondays to Thursdays)
 11am-9pm (Fridays to Sundays)
 No admission one hour before closing
UNTIL: September 11, 2016
ADMISSION: MOP120
TICKETING: (853) 2855 5555
VENUE: Macau Convention Centre, Estrada da Ponta da Cabrita Golden Crown China Hotel (Opposite Macau International Airport, Taipa)

FORMER HOME OF REVOLUTIONARY LEADER YE TING
TIME: 10am-6pm daily (Except Wednesdays, open on public holidays)
VENUE: 76, Rua Almirante Costa Cabral
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8399 6699

MACAU GRAND PRIX MUSEUM & WINE MUSEUM
TIME: 10am-8pm daily (Except Tuesdays)
VENUE: Rua Luis Gonzaga Gomes, 431, basement (Tourism Activities Centre-CAT)
ADMISSION: Free
ENQUIRIES: (853) 8798 4108 / 2833 3000

MACAU SCIENCE CENTRE
TIME: 10am-6pm daily, (Except Thursdays, open on public holidays)
VENUE: Macau Science Centre, Avenida Dr. Sun Yat-Sen
ADMISSION: Exhibition Centre MOP25; Planetarium MOP60-80
ENQUIRIES: (853) 2888 0822

Offbeat

LONDON TO OFFER ALERTS ON AIR QUALITY AT BUS STOPS



Londoners will soon be able to get air quality reports when they check whether their bus is about to arrive. Mayor Sadiq Khan has ordered that 2,500 bus stop information signs display air quality alerts on high pollution days. Some 140 dot-matrix message boards on roads leading to London will also display the information, along with instructions for drivers to switch off their engines while stuck in traffic to reduce emissions. Electronic update signs at subway stations will also display information on air quality. The initiative, which begins Aug. 15, is part of Khan's crusade to clean up the air in the British capital. After taking office earlier this year, the mayor commissioned a survey showing that nearly 80 percent of those who responded were interested in receiving pollution data.

TV canal macau

13:00	TDM News (Repeated)
13:30	News (RTPi) Delayed Broadcast
14:45	RTPi Live
19:00	Helena's Shadow (Repeated)
19:50	Soap Opera
20:30	Main News, Financial & Weather Report
21:00	Miscellaneous
21:20	Miscellaneous
21:45	Portuguese Music
22:10	Helena's Shadow - Finale
23:00	TDM News
23:30	Documentary Series
00:15	Main News, Financial & Weather Report (Repeated)

cinema



CINETEATRO

04 Aug - 10 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

DREAMON: BIRTH OF JAPAN

ROOM 2
2.30, 4.30, 7.30 pm
Director: Shinnosuke Yakuwa
Duration: 97min

ONE PIECE FILM GOLD

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



THE SHALLOWS

ROOM 3
2.15, 6.05, 7.45, 9.30 pm
Director: Jaime Collet-Serra
Starring: Blake Lively, Óscar Jaenada, Brett Cullen, Sedona Legge
Language: English (Cantonese/ English)
Duration: 86min

ONE PIECE FILM GOLD

ROOM 3
3.50 pm
Director: Eiichiro Edo
Language: Japanese (Cantonese/ English)
Duration: 120min

MACAU TOWER

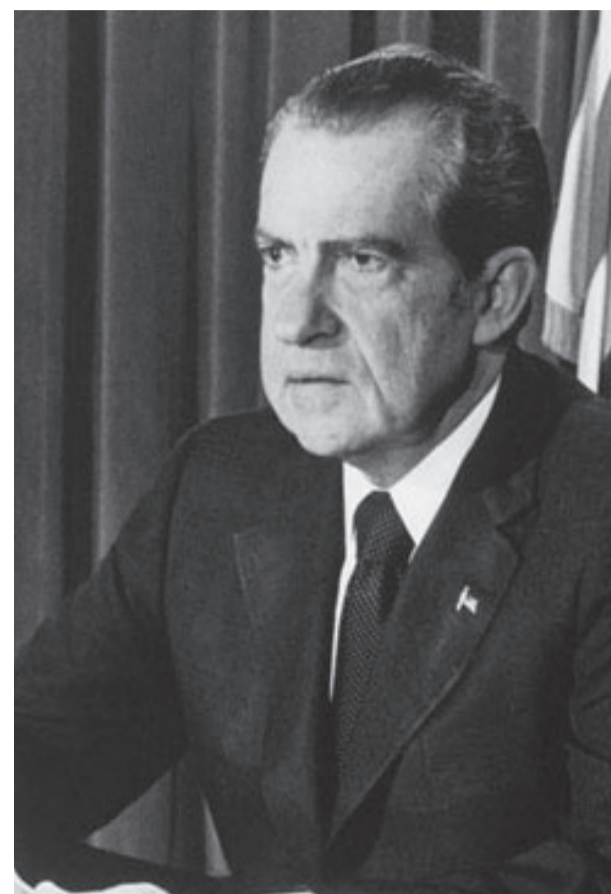
04 Aug - 17 Aug

SUICIDE SQUAD

2.30, 4.30, 7.30, 9.30 pm
Director: David Ayer
Starring: Will Smith, Jared Leto, Margot Robbie
Language: English (Cantonese/ English)
Duration: 123min



this day in history



1974 PRESIDENT NIXON TO RESIGN FROM OFFICE

Richard Nixon has announced he is stepping down as president of the United States - the first man ever to do so.

He has announced his departure in the face of an imminent impeachment trial - and possible removal from office - over the Watergate affair.

The president broke the news of his resignation in a television broadcast from the White House on Thursday at 2100 local time. It will take effect from noon tomorrow.

Mr Nixon, 61, said initially he had believed it was his duty to complete his term of office despite the Watergate charges.

"In the past days, however, it has become evident that I no longer have a strong enough political base in the Congress to justify continuing that effort," he said.

"As president I must put the interests of America first."

Mr Nixon has been charged by the House Judiciary Committee with "high crimes and misdemeanors".

The charges stem from a 1972 break-in at the offices of the Democratic National Committee in the Watergate complex.

The break-in, during that year's election campaign, was traced to members of a Nixon-support group, the Committee to Re-elect the President (CREEP).

Tape recordings have shown the president subsequently tried to influence the police investigation into the crime.

Mr Nixon is leaving office with more than two years of his second term left to run.

In his address Mr Nixon said he would be succeeded by US vice-president Gerald Ford.

Mr Ford will be sworn in as the 38th president of the United States tomorrow.

Courtesy BBC News

IN CONTEXT

Richard Nixon's resignation meant he avoided an impeachment trial and therefore being removed from office.

His successor, President Gerald Ford, issued an unconditional pardon in September 1974 for any offences Mr Nixon might have committed as president, saving him from possible prosecution.

But the five Watergate burglars and two co-plotters - former White House staff G. Gordon Liddy and Howard Hunt - were jailed.

In total 40 government officials were either indicted or jailed. Richard Nixon eventually re-established himself as a respected statesman. He died in 1994.

In June 2005, former FBI deputy head Mark Felt was revealed to be the anonymous source "Deep Throat", who helped Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein uncover the Watergate affair.

YOUR STARS

Aries Mar. 21-Apr. 19 You need to reach further and try to get something new locked down for the upcoming year.

Taurus April 20-May 20 A power struggle is brewing at work or among your friends, and it doesn't make you feel good to watch it happen.

Gemini May 21-Jun. 21 Your intellect is a big asset, and you make the most of it with today's great energy. You may devise a new argument in favor of your pet position or dream up a new idea to try out another day.

Cancer Jun. 22-Jul. 22 You need to deal with money today - maybe just at work, or more likely as part of your daily life. It's one of those issues that never goes away, but your mindset is perfect for handling it.

Leo Jul. 23-Aug. 22 You take pride in some big accomplishment or positive trait, but that doesn't mean that everyone else feels the same way.

Virgo Aug. 23-Sept. 22 You stumble upon a new trick for staying organized - and that's especially impressive for you, because you thought you knew them all!

Libra Sep.23-Oct. 22 You've got some serious fun coming today - so get your people together and share the good times!

Scorpio Oct. 23 - Nov. 21 You've got problems at home, but nothing you can't handle - in fact, you may find that you've got more energy than ever when it comes to domestic issues.

Sagittarius Nov. 22-Dec. 21 Your ability to communicate is greatly linked to your energy today - and it's a good thing that your energy levels are so high!

Capricorn Dec. 22-Jan. 19 You are somewhat troubled by a weird financial discrepancy - so pursue it. You should be able to get to the bottom of it without too much trouble.

Aquarius Jan. 20-Feb. 18 Your energy levels are terrific today - so make sure that you're making the most of them!

Pisces Feb.19-Mar. 20 Your desire to serve the world is dominant today, so get out there and volunteer or do good deeds on your own.

THE BORN LOSER by Chip Sansom



SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzles categorized as Easy, Easy+, Medium, and Hard.

WEATHER

Weather forecast table for China and World locations including Beijing, Harbin, Tianjin, etc.

CROSSWORDS

CROSSWORD clues and solutions including 'Friday's solution' with a grid.

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Jenna Fryer, Rio de Janeiro

OLYMPICS | WEIGHTLIFTING

Thailand's Sopita Tanasan wins 48kg gold in event debut

IN her Olympic debut, Sopita Tanasan came away with gold.

The Thailand native won the women's 48-kilogram category Saturday in the first weightlifting event at the Rio de Janeiro Games.

Tanasan snatched 92 kilograms and lifted 108 kilograms in the clean and jerk for a total of 200 kilograms. It was her first time competing on the world level at that weight class.

On her first lift in clean and jerk, Tanasan easily succeeded at 106 kilos to take the lead. She lifted 108 kilos on her second attempt, but failed at 110 kilos on her final try.

In a last-ditch bid to snatch the gold, Sri Wahuni Agustiani of Indonesia twice tried to lift 115 kilos to overtake Tanasan. She failed on the first try and Tanasan celebrated by hugging her coaches in the green room.

"I didn't know what to think," Tanasan said. "I didn't think she would be able to lift it."

Agustiani was able to lift the bar on her second attempt and her coaches screamed in celebration, but she couldn't jerk the weight. She said she's lifted 118 kilos before in practice and thought she'd maybe pull it off for the gold.

"It just wasn't meant to be," she said.

Agustiani won silver and Hiromi Miyake of Japan took bronze.

Morghan King failed to end the United States' 16-year streak of not medaling in the 48kg category, finishing sixth. Tara Nott was the last American to medal, winning gold in 2000. Still, King sent an American record. Her lift of 83 kilos in the snatch broke the U.S. record of 82.5, which had been set by Nott in Sydney. King added 100 kilos in the clean and jerk for a total of 183 kilos.



Sopita Tanasan, of Thailand, competes in the women's 48kg weightlifting competition at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro

"The snatch was something I've been working on for a long time. The clean and jerk, I knew it was going to be a lot tougher. But, I'm happy," King said. "I still have to pinch myself that I was out there. You are in the moment and focusing on your lift, then just trying to do your best, and then it's all over. It's kind of surreal."

The event became somewhat wide open after the sudden withdrawal of favorite Hou Zhihui of China. Predicted by many to win the gold, the 19-year-old left Rio with what was described as a knee injury. But there was speculation that the injury — whatever its severity — helped China decide to replace her on the team with over-75kg lif-

ter Meng Suping. With the Russian weightlifters banned from participating, Meng became a favorite in the heavier division. So with Hou out of the way, the competition became a crapshoot that Tanasan quickly took control of as the last lifter in the snatch division. She easily lifted 88 kilos on

■ The event became somewhat wide open after the sudden withdrawal of favorite Hou Zhihui of China, who left Rio with what was described as a knee injury

her first attempt — best of the round — and then bettered her mark twice to 90 kilos then 92 kilos.

Thi Huyen Vuong of Vietnam failed to advance past the snatch round after three unsuccessful attempts at 83 kilos and 84 kilos. It trimmed the field to 11 lifters vying for the medal, all chasing Tanasan.

The 22-year-old Tanasan dropped down from the 53kg class to make her Olympic debut. She lifted 195 kilos to win the junior world championships in that class in 2014, and she was fourth overall at the world championships last year after lifting 210 kgs.

No previous data was available for Tanasan in the 48kg class. AP

10M AIR PISTOL | FIRST GOLD MEDAL FOR VIETNAM

Hoang holds on against Wu, rowdy crowd to take air gun gold

John Marshall, Rio de Janeiro

HOANG Xuan Vinh heard the cheers. The Brazilian fans wanted a Brazilian to win Olympic gold and let Felipe Almeida Wu know it with every shot.

They could chant "Wu!" all they wanted. Hoang wasn't listening. He was focused, on breathing, relaxing muscles, squeezing the trigger at just the right time.

Hoang shut out the hometown-hero noise and focused on his target of bringing home Vietnam's first Olympic gold on Saturday, rallying to beat Wu on the final shot of men's 10-meter air pistol. "Many people were happy, but I only try to shoot," Hoang said.

Wu was the clear crowd favorite as the only Brazilian in the field, serenaded with chants of "Wu!" and the Brazilian national anthem.

He led early in the elimination finals of his first Olympics, but Hoang was more consistent, building a 2.3-point by the time defending gold medalist Jin Jongoh of South Korea went out in fifth place.

The crowd became more raucous as Wu rallied, roaring after he hit 10.2 to Hoang's 9.2 to take the lead on the penultimate shot.

"It was touching and really helped me greatly with my performance," Wu said.

Wu, the No. 1-ranked shooter heading into the Olympics, hit a solid 10.1 on his final shot, giving the Brazilian fans hope of their first gold of their hometown games.

The 41-year-old Hoang wouldn't let them or Wu have it, hitting 10.7 to earn his country's first gold and third medal overall. Vietnam previously won silver in weightlifting in 2008 and another in taekwondo in 2000.

"I am very happy to



Hoang Xuan Vinh of Vietnam displays his gold medal following the victory ceremony for the men's 10-meter air pistol event at Olympic Shooting Center at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro

bring back first gold medal for Vietnam," said Hoang, who was fourth in 50-meter pistol at the 2012 London Games. Hoang raised his arms in triumph following the

final shot and the Brazilian fans sent Wu off with another chant.

Pang Wei of China, the gold medalist at the 2008 Beijing Games, captured bronze. AP

opinion

World Views

Noah Feldman

PAYING RANSOM FOR HOSTAGES ISN'T ALWAYS BAD

The entire cash-on-a-pallet debate about the USD400 million payment the U.S. made to Iran in January rests on a single assumption: that paying ransom for hostages is a bad thing. But it isn't, at least not always.

All negotiations and transactions depend on leverage. Hostages are a form of leverage, and so is money. So is military force. Frequently, paying ransom is the least expensive and most effective way to achieve the goal of recovering hostages.

And on close reflection, ransom payments don't really create new incentives for bad actors to take hostages - because those incentives already exist, and can't be eliminated by insisting that paying ransom is something the U.S. will never do.

Why does a country like Iran take hostages in the first place? Simply put, it's trying to get vastly stronger actors, like the U.S., to do what it wants. In this way, a hostage-taking country is not so different from a brigand in an unpoliced area who takes hostages as a moneymaking venture. The kidnapper is exploiting two vulnerabilities.

First, the kidnapper can get hold of a person who is unprotected, and can't easily be caught without the hostage being harmed. Second, the hostage wants to live freely - and the hostage's friends and family want the same thing for him or her.

There are really only two ways to eliminate hostage-taking, and they correspond to the two vulnerabilities.

One is not to get grabbed in the first place. That isn't very realistic for all Americans, who travel freely around the globe and sometimes make themselves vulnerable to capture.

The other is not to care about the hostage being taken at all. At the personal level, that requires both hostages and their friends and family to be prepared to accept indefinite or even permanent detention. Understandably, that's extremely rare.

At the national level, not caring would require a broadly shared political value that accepts the detention or death of Americans as the price we all pay for our freedom to travel and our nation's global power. Such a Spartan view isn't realistic in our democracy, and I'm not sure it would be ethically desirable even if it were.

The upshot is that American hostages will inevitably be taken, and Americans, including some in the government, will inevitably want to get them back.

The question, then, is whether it's a sensible principle for the U.S. never to pay ransom to do so.

Here the answer is an unequivocal no. The alternative to paying ransom is to use economic sanctions or to threaten force. Those are both good tools of foreign policy, but both are blunt instruments rather than scalpels.

Economic sanctions harm an entire country or industry, and are also often costly to those who impose them.

Force could be directed specifically at recovering particular hostages, but as President Jimmy Carter's failed attempt should remind us, it's hard to execute. Other forms of force may kill innocent bystanders or otherwise strengthen anti-American sentiment.

In contrast, paying ransom is the simplest and most direct way to get back hostages, presuming you want them returned.

But what about the incentive it creates for more hostage-taking? My Bloomberg View colleague Eli Lake points out that "when it comes to Iran, ransom payments are standard operating procedure" - a statement that is 100 percent true. And he adds that the Iranians have learned that hostage-taking works - which is also perfectly accurate.

But Iran didn't need the U.S. to teach it that hostage-taking is effective. The incentive to take hostages is immediately obvious to anyone trying to gain leverage over a more powerful actor. There's a reason hostage-taking is as old as recorded history.

And that's why it's a bit absurd to think that the U.S. should never pay ransom - because refusing to pay ransom will make it much harder to get back hostages without eliminating the incentive to take them in the first place.

It sounds tough to say that we don't pay ransom. But we do; we have; and we will - so long as we care about our citizens, and so long as humans are willing to use other humans as leverage to accomplish their goals. **Bloomberg**

THE BUZZ MARCOS BURIAL AT HEROES' CEMETERY GIVEN GO-AHEAD

The Philippine president has given the go-ahead for the burial of former dictator Ferdinand Marcos at a heroes' cemetery and says he'll allow anti-Marcos protesters to hold public demonstrations against the move.

President Rodrigo Duterte said yesterday that Marcos is qualified to be buried at the military-run cemetery as a soldier and as a former president. He disclosed that he once voted for Marcos

as president and that his late father, a politician, had served in Marcos's Cabinet.

Army spokesman Col. Benjamin Hao said Marcos family representatives have gone to the cemetery to pick a burial site and make initial preparations ahead of final arrangements.

The Philippine Star has quoted Marcos's son and namesake, former Sen. Ferdinand Marcos, as saying that the planned burial may take place on Sept. 18.

LAWYERS SAY

Barring radical candidates hurts Hong Kong autonomy

Benny Kung

SOME Hong Kong lawyers are warning the government's push to block radical candidates from seeking legislative seats could undermine the city's promised autonomy from China.

Local election officials have turned down the candidacies of six would-be lawmakers on grounds they supported independence from China, a position the government deems illegal. The move raised questions about freedom of expression in the former British colony after the government cited a candidate's social media posts and press statements, saying he was insincere in renouncing his pro-independence stance.

The controversy comes a month before Hong Kong holds its first Legislative Council election since the 2014 Occupy protests, which brought global attention to the city's democracy debate and fueled a nascent independence movement. Officials have pledged to squelch calls for full autonomy, even as concerns grow about China's commitment to the "one country, two systems" framework that guarantees Hong Kong free speech, independent courts and a capitalist financial system.

"Legal matters should be left to the judiciary," said Edward Chan King-sang, a former chairman of the Hong Kong Bar Association, who was



among 30 legal figures who signed a letter protesting the decision to block the candidates. "To international investors, you need to think about how much trust do you want to put in the 'one country, two systems' promised by the central government. In the future, under this system, there may be more and more intervention."

The move to bar candidates for the Sept. 4 vote comes after members of a pro-independence group were charged in connection with a Lunar New Year riot in the shopping district of Mong Kok that left more than 90 police officers injured. The Chinese government's liaison to Hong Kong, Zhang Xiaoming, later said the push for independence had "already far exceeded the category of free speech and touched the bottom line of 'one country, two systems.'"

Last month, the Electoral Affairs Commission announced it would require candidates to sign a form acknowledging Hong Kong as an inalienable part of China, as established in the city's Basic Law. The

commission followed up with some candidates who signed the form, scouring their past public statements for inconsistencies.

An election officer cited Facebook posts and newspaper articles as grounds last week for disqualifying Edward Leung, of the "localist" group Hong Kong Indigenous, as a candidate in the New Territories East district. "I can't accept that Mr Leung has genuinely changed his past advocacy and stance in support of Hong Kong independence," Cora Ho, the election officer, wrote.

Leung was allowed to run in a special election in February, securing 15 percent of the vote and demonstrating growing support for the radicals. Just days before, he had been charged with rioting in connection with the Mong Kok melee.

Alvin Hui, a senior information officer at the Electoral Affairs Commission, said on Friday the decision to approve or disqualify a candidate was in the hands of the relevant returning officer and the EAC would not comment further.

However, Chan and 29 other legal sector members who sit on the committee that choose the city's chief executive questioned the decision. "This has a negative impact on the long term stability of Hong Kong," they said in their joint statement. **Bloomberg**

THE DECISIVE MOMENT



Kayakers in Nam Van Lake play a game of Kayak Polo yesterday in the late afternoon.

Station	Air quality
Roadside	25-45 Good
High Density Residential Area	40-60 Moderate
Ambient	35-55 Good

SOURCE: D5IMG

WORLD BRIEFS



JAPAN marked the 71st anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima on Saturday by renewing calls for a nuclear weapons free world and urging leaders to follow the example of President Barack Obama and visit the bomb sites.

INDIA Gunmen opened fire on a busy market place in the north-eastern state of Assam on Friday, killing 13 people according to officials. The government is blaming the attack on the National Democratic Front of Bodoland, a rebel organization that seeks to carve out an area of Assam as an independent state for the Bodo ethnic group.



BELGIAN authorities are still investigating an attack by a machete-wielding man on two policewomen but are treating it for now as an act of terror, the country's prime minister said yesterday. Prime Minister Charles Michel said the attacker's shouts of "Allahu akbar!" as he slashed at the officers outside the Charleroi police station on Saturday were a notable factor in the authorities' decision.

MACEDONIAN police say the capital of Skopje has been hit by torrential rain and floods that left at least 15 people dead, six missing and 22 others sent to the hospital.



YEMEN The Security Council has failed to agree on a statement supporting the U.N. special envoy to Yemen who is trying to get Shiite rebels to back a peace deal and end the 17-month civil war in the Arab world's poorest country. Yemen's internationally recognized government has approved the U.N.-proposed deal but Houthi rebels have so far rejected it.